

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 41 — No. 9

NOVEMBER 1996

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**High-tech ups
intensity
of labor**



(I am turning over this month's "Workshop Talks" over to David L. Anderson.—John Marcotte)

Some intellectuals think that technology, the new "information age," will save this world. But we are not living in any "post-industrial" world. We are living the ultimate consequences of capitalism's logic of dead labor dominating living labor. The computer is just a new form of that.

Toys-R-Us built a brand new high-tech warehouse. They moved out of the inner city to the countryside, where they got tax breaks because the high-tech was supposed to create jobs. But not only did they not hire one more person, it has created fewer jobs. Because of technology they don't even need a big warehouse space. The merchandise comes in and goes out the same day. One person loads two trucks as the merchandise comes down the conveyors.

The computer in no way frees you. It does not make for leisure time, it makes for intensity of labor. To do the simplest task, you have to follow precise steps one after the other, in proper order. It is all coming down the conveyor and you get two from one truck, four from another, and it is harder to stack and put away.

At the job site, you get a hand-held keyboard which directs every task. We used to be able to break down and put away merchandise as we saw fit. Now everything has a certain rigid order, a certain plan, or nothing gets

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

**Sudan: pitfalls
of religious
consciousness**



Editor's note: We continue the series of articles on the Sudan by Robert Reed in this issue. See the August-September and October issues of N&L for his earlier articles—Lou Turner.

In *Towards the African Revolution*, written in 1960, Frantz Fanon stated, "The deeper I enter into the cultures and political circles [of Africa] the surer I am that the great danger that threatens Africa is the absence of ideology."¹

But the absence of ideology is not the problem in Sudan. There is an ideology, an all pervading one. It is Islam. As the leader of Sudan's National Islamic Front (NIF), Hassan al-Turabi stated, "There is a vacuum now. That vacuum is being filled by an Islamicist spirit."² And what is this Islamicist spirit?

The word *Islam* itself means *submission and surrender* to the will of God. The essence of things is to submit to God, "to Whom all those in heaven and earth have already surrendered, whether willingly or unwillingly..."³ And submission must be brought out through fear of God. The 'ultimate expression in fear of God' is *la ilah ila Allah*. Submission and fear. Of God? Or of the State? Is this the Islamic spirit al-Turabi speaks of?

But what if one does not want to submit? What if one has no fear of God? Then one must be made to submit, to become a slave of God.

"The rationale of such servitude (slavery) is to be found in the principle of reciprocity (*al-mu'awadah*). If an individual is invited to become the slave of God but refuses, such refusal is symptomatic of ignorance that calls for a period of training. The individual prepares to

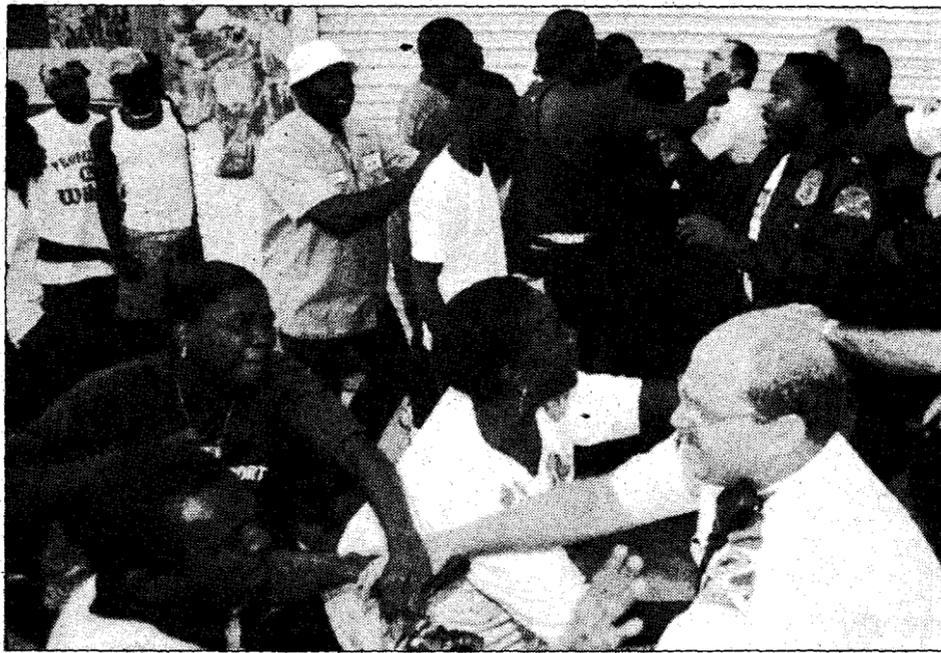
(Continued on page 8)

1. Frantz Fanon, *Toward the African Revolution* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p. 186.
2. Bill Berkeley, "The Longest war in the World," *New York Times Magazine*, March 3, 1996, p. 59.
3. Mahmoud Muhammad Taha, *The Second Message of Islam* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1987), p. 113.

ON THE INSIDE

From *The Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya* • Hungary's 1956 Revolution page 4
Philosophic Dialogue • Inheritors of Althusser's vulgar materialism page 5
Editorial • Nobel awards reflect revolt in Indonesia and East Timor page 10

Rage of the poor, voter indifference promise shaky term for Clinton



Police slaying of Black motorist sparks St. Petersburg, Fla. outrage.

by Olga Domanski

The dullest election campaign in memory that finally ended on Nov. 5 could be forgotten as no more than a national embarrassment were it not for what it revealed about the alarming new point we have reached in this country. For what Dole and Clinton represented was no mere Tweedledum and Tweedledee, both vying for the center, the kind of non-choices the Republican and Dem-

ocratic Parties have always represented. Rather, this year saw such a drastic move in tandem to the Right, where the Christian Coalition sat back counting up its gains, that it points to a frightening future.

There is no question that, while Clinton's victory was as far from a "mandate" as it could be, given that the 48% turnout was the lowest ever, it did represent revulsion against Newt Gingrich's "Contract on America" which had already set in stone such draconian measures as the so-called Welfare Reform and Immigration bills.

The slashing of food stamps and welfare benefits, sure to throw 1.1 million more children below the poverty level, was so vicious that it brought forth

the protest of even Clinton's close supporter, Marion Edelman, head of the Children's Defense Fund. The blatant immigrant bashing brought forth the largest Latino civil rights demonstration and march in U.S. history.

It's no mystery why two years of Gingrich's rule over the House of Representatives have made his name and face one of the most hated in the country. That the

(Continued on page 9)

Women's march: 'Hand in hand in Hebron'

Jerusalem—It all began three weeks ago when a group of Israeli women crossed an abyss of cultural differences and entered Hebron, hoping to come up with some joint peace action with Palestinian women. In warm and mutually respectful meetings, we decided on a plan for a grand march through the streets of Hebron in the Palestinian West Bank.

Some tension arose in our efforts to find slogans for the march that would be acceptable to us both. While our side vetoed "Jerusalem for Muslims Only," the Palestinians took us aback by vetoing all our slogans that implied legitimacy for the state of Israel—"Two States for Two Peoples," and so on. "We personally agree with this," they said, "but in Hebron we cannot carry such signs." It was disappointing to us that they could not defy that position, and perhaps even shared it. Nevertheless, we were all eager to find that narrow ledge of consensus in which we could cling to each other.

As the official negotiations between Israel and Palestine alternately advanced and floundered regarding the redeployment of Israeli troops in Hebron, and as Hebron's Jewish settlers stepped up their level of violence, we decided that a mass march could never take place in this volatile atmosphere. The Palestinian women had come to the same conclusion and we decided to postpone the event, but we were all reluctant to let this opportunity slip from our fingers.

"Let's hold a small march," suggested Amal, their chief decision-maker, and we all agreed at once. We set the date for Thursday (Oct. 31). Yes, a work day and a school day, but we were determined to make a least one modest statement before new political realities overwhelmed our enterprise.

Hebron is a town without pity—120,000 Palestinians and 400 Jewish settlers, the latter protected by a staggering number of Israeli soldiers. As if this firepower were not enough, both the Palestinians and the settlers in Hebron have stockpiled huge arsenals waiting for someone to light the match.

We knew it would not be easy to find women to enter the jaws of a population with such hatred in their hearts for Israelis. And we knew that marching together with Palestinians in full Muslim regalia would not win us points with the Israeli soldiers who have orders to break up any Palestinian demonstrations.

To make matters worse, in the days preceding our scheduled event the settlers in Hebron were involved in two shooting incidents against Palestinians. Following this, a phone call from a senior army officer warned peace groups not to even think about demonstrating in Hebron in the near future, as the settlers there have two

new squads—"one to shoot Palestinians and the other to shoot left-wingers who come to town." After long discussion, we decided to go through with the march: first, because one doesn't give in to bullies and intimidation; and second, because we have an important statement to make and we intended to make it.

Thursday morning came and thirty of us set off for Hebron with a mixture of trepidation and hopefulness. At the women's center in Hebron, we met our partners and were led by them to the rallying point. Amal gave the signal and we unfurled a huge 30-foot banner that proclaimed, purple lettering on white, our three agreed-upon slogans in Hebrew, Arabic and English: "Implement International Agreements," "Settlements Are an Obstacle to Peace," and "Yes to Peace! No to Occupation!"

We began to move down the street headed toward the center of Hebron, Palestinian women interlacing with Israeli women, pushing the banner in front of us like a skirt protecting this child of peace yearning to step out and be seen, but still afraid.

As we turned the corner into the main street, the whole city of Hebron seemed to wake up to our presence. We blocked cars in both directions, drivers pulled over to watch, storekeepers came out to see what all the fuss was about, market vendors put down their tomatoes and shook our hands, greeting "Shalom, Salaam, Peace" as we walked by.

A huge procession formed behind us, more women, children, shoppers, loiterers, the unemployed, the revolutionaries, the bored. A Palestinian woman put her arm around me and I put mine around the women on my other side, and we were all marching with our arms together, "yad be-yad" as we say in both Hebrew and Arabic, "hand in hand."

None of us had envisioned that it would be this powerful, this inspiring. We stopped waiting for the sound of an explosion, stopped looking for the disaster. Now we were feeling buoyed by the sense of common purpose, by the great longing in all our hearts for those very platitudes—no more bloodshed...a true and just peace. Thus we marched through the streets of that town of despair, feeling hopeful for a whole morning, hearing the sounds of a song that all of us were marching together, though we walked in silence.

I don't think we will ever let go of that moment, not those in Hebron nor those of us in Israel who experienced it. It was not a piece of paper signed between governments, but it was a vision of something that can really be, that can really happen, a vision of a reality that is more profound than paper.

—Gila Svirsky

Ebert divorces Marx from his humanism

by Laurie Cashdan

Teresa Ebert's denunciation of my review characterizing her recent book, *Ludic Feminism and After: Postmodernism, Desire, and Labor in Late Capitalism*, as "regressive materialism" only underscored the perils of attacking Marx's Humanism. (See Aug./Sept. and Oct. N&L). By reducing all questions of theory and revolution to one, the economic determinants of ideology, including gender, her letter reveals the serious consequences of such an error for feminists.

Notwithstanding her epithets attacking my review as "reactionary," "bourgeois," "idealist," and "revisionary," Ebert's anti-humanism, by sheering Marx's revolutionary dialectic from his economic categories, leaves workers—and women—theoretically imprisoned within

Woman as Reason

these categories. She accuses me of producing "a cultural Marx, placing 'human relations'—as if these are autonomous—at the center of his work rather than the material and historical practices that structure those relations." Marx's own words in his 1845 *Theses on Feuerbach* defy Ebert's criticism: "The standpoint of the old materialism is 'civil' society; the standpoint of the new is 'human' society, or associated humanity."

However, we need to compare her analysis to *Capital* itself to see the results of divorcing Marx's humanism from economics. Ebert quotes from Marx's Preface to *Capital* his passage on individuals as "bearers" of class relations. His point is that *Capital* addresses capitalists not as evil individuals but "personifications of economic categories" (*Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 92). Ebert is right that Marx discusses individuals—whether capitalists or laborers—as representing objective economic categories. But are they only expressions of objective economic categories? Is the subjective swallowed up by the objective for Marx? Is Ebert suggesting, like Althusser, that Marx broke with his philosophic humanist writings of the 1840s; that there are two Marx's?

Beginning in *Capital*'s first chapter, on the commodity form, Marx argues that capitalism dehumanizes humanity by turning relations between people into relations between things. Capitalist production creates what he calls "the fetishism" of the commodity. When the products of labor are produced as commodities, the worker's activity becomes so alien to him/herself that relations between human beings become reified—turned into things—erasing the human laborer's concrete activity.

As Raya Dunayevskaya argued long ago in *Marxism and Freedom* (1958; 1988), Marx's breakthrough was grasping the *split* between the laborer and his/her labor power—a commodity—the worker rebels against this dehumanizing separation of mental and manual labor.

Ebert's economism and her hostility to humanism so drive her work that she perversely adopts Marx's critique of capitalism turning individuals into things, embodiments of economic categories, without seeing how he dialectically reveals its revolutionary opposite—the living laborers whose rebellion tears the fetishistic veil off the commodity by establishing "freely associated labor"—as they did in the 1871 Paris Commune.

Ebert cannot possibly grasp Marx's dialectical method of approaching opposites, objective and subjective, because she counterposes materialism to dialectics. She argues that I substitute "a philosophic method ('dialectics') for materialism. Ebert's 'historical materialism' ignores Marx's own profound relationship to dialectics—especially his appropriation of Hegel's "negation of the negation" as the revolutionary principle of history.

Dialectics reveals the possibility of transcendence immanent within a social totality. Ebert strips from *Capital* Marx's view of the human subjects that arise from within capitalism to destroy it. While her critique of ideology remains academic, Marx attacks "fetishism" through dialectics and subjective resistance.

To support her spurious claim that centering on human relations displaces historical materialism in favor of culture, Ebert argues that my attempting to "restore the individual as the center of social practices" is an "ideological" move. The view that an individual can only be

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Women in Colombia, according to the Instituto Maria Cano, have to prove they are not pregnant before they can get a job—even though required pregnancy tests are illegal! In Mexico, U.S. companies and their subcontractors—including General Motors—violate the law in the same way. Bosses argue this discrimination is necessary to avoid the expense of maternity leave. So far, Colombian women's groups have not had the resources to challenge the practice in court, but people are urged to call GM's Walter Ralph at 313/556-5000 and demand this practice stop in Mexico.

A woman worker was critically injured at Sri Lanka's Blanca Diamond Institute in the Free Trade Zone when her apron got tangled in the belt of a diamond cutting machine. Workers had repeatedly complained that their uniforms were unsafe, asking to change to trousers with head guards and footwear, but management ignored them.

—Information from *Asian Women Workers Newsletter*

conceived through bourgeois Enlightenment ideology is consistent with French structuralist Louis Althusser's anti-humanism. Althusser argued that all subjects are interpellated (constituted) by ideology, through language, which constitutes individuals as seemingly autonomous individuals with ideas that inspire him/her to act.

Ebert insists that the revolutionary theoretician's responsibility is to expose the economic determinants of such ideology. She argues that "ludic" or poststructuralist feminists instead focus on the linguistic play of discourse. However, whether one approaches the "interpellation of subjects" from economic determinism or discursive determinism, either subsumes both dialectics and the revolutionary subjects arising from within capitalism.

How else could Ebert find the idea of women as revolutionary subject so despicable that she would conclude that our use of the logo "Woman as Reason" must mean women as "a spontaneous flow of emotions and sentiment," "helpless, uncritical creatures?" Women's struggles—as force and as "revolutionary Reason" throughout history—tear up the ruling ideology.

Ebert's one-dimensional view relies not on Marx's discussion of women and gender, but on Engels's *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*—indeed, Ebert conflates Marx and Engels. Engels links gender oppression to the onset of private property, arriving at the fantastic conclusion that women suffered what he called the "world historic defeat of the female sex." His conclusion, as Dunayevskaya argues in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* (1985; 1996), could only have resulted from turning dialectics into mechanical positivism. Here we see the consequences of viewing women as "bearers of particular class relations and interests"—not as revolutionary subjects.

Grasping Marx's dialectical methodology allows us to trace this emergence of women as revolutionary subjects. Far from being reducible to "class struggle"—as Ebert claims all questions of revolution are—women's liberation in our era has insisted that revolution fully transform human relations, including the dehumanization of women. Unfortunately, Ebert casts off both women's liberation and dialectics of revolution.

NEW EXPANDED EDITION

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

by Raya Dunayevskaya

To order, see page 7.



Black Women United

Chicago—This year the Women's Studies Program at Loyola University started a group called Sisters which I was really excited about. It was supposed to be a support group for multicultural women, to bring us together and show our similarities as women. There are more women than men on campus, but the men still dominate everything. We felt we needed to do something.

But, when the first meeting came around, problems came out. I thought we needed to talk about why we were here and what we were for. We had some really different ideas, like, for example about the elections. Some women were Republican and some were Democrats. How can you organize a group with such different viewpoints? I can't go into something I don't agree with.

Plus, I didn't see any diversity in the group. This didn't seem to bother anyone too much. It's all white women, and I'm not about to preach the white woman's struggle when I've got my own. It was just like history class in school, where they won't teach you about your own history. So, I thought, Black women aren't coming to Sisters, and this isn't representing us. I thought we really needed our own group, and that's why I'm organizing Black Women United (BWU).

BWU is not a hierarchical organization and everybody's ideas matter. I don't want it to be any kind of clique. There are a lot of powerful Black women on campus, and I want us to come together. Sometimes Black women go to certain meetings, like the Black Cultural Center meetings, and our ideas are shot down. There's so much on campus that, as a Black woman, I can't identify with. So, this is about empowerment.

We hear names like Angela Davis, Elaine Brown, Coretta Scott King, but do we really agree with what they were doing? We need to learn more about these women. People say they come out of college confused. I don't want to be like that. We want to start a file on teachers, courses, scholarship, financial aid, etc., that can help Black women students. We want to deal with welfare and other political and economic issues that affect us.

There are a lot of African-American women leaders at our school who can do a lot. We're here for a cause—for Black women to unite—and that can be hard to do.

—Angela

Promise Keepers protested

Memphis, Tenn.—The daily newspaper, the *Commercial Appeal*, reported the Promise Keepers' meeting as men bringing commerce to Memphis as 52,000 filled the Liberty Bowl stadium, Oct. 11-13. Despite this welcome, they were met by Memphis WAC (Women's Action Coalition), News and Letters, and others, in a protest next to the Liberty Bowl. Our signs read, "Protect Your Family From the Christian Coalition," "End Male Dominance—Abolish the Promise Keepers" and "Stop Khomainsi-ism!"

We received thumbs up signals from drivers and several groups of Promise Keepers asked us why we were protesting. Two WAC women facing the exiting crowd on Friday evening had their pro-gay, lesbian, and women's rights signs ripped from their hands. They were yelled at and "prayed" over for hours by hundreds of hostile men.

The media ignored our protest and described the Promise Keepers' huge, all-male, charismatic prayer rally in glowing terms, focusing on its call for men to be more responsible to their families, to atone for their sins, and to practice "racial reconciliation."

They didn't report that these rallies are projects of the theocratic right, or that speakers insist that "family values" means dominating wives and fighting a "spiritual war" against homosexuality and women's right to abortion. They didn't analyze the fact that "racial reconciliation" means a few individuals forming friendships rather than fighting society's institutionalized racism. They didn't say that emotional mass rallies, promotion of male dominance, militarism, and opposition to homosexuality and abortion were tactics used by the Nazis to rise to power.

Men gather in football stadiums, chant Christian songs and listen to Jerry Falwell, Focus on the Family founder James Dobson, D. James Kennedy, Tim LaHaye, and Bill Bright—all prominent leaders of the theocratic right. New Promise Keepers then go home and submit their lives to the scrutiny of other Promise Keepers in a system borrowed from the "Word of God," an Armageddonist cult with which founder Bill McCartney has been involved.

The leaders of the religious right blatantly state that their mission is to destroy democracy and create a "Christian" fundamentalist government. The resistance they ran into in Memphis—the "buckle of the Bible belt"—is just a taste of what the Promise Keepers will get at their planned march on Washington, D.C., in 1997.

—WAC member

'Dangerous Intersections'

New York—A conference entitled "Dangerous Intersections: Feminist Perspectives on Population, Immigration and the Environment" held Oct. 25-26 drew together more than 100 students and environmental justice activists, almost all women. Professors spoke alongside Black, Latina, Native American and other community organizers and left wing environmentalists. Speakers discussed liberatory ideas as well as dangers posed by rightwing ideas and by racism within the women's and environmental movements themselves.

Betsy Hartmann, director of the Population and Development Program at Hampshire College and a founding member of the Committee on Women, Population and the Environment, explained the current revival of the Malthusian idea that overpopulation causes the world's problems. Malthusian arguments and eugenics blame social ills on poor people, people of color and women for having too many children, and on immigrants for coming to the U.S. These arguments of the right are gaining prevalence, even though birth rates are falling nearly everywhere in the world and women have fewer children as their standard of living rises. Problems of poverty and the environment are caused by the system we live under, she emphasized, not population pressures.

So strong is racist and anti-poor sentiment today that some liberal and women's groups have jumped on the "overpopulation" bandwagon even while they support reproductive rights, and many prominent environmental groups have joined the anti-immigrant hysteria. We see these ideas manifest today in widespread, sometimes forced use of unsafe chemical sterilization and birth control; mass incarceration of non-white men; and anti-immigrant laws. Some "leading analysts" have even blamed the violence in Haiti and Rwanda on population pressures!

Other speakers told stories of particular women's and community struggles. Several Native American activists discussed their cultures, relation of population and health issues to the land. They do not separate ongoing fights to save sacred sites, to stop uranium mining and nuclear plants—which cause high rates of cancer and birth defects—and to promote reproductive health.

Vernice Miller, an early "EJ" (environmental justice) activist in Harlem, said the EJ movement, while still battling many mainstream environmental groups, has advantages from being grassroots based. It is stepping up its international work, particularly regarding Mexico. Ludovic Blain of NYPIRG described community organizing among disparate immigrant populations in poor sections of New York City. A campaign conducted in four languages managed to defeat a proposed incinerator in Brooklyn.

Loretta Ross of the Center for Human Rights Education in Atlanta emphasized the need to work for what we are for—human rights, which are economic, social and cultural as well as civil and political. She urged us not to be only reactive, but to have our own plan and ideology, and to create a common movement for human rights.

—Anne Jaclard

New York City workfare means forced labor

New York—Some 70,000 New Yorkers are already in workfare, here called the Work Experience Program or WEP; the workers call it the Welfare Exploitation Program or just plain "slave labor." WEP does nothing to train or help recipients obtain "real" jobs, and it deprives them of all rights that workers have. The jobs are mostly cleaning streets, parks, subways and public buildings. Some non-profit groups are also obtaining WEP workers who will eventually be provided to private businesses.

The municipal unions have been complicit in accepting layoffs of union workers who are replaced by WEP workers. WEP workers receive the equivalent of minimum wage in food stamps and small cash grants.

Welfare recipients recently formed WEP Workers Together!, an organization "fighting to end WEP and for the creation of a real public jobs program and the development of workplace protections for workfare participants." One member, Sandra White, tells her story:

Although I am an actress, I worked in a bank for many years before being downsized out of a job. When my unemployment insurance ran out, I was forced to apply for welfare. You have to wait 45 days after you apply to get assistance. I was required to attend a two-week class on

Ontario labor mass victory

Toronto—A great battle between the Tory government of Ontario and the left-wing extraparty opposition was fought out peacefully in the streets of Toronto. Even the servile Tory press admits that opponents of the budget-chopping Mike Harris government achieved a resounding victory.

On Friday, Oct. 25, Ontario and its allies shut down this city of more than three million. Public transit was at a standstill; the volume of traffic on the city's normally clogged expressways resembled that of an early Sunday morning. Hundreds of businesses closed down or operated on a reduced basis. Protesters and police joked with one another and there were only one or two isolated violent incidents.

Oct. 26 will go down in history as the day of the largest demonstration in Canadian history. Three hundred thousand people marched on Queen's Park, the seat of the Ontario government. The mammoth crowd enjoyed the warmth and bright sun as speakers denounced the Harris Tories and discussed the prospects for a province-wide general strike. Bruce Coburn and other entertainers provided music and laughter for elated demonstrators.

In power for almost 18 months, the Tories seemed invulnerable only a few weeks ago. Now the tide has turned, and a huge drop in public support for Harris's neo-conservative agenda may force the government to back away from its harsh campaign of anti-labour legislation, budget cuts, hospital closures, layoffs and environmental deregulation.

—Labor ally

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

done. You work harder and faster because you can never do half a job. And this is when the system works. When it crashes, which is often, your job takes four times as long as it used to. The computer just locks you into a rigid mode of doing.

In the June 1996 N&L I wrote about how this technology is making all kinds of labor, from factory to secretary, more alike. The headline stressed the oppression is alike. But I wanted to bring out that the kind of questions that get raised are alike. When I talk with a good friend who is a secretary, the question of why we should do this kind of work comes up. This is the kind of question raised by workers against automation.

The machine oppresses, but it also forces one to leap beyond the here and now, to say, "This is not the way I want to live, not the way I want to be forced to think, I am not a machine." This is the dichotomy of capitalism. Capitalism has an analytical concept of what thinking is. Computers are analytical. Human beings can be analytical too, but can also make a leap in logic even under the system of capitalism. The human being by nature always finds a way around the machine, to "out-think" the machine.

The Information Superhighway will not save capitalism. As with all machines, you only get out of the computer the sum product you feed into it. Any information devoid of the human being thinking and living is totally irrelevant in the long term, it has no way to transcend this world.

MARXISM AND FREEDOM from 1776 until today

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

"The fundamental problem of true freedom... remains: What type of labor can end the division between 'thinkers' and 'doers'? This is the innermost core of Marxism... This basic question... arose out of the new stage of production called Automation."

To order, see page 7.

how to get a job. When that didn't produce a job, I was forced into WEP. We have to report to a Sanitation garage in Brooklyn, from which my group is trucked out to clean the streets. We were supposed to get gloves and other protective gear, but so far we haven't gotten anything but orange vests, which are stored in the garbage cans overnight.

We are only supposed to sweep, but we are ordered to do other work, including picking up dead animals. Sometimes without goggles we use weed-whacker, which cause dog excrement and glass to fly up in your face.

We have to work outside in heavy rain storms with no rain gear and are not allowed to seek shelter. We have to ask the local businesses to use their bathrooms. If you bring your lunch, you have to carry it around all day by fastening it to your garbage can. One co-worker of mine was hit by a car and seriously injured; another was bitten by a dog and needed 72 stitches. Two workers in other groups have been killed on the job.

Our supervisors (Sanitation workers) harass us and treat us horribly. Sometimes we wait over an hour for the truck to pick us up after work. At the garage, the Sanitation workers have stolen our bikes and posted signs on the bathroom door saying "No WEP workers allowed."

Clinton created a monster when he signed the new welfare law. There may soon be 100,000 people on workfare in New York City. In WEP Workers Together! we try to help each other learn our rights and to change WEP altogether.



'It ain't over' in Detroit

Detroit—"The strike ain't over until WE say it's over—and we say: IT AIN'T OVER!" Six hundred supporters and striking Detroit News and Detroit Free Press workers cheered a fired Detroit News reporter at the most recent "Ox Roast" benefit put on by area local unions. These fund-raisers help striking workers' families (2,000 of 2,500 members of six newspaper unions have stayed out since July 13, 1995) and create a network of solidarity and struggle determined to win a decent contract and return all strikers to work.

The AFL-CIO calls this strike "the most important in America today." Its president, John Sweeney, was arrested in a Labor Day demonstration here. But both national and local leadership have quietly sidestepped all attempts to enlist their support for building mass rank-and-file actions like a National Labor March on Detroit.

Several newspaper bureaus were occupied one afternoon, throwing the Detroit News into such consternation that they shut down their mainframe computer at deadline time. On Oct. 11, 400 members of the National Black Caucus of Teamsters rallied for the strikers.

Newspaper workers supported Bridgestone-Firestone workers and Fox TV 2 Communications Workers, and have talked with striking Canadian Auto Workers. The six newspaper unions have resisted attempts to break them apart—the Typographers were urged by their own district president to "unconditionally surrender!"

One typographer said, "I have been in three strikes, but nothing as bitter as this. There were 900 printers at both papers in 1974; now we have 110. All the skill is gone from my job. Young people will never get the wages and benefits at this trade that we had."

The solidarity network is centered in the Action Coalition of Strikers and Supporters (ACOSS). For strike information or to leave a message call the ACOSS Hotline (810) 447-2716 anytime.

—Susan Van Gelder.

Hood Furniture closing is anti-union racism

Jackson, Miss.—"Everyone who read News & Letters last issue knows how we finally got Hood Furniture to sign a contract with our union, IUE-Furniture Workers Local 282, on Sept. 20," said Lurlee Lewis, chief steward at the plant. "Well, on Oct. 11, they passed out a letter to all workers at Hood saying that the plant would close permanently no later than Dec. 15."

"They told us that the main reason was poor quality of the furniture being made and excessive absenteeism. But we all know that the reason over 250 Black workers will lose their jobs is racism, pure and simple. Warren Hood had said that he would rather close the plant than let us be represented by Local 282 with Willie Rudd as president. They knew when they signed the contract that they were going to close."

"The truth is that we were telling management about poor quality production since last spring. We would put red tags on the bad furniture, but management took them off and sent the stuff out anyway. Warren Hood is such a racist that he could not live with a union contract signed by a militant Black union president. We never saw either Warren Hood or his son Jimmy in all the negotiating meetings. He couldn't see us face to face."

On Oct. 11, Hood had the company's C.E.O., Joe McMullin, send letters announcing the plant closing to Mis-

CAW sit-in seals GM pact

Toronto—The labour movement in Canada scored an important victory with the agreement last week between the Canadian Auto Workers and General Motors Canada that ended a three-week strike. The most contentious issue was outsourcing. GM wanted the right to contract with outside firms for items now produced in GM plants. The Canadian Auto Workers countered with the concept of "work ownership."

Work ownership does not refer to ownership and control of the firm but to the workers' right to keep the jobs they do, without threat of losing these jobs to outside suppliers. The threat of work ownership is now part of the contract between the CAW and GM Canada.

The Canadian settlement was watched very closely by Detroit because similar issues are at stake in the U.S. Some suggest that GM Canada's combative stance was a result of Detroit's fear that a win for the CAW might strengthen the hand of the UAW in the U.S. in its negotiations with GM. The CAW-GM settlement resembles an earlier agreement with Chrysler Canada and sets the stage for bargaining with Ford.

In the second week of the strike GM attempted to remove machinery from a parts plant in order to relocate production which prompted an unprecedented worker occupation of the plant. Workers ordered supervisors to leave, locked plant doors and chained the machinery. The crisis prompted GM head John Smith, Jr. to bypass the GM Canada president and fly to Toronto for face-to-face discussions with CAW leader "Buzz" Hargrove.

The occupying workers unchained the machinery and relinched the plant, but did not return the supervisors' lunches, which were commandeered during the seizure. Noting that over 40% of GM's global profits come from its Canadian operations, a GM Canada worker commented on the futility of GM's resistance to the CAW's "work ownership" proposals. "If GM was a person, they'd have him committed."

—Activist

Tough talks at Delta Pride

Indianola, Miss.—At Delta Pride Catfish plant, UFCW Local 1529 negotiations with the company are at a standstill. Our contract was up on Halloween. The company is using the same tactics that caused the workers to strike in 1990. They want to take back what we've already won—almost two years to get one week of vacation, and down-staffing job classifications.

The workers at the Delta Belzoni plant voted to eliminate a work week of four ten-hour days that the union let them try for six months. It's come back to haunt us—the company won't make any movement because they're trying to force us to accept that work week at all the plants. They haven't brought us a wage package or anything. The workers voted it out because it's highway robbery—eight hours a week that should be paid overtime. Not only that, they want to tie daily overtime to weekly attendance. So if I work Monday and Tuesday and get two hours of overtime but don't work on Wednesday, I'll lose the four hours of overtime.

The scuttlebutt is that what the Canadian consultants, who are directing Delta Pride management, have in mind for the future is how to run the operation with fewer people. Their example was that the same machine at Delta that runs 41 fish a minute with 10 trimmers behind it, in Canada runs 80 a minute with four trimmers.

We heard the union is asking for guaranteed work of 32 hours per week and changing the probation period from 60 days to 30. We also want to use our vacation the way we want, to split it up if we want, instead of having to use a whole week at a time.

We heard the union will try to get our pay to not depend on our job classification so much as on how long we've worked at the plant. You could have worked there several years and someone coming in on a different class makes almost as much.

One thing different is there are several rank-and-file workers who are part of the negotiating team. They get the feel of the attitude of the company—how they think you are nothing, how they don't consider anything you say—like we workers don't deserve anything. This way we can know better what's going on and cut down on the confusion.

—Workers ready to fight at Delta Pride

Mississippi Gov. Kirk Fordice, Jackson Mayor Kane Ditto, and IUE International President William Bywater. He said that Hood was open to selling the plant instead of closing it. The letter didn't mention the tax-exempt status Hood got when it took over the plant in 1983 or the hundreds of thousands of dollars in bond money from the City of Jackson and Hinds County.

"What we are doing now is filing unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB," Rudd said. "The contract was obviously negotiated in bad faith. They planned all along to close; they just wanted to avoid a strike or a boycott. We are calling on all our friends in civil rights organizations, labor and the community to put pressure on Mayor Ditto and Gov. Fordice, and demand that Hood not close the plant until a buyer is found. We are not ruling out any action."

Lurlee Lewis told N&L that "most of the employees are not crying; we're laughing. Over the past few years, Hood hired quite a few Black supervisors. They dogged us for Mr. Hood. The best part about this whole situation is that when management closes the door, they have to look for a job too. We stuck up for what we believed in for seven years, and we stuck together too, even when it was rough. Wherever we go, if the plant closes, we will have that. They will have nothing."

—Michael Flug

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

*Editor's note: This November marks the 40th anniversary of one of the greatest revolutions of the twentieth century, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, which rose up against both "Communist" totalitarianism and existing capitalist relations. Since it is important not to lose the significance of this great revolt in the midst of today's ideological pollution, we publish here the following essay by Dunayevskaya excerpted from her pamphlet *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism, and the Afro-Asian Revolutions*, first printed by News and Letters in 1959 and re-issued with a new introduction in 1984. The full pamphlet can be ordered from N&L (See page 7).*

Man does not live by bread alone; but he must have bread to live. The humane materialism of Marx holds both the immediate and long-term answers to the present colonial revolutions.

Present-day Communist attacks on humanism are neither accidental nor are they hair-splitting points of doctrine. They concern nothing less fundamental than whether these national revolutionary movements, as well as working class movements, shall emerge from the death-grip of state capitalism.

We need to be aware that Stalin chose to revise the Marxist theory of value right in the midst of World War II as the heroic Russian people were driving back the Nazi invaders. 1943 was chosen as the year for a seemingly pedantic article, "Some Questions of Teaching Political Economy," because that was the year the Russian production managers "discovered" the American assembly line technique. It was Stalin's way of telling the Russians not to expect a change in the conditions of labor after the war.

BECAUSE MARX'S THEORY of exploitation is built on his analysis of the law of value as the law of capitalist development, the Russian theoreticians, up until 1943, had denied the operation of that law in their country, an allegedly classless society. A revision of Marxism was necessary to make it possible, at one and the same time, to admit the law of value operating in Russia and still claim that it was "a socialist land." It took the form of asking teachers not to follow the structure of Marx's Capital.

As I wrote in my *Marxism and Freedom*: "Marxism is a theory of liberation or it is nothing. Whereas Marx was concerned with the freedom of humanity and the inevitable waste of human life which is the absolute general law of capitalist development, Russian communism rests upon the mainspring of capitalism—paying the worker the minimum and extracting from him the maximum. This they dub 'the Plan.' Marx called it the law of value and surplus value." (p. 24).

Just as the break of 1943 with the Marxist analysis of value meant the continued exploitation of the Russian workers, so the 1955-6 attack on the humanism of Marxism, in Hungary particularly, meant their continued imperialist control of Eastern Europe and their new intervention—by economic aid—in the colonial world.

Some there are who think that Russian Communist "aid" is different from that of American imperialism's Point Four programme. Others are so desperate to sell "Christian internationalism" to stop Communism that they claim that only one per cent of U.S. national income is needed to build up the underdeveloped countries. The truth is that neither Russian state capitalism nor the profits of the U.S. and "its wealthy allies" (including the wealth of the Krupp empire of West Germany) will ever rebuild the world economy.

THE WORLD ECONOMY must have totally new foundations operated by motive forces other than mere machine building and private or state profit. Only a qualitatively different kind of labour, one that comes from the release of the creative energies of the common people, can reconstruct the world on new human foundations....This, too, Marx foresaw long ago. In 1844 he wrote: "To have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie."

Marx foresaw the impasse of modern science not because he was a prophet but because he took the human being as the measure of all development, and therefore saw that at the root of all class divisions was the division between the mental and the manual, between science and life itself.

If there are any who still think that anything but an exploitative society could result from such a basic division, let them take a second look at both Russia and America and see where science has led them to. The duality that pervades capitalist society and invests each thing with its opposite, has led to automation, something which instead of fructifying man's labor simultaneously overworks him and throws him out of work. From the splitting of the atom came not the earth's greatest source of energy but its most destructive weapon.

The discerning scientist, for all his middle class identity, can see this now. It was Dr. William Pickering who stated that no matter who drops the bomb first "we are one-half hour's distance away from total annihilation." Since, continued Dr. Pickering, the scientists cannot help themselves, we must find an entirely different approach to life, "a new unifying principle from the heart and mind of man."

Such a unifying principle can be nothing but Marxist Humanism. It is the point of unity also between the masses in the underdeveloped countries and the common people in the advanced countries.

Hungary 1956: the light of freedom

It is just for this reason that Russia engages in the struggle against humanism. The undercurrent of revolt against the Russian tyrants is uncompromising and continuous. In the satellites it gives them no respite.

The revolt has been reflected even within the ranks of the Communists. Thus in 1955-6, Imre Nagy, who had been expelled from the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party, wrote a letter in which he assured the Central Committee that when the masses turn to humanism it is not because they "want a return to capitalism...They want a people's democracy where the working people are masters of the country and of their own fate, where human beings are respected and where social and political life is connected with the spirit of humanism."¹

IN THE PETOFI CIRCLE, the Hungarian Communist writer, Tibor Dery, declared on June 19th, 1956: "We have been fighting for so many things that we have for-



Hungarian freedom fighters felled Stalin's statues in the 1956 revolution.

gotten the chief thing—humanism." But the ruling bureaucracy would listen to none of this, especially since humanism was spelled out to mean "introducing self-management in the factories and workers' democracy."

As the whole world knows, the next stage in the humanist struggle was not theory but action—the Hungarian Revolution.

The ruthless totalitarian machine which crushed that revolution bore the not-so-smiling faces of Khrushchev and Bulganin recently returned from their junkets in Burma, India, Malaysia and their talks to people there about freedom from colonialism!

It was then that the Russian Communists bore down on all humanists. *Kommunist* (No. 5, 1957) gave out the line: Leninism "needs no sort of 'humanization' nor any of the reforms proposed by the proponents of 'humanist socialism.'" By then, the ruling Polish Communist bureaucracy had accepted "the line" and the attack was launched against all "revisionists." Jerzy Mirowski, Politburo member wrote on the eve of the Writers' Congress: "All revisionists describe themselves as creative Marxists. There is only one Marxism; the one that guides the Party."

This Party attack had to be that precise because it was from Poland that humanism had emerged and inspired the Hungarian Revolution. Though the Poles themselves stopped short of revolution, they made some attempt to take a stand on principle after the crisis in Hungary. Thus, *Nova Cultura* of April 28th, 1957, stated:

"The Communist ideal demands the liberation of humanity—and of the individual within the framework of society—from alienation in all the domains of society. The aim is to obtain the real sovereignty of the masses, to destroy the division between those who are deprived of freedom and the ruling group which is not responsible to the people. The idea of Communism, of humanism put into life, is universal."

By 1959 the iron curtain was shut tight and the Third Party Congress of the Polish Party directed a good deal of its resolution against "the revisionists, fencing with pseudo-left wing phraseology... (that) pushed many honest but ideologically weak comrades into the ranks of dogmatists who with the help of demagogical chatter presented themselves as allegedly the only authentic defenders of Marxism and Communism."

On the last day of the 21st Congress of the Russian Communist Party (February 6th, 1959) their chief, M.B. Mitin—who bears the august title of "Chairman of the Board of the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge"—told us where to look if we were searching for true(!) humanism. "The magnificent and noble conception of Marx-Leninist socialist humanism" was in Khrushchev's Report! The rule "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em!" seemed to hold.² The hypocrisy was evident in the very next paragraph. Mitin hit out against all "revisionists" and especially against "Yugoslav revisionism."

"What is it if not apostasy, if not full retreat from Leninism, slandorously to claim as they do that the development of the Soviet State signifies 'a bureaucratic statist trend,' that the principle that the socialist state plays a decisive role in the building of socialism and communism is nothing but a 'pragmatic statist revision of Marxism.'"

1. Imre Nagy on Communism, "In Defense of the New Course," p. 49.

The reason this struck a raw nerve among the Russian Communists was not, however, due to theory, deviationist or otherwise, but because Tito knows the importance of the new Afro-Asian nations. He travels widely among the "neutral" countries and does so for the purpose of exposing Russia's role.

The question is—what does Tito propose in its stead? Whether state capitalism calls itself "Communist" or not, it has nothing more than private capitalism to sell. Both attempt to stop the new forces finding the path to immediate freedom.

2. This characterizes not only the Communists, but the Trotskyists too....The Communists have finally, after a delay of 32 years, brought out an English edition of Marx's *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* only to append to them some fantastic footnotes....Where Marx writes: "Communism as such is not the goal of human development—the form of human society," the Communists comment: "Under 'communism as such' Marx here means crude, equalitarian communism..." It is not Marx's alleged criticism of "equalitarian communism" that bothers today's Communists. What cuts to the quick is Marx's emphasizing not the nationalization of property, but the freedom of the individual. Thus his prophetic warning against State Communism: "We should especially avoid re-establishing society as an abstraction opposed to the individual. The individual is the social entity."

Hungary '56 recalled

Editor's note: The following article was sent to us by an active witness to the events in 1956.

The 40th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution marks a watershed event in the history of socialism. In a prophetic manner, the revolution signaled the beginning of the end of the Stalinist system. The ruling elites of the capitalist Western world have presented the Hungarian Revolution as directed against socialism, when just the opposite was true. It was a revolt against the state-capitalism of the "Soviet Union" and its satellites.

The events of October 1956 were prepared over a period of several years and initiated by members of the Communist Party itself when, by the early fifties, it became obvious that something had gone terribly wrong with the Russian Revolution. Milovan Djilas theorized that a "New Class" had emerged, centered around the personality cult of Stalin, Tito, Rakosi, Dimitrov, Dej and the like. Hundreds of progressive members of the Party who dared to criticize the system were put in jail. Many, like Prime Minister Laszlo Rajk, were tortured and executed by the ruling clique surrounding these "demi-gods."

THE STRIVING FOR a human version of the socialist ideals got a tremendous boost when Imre Nagy became prime minister in 1953. In his short tenure before the Rakosi clique deposed him, he acted as yeast in fermenting an increasingly revolutionary intellectual zeal, concentrated primarily in the circle that took its name from Petofi, the great Hungarian poet at the time of the 1848 revolutions. More and more open criticism of the excesses of Rakosi were heard. Even satirical plays appeared. This ferment reached its climax in the open revolution that erupted on Oct. 23, 1956, when the main preoccupation of the crowds was to chase down members of the hated secret police, and "Revolutionary Workers' Committees" were formed in the factories.

Hundreds of books could be written just about the 11-day period between Oct. 23 and the day Russian tanks rolled in on Nov. 4. While Imre Nagy issued an unheeded call for help to the Western world, soldiers, civilians and even children fought the tanks with whatever they had, but they were no match for the superior forces of the Russian army. After a few days and tens of thousands of casualties, the fighting was over. If we add the 150,000 dissidents who left Hungary, it is safe to say that Hungary lost close to a quarter million people.

The fact that right-wing elements, including former fascists returning quickly from Austria and West Germany, joined the fight against the Russian troops that intervened cannot change the fact that the aim of the revolution was not an effort to turn Hungary back to a capitalist society, but to direct the efforts of building socialism to a new path.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN that today, despite this hatred of the Stalinist system, the Hungarian people look back to the "cradle to grave security" they had then as a veritable "Shangri-la"? Today the conditions for employment by the foreign and "new" local corporations include: no union affiliation, a minimum wage of 60¢ an hour, no unemployment insurance and no subsidies for the health care, food, housing, education and transportation that had once been free. More than 50% of the population has fallen below the poverty line, 10% is addicted to alcohol, the unemployment rate is 30-40%, and Hungary is now the "suicide capital of the world."

While in prison, Imre Nagy said that when the masses turn to "humanism" it is not because they "want a return to capitalism...They want a people's democracy where working people are masters of the country and of their own fate, where human beings are respected, and where social and political life is connected with the spirit of humanism." But it was the visionary act of Raya Dunayevskaya—based, at one and the same time, on her deep, philosophic studies of Hegel, Marx and Lenin, and on the actual revolutionary struggles of the 1950s—that established Marxist-Humanism as the philosophy of continuous revolution for our age. In that sense the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 remains a beacon in our search for a human future.*

—Laszlo Gati

* It is significant that Raya Dunayevskaya's Archives have been added to the University Library in Budapest this year.

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

Inheritors of Althusser's vulgar materialism

Today, the battleground of ideas is rife with those reverting back to vulgar materialism versus those, especially cultural critics, trying to theorize their way out of the base/superstructure binary so dear to post-Marx Marxists. Cultural critics, in arguing their way out of culture as a reflection of an economic base, embroil themselves in the project of trying to transform consciousness through critiques of culture, or engage in the project of deconstructing the discursive realm where language does not communicate but deceives.

Cornel West calls this "prophetic criticism"; it seeks to demystify the representations of reality that construct our subjectivity and our consciousness. Here, superstructure not only reflects, but in a sense "creates"—that is, it determines our "subject positions" and our comprehension of reality.

By careful linguistic and/or mental maneuvers, many cultural critics attempt to theorize their way out of oppressive relations. But this method leaves no room for the notion of transcendence as immanent in the dialectic of our reality. Here, thought still does not escape the photocopy theory of knowledge because it is not credited with the ability to envision the new, a reality different from the one out of which it arose.

'CRITIQUE OF ALTHUSSER'

Raya Dunayevskaya's critique of Louis Althusser, published in the October News & Letters, shows how difficult it is to break the dominance of the vulgar materialist view of reality, even today. Althusser is often credited with introducing a more complex view of superstructure and ideology in Marx, but to Dunayevskaya his Marxism remained "vulgarily economist despite all its pretense to a non-economist approach."

For Althusser, ideology is not specific to capitalism, but the natural condition of humanity. It structures human consciousness in all modes of production, socialism included, and thus necessitates "theoretical labor" by intellectuals. This would mean that even in socialism and the struggle for it we need people (intellectuals, leaders, the Party, the State) to tell the masses the true meaning of reality because they are too saturated with "bourgeois reformist ideals."

As Althusser puts it in his essay "Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formation: Ideology and Ideological Struggle":

Marx and Lenin put us on guard on this point, in showing us that the economic and political practice of the proletariat was, by itself, incapable of producing the science of society, and hence the science of the proletariat's own practice, but was capable only of producing utopian or reformist ideologies of society. Marxist-Leninist science, which serves the objective interests of the working class...was pro-

duced by the practice of intellectuals possessing a very high degree of culture (Marx, Engels, Lenin) and 'introduced from without' into proletarian practice, which it then modified and profoundly transformed.

Some argue that at least Althusser recognized the importance of theoretical labor, but really he did not. He merely recognized the labor of the vanguard party. To Althusser, as distinct from ideology, is the product of intellectuals. What we have here is not philosophic mediation but rather a scientific mediator—and thought is still determined by the economic base, that is, capitalist production relations. Working class consciousness is contained by ideology, whereas intellectuals "with a high degree of culture" are able to demystify it.

Dunayevskaya answers Althusser by pointing out that the distinctive mark of Marxism is that "the worker was a thinking human being, a creative molder of history"—not just the bearer of social structures but the "bearer of the Idea of freedom." Althusser never got out of vulgar materialism because he never saw this—his anti-Hegelianism, anti-idealism, anti-humanism, manifests an intense vanguardism.

PHILOSOPHY AND ORGANIZATION

Today the popular reversion back to an explicitly vulgar understanding of materialism is a backlash against the excesses of the postmodernist focus on superstructure. This is seen, for example, in the new journal Red-Orange or even in John Torrence's new book *Karl Marx's Theory of Ideas* (1995), which tries to tackle the vulgar base/superstructure dichotomy and shows a sympathy for Hegelian Marxism—yet ultimately argues that the philosophic link between the early and late Marx was "realist and not idealist."

All of this is a manifestation of trying to hem in our new realities within the old duality of idealism and materialism which Marx's philosophy explicitly united as a "new Humanism." Althusser certainly makes clear the organizational ramification of separating idealism and materialism.



Raya Dunayevskaya's work on the dialectics of philosophy and organization is an attempt to work out in ever more "richer and concrete" transcendence the realization of philosophy as a subjectivity of transcendence in order to realize the unity of reason and reality, theory and practice, materialism and idealism. Just as Marx turned to dialectic method and transformed it in 1844, Raya plunged into dialectic method as a means of reconstituting Marx's new Humanism as a viable alternative for today.

MARX AND TRANSCENDENCE

Her focus on philosophy as Subject, on realizing the self-activity of Mind, the Self-Thinking Idea through the unity of philosophy and organization may strike some as a serious discontinuity with Marx. After all, Marx's critique of Hegel was over the dehumanization of the dialectic. In response to Hegel, Marx inserted the real corporeal human being standing with his/her feet planted firmly on earth, into the dialectic and thus transformed transcendence within alienation into transcendence as objective movement. As Dunayevskaya put it in a 1986 document: "To Marx it wasn't consciousness in itself developing outside of the human being; it was the human being itself who develops consciousness, and with it, creating a world that man shapes himself, not out of whole cloth." But, the very next sentence reads, "Marx's indebtedness to the Hegelian dialectic manifested itself in the very next work, the 'Theses on Feuerbach.' There Marx credits not Feuerbachian materialism but Hegelian idealism for having developed 'the active side in contradiction to materialism' of consciousness."

Even before 1844, in 1841, Marx had found himself in disagreement with Hegel; he saw in Hegel the failure to achieve the unity of reason and reality. But, Marx's answer to this diremption of thought and reality was not a turn to a vulgar concept of "reality" but rather to dialectic method which he put through a profound change. He singled out negation of the negation as the moving and creative principle of the dialectic of history itself. 1844 became his philosophic moment—the founding of a whole new way of thinking and being never before expressed in a systematic manner. What Dunayevskaya sought to work out throughout her life was how to strike a continuity with this new Humanism—how to "realize" it for new realities.

Dunayevskaya argued that working out the dialectics of philosophy and organization was the crucial determinant in realizing the unity of idealism and materialism, theory and practice, reason and reality for today. Only then can we truly displace the rule of vulgar materialism and post-Marx Marxism and create the ground on which the self-creativity of human history can unfold into what Marx called revolution-in-permanence. This remains an untrodden path in revolutionary history, but one that demands engagement by any interested in creating a truly new and human society.

—Maya Jhansi

New look at Louis Fraina (Lewis Corey) and American Marxism

Suddenly, in November 1918, a 26-year-old self-educated intellectual, the U.S.-born son of working class Italian immigrants in New York, emerged in the forefront of revolutionary politics in the U.S. His name was Louis Fraina, and he had been chosen by a group of mainly foreign-born socialists to write the lengthy introduction and editorial notes to *The Proletarian Revolution in Russia*, a 450-page book which made available for the first time in English many of the key writings of Lenin and Trotsky.*

In his introduction and commentary, Fraina not only hit out at the capitalist order and the imperialist war, but also declared boldly that "Bolshevism...is not a peculiar Russian product...it represents everywhere the revolutionary opposition equally to Capitalism and moderate, opportunistic Socialism." Fraina also pointed to the democratic soviets in Russia as "forms for the creation of a new type of government, which shall supersede the bourgeois political state."

These twin issues, 1) a break with the opportunism and compromise with imperialism and capitalism that had infected even Debsian socialism, and 2) an embrace of the new form of proletarian democracy, the soviets, were rallying points for thousands of American workers and intellectuals in the years immediately following 1917.

IMMIGRANTS, 'THE NEGRO QUESTION'

In her unpublished 1953 essay, "Our Organization," Raya Dunayevskaya noted that immigrants had brought

*See N. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, *The Proletarian Revolution in Russia* (The Communist Press: New York, 1922).

a new spirit to American socialism during this period.

Where Eugene Debs, although himself a Left and anti-war socialist, and certainly no opportunist, had nonetheless refused to break with the Second International after 1914, the immigrant socialists knew, Raya wrote, "that it was necessary to fight...the petty-bourgeois tendencies within the Marxist movement" (see *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, pp. 2042-2116).

Pushed by such ideas, the new American Communist Party concentrated its labor work not on the already unionized shops, but on the non-union sweatshops, part of, as Fraina noted repeatedly, the 80% of American workers who were not unionized. Young immigrant socialists, aware that Debs had not really attacked, wanted the Party to move closer to the Black masses.

Raya, herself an immigrant and a Young Communist during the 1920s, noted that the new line was that "the attitude to the Negro must be shown in life rather than in words" and "any member could, as a regular part of the agenda...bring up the guilty person on charges of white chauvinism...It was the first time the white members felt the Negro question instead of merely orating it." These revolutionary new beginnings were soon snuffed out, once Stalin took control of the international Communist movement in the late 1920s.

BUHLE ON FRAINA AND BOLSHEVISM

To many readers of News & Letters, the most exciting part of Paul Buhle's *A Dreamer's Paradise Lost: Louis C. Fraina/Lewis Corey (1892-1953) and the Decline of Radicalism in the U.S.* (Humanities Press, 1995), the first-ever detailed study of Fraina's life and work, will be the account of those revolutionary years, 1917-22.

Although Buhle brings this crucial period alive through a wealth of original sources, he is regretful of Fraina's move after 1917 to become "a full-fledged Bolshevik," going so far as to call this "his political doom" (p. 63), here seeming to side with Debsian eclecticism. This is rather surprising considering that Buhle's major intellectual mentor is C.L.R. James who so frequently advocated an "American Bolshevik Party."

In 1918, at Fraina's suggestion, a number of young revolutionaries joined the Debsian Socialist Party in order to force a split between the revolutionaries and the reformists. In an appeal to these youth, Fraina wrote that "the struggle for democracy as such can be waged only as an integral part of our generation's revolutionary struggle for socialism" (cited by Buhle, p. 74).

In the spring of 1919, Fraina placed first in the balloting for the National Executive Committee of the new U.S. Communist Party, ahead of many older and better-

known figures. The years 1919-21 saw upsurges by both labor and the Black masses, but sadly, as Buhle points out, Fraina himself did not link them together and "failed to see the logic in this parallel" (p. 83).

In 1920, Fraina traveled to Russia for the Second Congress of the Comintern, where he made important contributions to the debate on trade unions. Although Buhle does not mention it, Fraina also spoke there on Latin America, which he called "the colonial base of U.S. imperialism," criticizing the U.S. left which "paid no attention to the Latin American movement."

ENCOUNTER WITH LENIN, DIALECTICS

Drawing on Fraina's unpublished notes, Buhle offers a tantalizing account of his two meetings with Lenin: "In the first conversation, Lenin tried to convince Fraina of the need for American Communists to support a labor party in order to make contact with the masses; in the second, he spent hours stressing the importance of philosophy in the revolutionary movement" (p. 95).

There is no evidence in Fraina's subsequent writings that the second conversation on dialectics made any impression on him. By 1922, apparently because he was unable to accept Lenin's critique of ultra-leftism, Fraina resigned from his leading position in the Comintern.

Under the pen name Lewis Corey in the 1930s, he became one of America's best-known Marxist economists, but by now the radicalism of his youth had faded in favor of a more statist concept of socialism which brought him close to the politics of the Popular Front.

In the late 1930s, Corey, together with Sidney Hook, Meyer Schapiro, and other intellectuals, founded *The Marxist Quarterly*, a journal open to various tendencies. It folded after only three issues, a victim of the necessarily deep divisions produced by Stalin's Moscow Frame-Up Trials. Corey waited all the way until the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939 to make a public break with Stalinism, and then, like so many intellectuals of the period, drifted to the Right.

Buhle's biography of Fraina/Corey offers us a unique window into an extremely important chapter in the history of American Marxism, one in which many intellectuals, despite their commitment to the Russian Revolution, to labor, and to Marxist economic theory, were ultimately unable to meet the new challenges posed by the rise of fascism and Stalinism.

—Kevin Anderson

Kevin Anderson is author of *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism*.

NEWS & LETTERS

Vol. 41, No. 9

November 1996

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$2.50 a year (bulk order of 5 or more, 15¢ each) by News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312)663-0839. Fax (312)663-9069. Second class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Articles and letters are reprinted verbally if credited to "News & Letters."

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POLITICS, ELECTIONS AND THE AMERICAN MIND

Everybody knows that political campaigns are giant propaganda mechanisms. They are all about mind stealing. They are working on the American mind. It isn't just at election time. They always do a lot of hiding the truth. How else could they keep trying to tell us that our lives are either already getting better as the Democrats do, or would get better with them as the Republicans do? In this system?

**Mind intact
Chicago**

* * *

I have been listening to the Democrats and Republicans promising the voting public how they are going to cut taxes for small business. What does this mean to the working people of this country? I'll tell you what it means for labor: Someone has to pay the taxes. Big business doesn't pay taxes; they are on welfare. Small business is getting tax cuts. Only the working class is left out. This is nothing new; the worker, the producer of everything, has gotten the shaft ever since the birth of capitalism.

**Felix Martin
Whittier, Cal.**

* * *

Asking Black people to vote today is like asking the Jews to have voted under Hitler's constitution in Germany.

**Black man
Illinois**

* * *

Dole is wrong to think people are stupid. They saw pretty soon where we were going with Gingrich's "Contract on America." It's real life, not rhetoric, that makes the impact. It was the beating of the migrant workers in Riverside, Cal. that got the Latino civil rights march in Washington going.

**Journalist
Florida**

* * *

Recently, when there was an outbreak of disease—causing E. coli bacteria in the water, the authorities tried to blame it on leaky diapers of babies wading at beaches. The truth is they weren't testing the water the way they should. So they blamed it on the public. That's politics.

**Former water tester
Illinois**

* * *

Ralph Reed's rhetoric in supposedly deploring the burning of Black churches in the South is all the more disgusting because it is the atmosphere of hate and division his Christian Right has been working so hard to build in this country that bears the responsibility for them.

**Young educator
Illinois**

* * *

The "real" story behind all the California propositions seldom gets known outside California. Take the two health initiatives—214 sponsored by SEIU and 216 by the California Nurses Association. The nurses started theirs first, but Sweeney wanted his own instead of just supporting the nurses. Now both may lose. The nurses in particular are concerned with patient care, but the way the proposition got written up, it reads as though they only want to protect their own jobs. It's a sad story.

**Concerned voter
Berkeley, Cal.**

* * *

I never voted in my country, Barbados, nor here. I see politicians are all the same: it is all about lying. They come around only at election time and promise you everything. Then you never see them again. They only take care of the rich. There is nothing for the poor man. My mother had a saying: "I don't build ground for the monkeys to play on."

**Barbadian worker
New York**

* * *

Politicians remind me of "snake oil" salesmen. They have the answers to whatever ails you.

**Mark Jones
Chicago**

* * *

I understand Lyndon Larouche was booted off the stage at Chavis and Farrakhan's National Political Convention in St. Louis. I don't understand why the people let Farrakhan speak up there. Larouche, Farrakhan and Perot are all in the same boat—they all need a dose of the kind of reality N&L writes about.

**Retired Black steelworker
Memphis**



If a picture is worth a thousand words, the enclosed front page of the New Yorker says a mouthful. If I had drawn it, I would have turned it into a "Dance Macabre" on the heads of the disenfranchised and poor masses of voters.

**Symphony conductor
Canada**

ALTHUSSER AND EBERT VS. MARX

The October "Marxist-Humanist Archives" column said that Althusser was really attacking Marx's Hegelianism, because Hegel haunts the apologists for the State. We might add he haunts the apologists for the vanguard party, even if not now affiliated with a State, and haunts intellectuals who want to avoid the idea of revolution. Althusser's own party worked hard to thwart revolution in France in 1968. Whether it was the concept Althusser championed of an "epistemological break" between the young and "mature" Marx or his campaign (decisively refuted in Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism) to cover up the actual break in Lenin's thought stemming from Lenin's 1914-15 study of Hegel, the point is the same: to delete the Hegelian dialectic from Marxism.

**Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis**

* * *

Teresa Ebert, in her denunciation of Laurie Cashdan's critique of her recent book (October 1996), wrote: "Individuals, for Marx, always participate in all their relations inevitably as bearers (traeger) of particular class-relations and interests." She took this from the Preface to the first edition of Capital, vol. 1.

However, Marx wrote there specifically about his treatment of capitalists and landowners. He meant to analyze, not individual capitalists' greed or lack of morals, but the "laws of capitalist production." Ebert added to her out-of-context quote the words "always," "all" and "inevitably" in an attempt to reduce the complex relationship between forces for revolution to a single dimension.

**B. Ann Lastelle
Chicago**

* * *

Althusser's essay on "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus" is still considered by many Marxists to be an original "supplement" to Marx. What makes him attractive is his criticism of the illusion of freedom under bourgeois society and its institutions. Unfortunately, Althusser is not "supplementing" Marx, but closing the door to the comprehension of his original philosophy. Althusser treats the Hegelian Absolutes as if they were just another illusion to chain the revolutionary subject to capitalist ideology. But in rejecting Marx's humanist philosophy Althusser sacrifices the possibility of overcoming the illusion, thus condemning humanity to eternally live under its sway. Though Althusser no longer commands a great following, his legacy is still weighing heavily on the minds of many Marxists.

**Cyrus Noveen
Los Angeles**

* * *

I got a good laugh out of Teresa Ebert's conversion to "historical materialism." In the late eighties when Ebert was a professor making a name for herself as the "bearer" of post modernism at Northern Illinois University, I was in the Marxist-Humanist Forum, a group of undergraduates who held weekly study groups of Marx, Hegel and Dunayevskaya. We organized speaking events for a Black youth from L.A., a retired worker whose history goes back to building the CIQ and a homeless youth who worked at the Delmonte plant. We also sold News & Letters at local plant gates.

Unfortunately Ebert's rejection of
Unfortunately Ebert's rejection of

Readers' Views

Marx as a "modernist" managed to disorient a number of radical students. Despite her current "profound" discovery that materialism is at the center of Marx's thought, I am skeptical when I hear her lecture others about being bourgeois.

**Jim Guthrie
Chicago**

U.S. FUNDAMENTALISM

Even if Louis Farrakhan's fundamentalism is removed from the "spirit" of the Million Man March, which is then linked to the Civil Rights Movement (as in Spike Lee's Get on the Bus), this view of Black history would still show severe limitations. It skims over the retrogression that has occurred from the high point of the Civil Rights Movement because its internal contradictions were not worked out.

Because retrogression is avoided, the lack of the historic-philosophic vision of a new society is compensated by the ideological conflict of visions. In the polluted moral atmosphere today, removing the pull of Farrakhan from the Million Man March fails to take up all that is at stake.

**Steven
Los Angeles**

* * *

When the Promise Keepers (PK) came to Memphis you could see how similar they are to Farrakhan's Million Man March. Both are steeped in fundamentalism, both carry on about "atonement," both tout the "sanctity of the family"—by which they mean the patriarchal family where women definitely are, or must become, subordinate. PK leader Bill McCartney, while a raving heterosexist, is no fool. Opportunistically he made the Memphis meeting a call for "racial conciliation." He knows most African Americans are not Muslims, but Christians. Since what they are saying is almost identical, I think McCartney is going to give Farrakhan a run for the reactionary money.

**Feminist
Tennessee**

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Oprah Winfrey had a show on date rape where there was a panel of survivors alongside Camille Paglia. (She's an anti-feminist intellectual who claims to be a feminist and has the simultaneous position that date rape doesn't happen and that if it does, it's the woman's fault for not being strong enough).

Woman after woman kept arguing that it's not about toughening women up to protect themselves (as if men are destined to remain pigs), it's about ending men's thought that they have ownership over women's bodies. And when Paglia kept using the phrase "white middle-class women," a Black woman from the audience got up to say that ALL women get raped and that behavior has nothing to do with it.

**S.B.
Chicago**

Echos of Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks and countless others in history were heard on Oct. 30 at a meeting of WEP Workers Together! (the new organization of welfare recipients in the "Work Experience Program") when the participants, mostly Black women, declared: "We're well, we're alive, we won't take this bull."

**Sheila
New York**

* * *

Last month, "New Reader, California" asked how the negation of the negation gives "material (including intellectual) support to women's self organization...?" I see the negation of the negation, a part of the Hegelian dialectic as the process of confronting your objective world, exposing those contradictions that you experience in your daily life and then linking your individual struggle to a more universal struggle, i.e., total human liberation. For me, the first negation might be struggling as a lesbian against sexism and heterosexism. The second negation is reaching the more universal struggle of developing totally new human relations.

**Sharon Cannery
Berkeley, Cal.**

* * *

On Halloween morning over 40 protesters let Operation Rescue (OR) know that southern women will control our bodies and abortion clinics in Memphis will stay open. Women and men from WAC, News and Letters, Planned Parenthood, BiGala and others confronted OR California/West—a group so despicable that Flip Benham, the leader of National OR, expelled them because they fraternize with the murderous fanatics who signed the "Justifiable Homicide" Covenant which encourages the murder of abortion providers.

**Terry Moon
Memphis**



**BOSNIA
HITS
HOME**

One thing that brought my attention to Bosnia was "Schindler's List." After I saw that movie and all the things that were going on at that time, it hit home to me that this is still going on right now in Bosnia-Herzegovina when they talk about "ethnic cleansing." What is that but what the Nazis were doing back in that time? That's when I started wearing a Star of David. That was my way of saying: I see what happened then, and this is a constant reminder to me not to let those kinds of things go unchallenged. I refuse to close my eyes to that.

**African-American student
Memphis**

FOR BESSIE: CELEBRATING A REVOLUTIONARY LIFE

It was a shock to learn of the death of Bessie Gogol in August. It is easy to say Bessie was a women's liberationist before the movement came on the scene, because she was; and it is easy to say she was a freedom fighter before that term entered the world's consciousness, because she was this, too. Above all else, Bessie had a passion for making the American revolution and for Marxist-Humanism as the Idea that would get us there. Even at the last Convention she attended in 1994, when age was catching up with her, she attempted to make the youth understand the importance of having African-American youth as members. I'm sorry that her dream did not

come true in her lifetime, but when it does, her life and ideas will be recognized as an act of world history.

**Angela Terrano
Prague**

* * *

My special memory of Bessie is of the enthusiasm with which she greeted newcomers to Marxist-Humanism, including how she encouraged me to speak at my first Convention about the experiences which had brought me there. Unfortunately, it resulted in me giving a talk that ran well over time and having to ask for an extension.

**Richard Bunting
Oxford, England**

BESSIE GOGOL (1900-1996)
Celebrate the revolutionary life and times of Bess Gogol in a memorial gathering sponsored by the Los Angeles News and Letters Committee.
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 23 6:30 PM
Echo Park United Methodist Church, 1226 N. Alvarado
(north of Sunset, side door), Los Angeles

THE MIDDLE EAST IN CRISIS

Your grasp of the geography, the politics and the feelings on the ground shown in your lead on the Israel-Palestine events (October N&L) makes me wonder how you did so well-informed from your distance. But the part that was the best for me to read was your assessment of the progress that had been made since the Oslo accords. Despite our criticism of these accords, there is no doubt they brought about a shift in the zeitgeist. I agree with your conclusion that the people are more eager for peace than are our leaders, and I was encouraged by the insight that "the Oslo accords have introduced a new reality which threatens to take matters far beyond the confines envisioned by the rulers."

Gila Svirsky
Jerusalem

I don't really understand the relationship between religion and the wars in the Middle East, but I thought it very important that Peter Wermuth related the struggle in Israel and Palestine to the Bosnian struggle for a multiethnic society. There is greater and greater racial polarization in this country. Racism is turning people into enemies who would otherwise be allies.

Women's liberationist
Berkeley, Cal.

With the recent outbreak of fighting in Jerusalem, it is time to talk about the taboo topic of religion. By this I do not mean the specific content of each religion, but religion itself as an attitude to the world. Ethnic strife, whether in Bosnia or in the Mideast, is not "caused" by religion, but finding a way out does demand a plunge into the seemingly labyrinthine question of religious alienation. When theory fails, that is where people return—to religion. It is part of the void in thought which allows for ethnocentrism and genocide and for all other sorts of counter-revolution.

It can no longer be left as a special, personal, category. Two or more contradictory ideas, the content of each religion, cannot lie side by side without conflict. These continuing crises just serve to underline the total inadequacy of reli-



gion to express or explain the human condition. The present crisis in Jerusalem is not really "about" religion, but about very worldly concerns, and this requires that we lift the mystical religious veil and make the leap from religionism to genuine humanism.

Malcolm
Bay Area

It's one thing to speak of the Palestinian people who have been driven off their lands as having a right to a homeland and a right to self-determination, as well as the state of Israel having a right to exist, but isn't it an abstract shibboleth to speak about the "national aspirations of Palestinians and Jews"? Whose "national aspirations" are being spoken of: Arafat's, Netanyahu's, Sharon's, Hamas', Islamic Fundamentalists', Orthodox Jews', Palestinian or Israeli workers', capitalists'?

I.R.
New York

The articles on the Middle East were impressive in giving a concise historic background which shows why everything is happening. You don't get that in the bourgeois press. Instead, you get only a picture of general chaos and random suffering.

Supporter
California

Every crusader who has occupied the Holy Land to "liberate" it—Roman, Ottoman, British Empire—has ended up on the garbage heap of history. Policies of racial superiority based on biblical "rights" cannot be upheld by military might and terror. Only accepting the mutual right of Israelis and Palestinians can possibly bring peace to the region.

Gyorgi
Vancouver

LABOR TODAY

World Trade Center security guards—members of SEIU Local 32B-32J—were locked out last March 1 by the Port Authority (PA) of New York and New Jersey. Most of us were here before, during and in the aftermath of the fateful terrorist bomb attack. We rose to the occasion, providing professional security.

This lockout is an attempt to bust our union and they justify it by saying it is due to saving money, downsizing. How can that be justified when they are spending \$26 million for art work and unnecessary helicopter jaunts for their executives? We were rejaunted by non-union workers at half the wages and no benefits or union. We went to arbitration and the PA was held in contempt; they did not even bother to show up.

The public and labor in general can support us by calling Gov. Pataki, (212) 417-2100; George Marlin, Exec. Director of the PA, (212) 435-7271. In unity there is strength.

Security guards
New York

I've worked at a lot of temporary agencies. One agency had me working for Federal Express, whose employees think it is a haven for good benefits and money. But the agency I worked for had their own little strict code. We couldn't be five minutes late more than twice or absent more than once in a 45-day period without being terminated. All for \$6 an hour with no sick days, no health benefits, really no benefits. They want you to get all your hours in. That way they get more money. These strict rules weren't imposed by the Federal Express employees. It was oppressive and there's no job security whatsoever.

Taken for granted
Tennessee

Ron Brokmeyer's essay (October N&L) suggests there is a "new stage of the socialization of labor" today. Is teamwork a new phenomenon that breeds revolt? Perhaps here and there, but on that basis can we claim we've reached a new

stage? Is there anything particularly revolutionary about a health care worker counterposing an "inclusive" idea of the team to management's idea that "excludes" both workers and decent health care? Brokmeyer says "the best of the principle of inclusiveness is overcoming racism, which is fundamental to the structure of American capitalism." I work every day and I can't see any organized effort on the part of American workers to end racism and rattle the very structure of capitalism. I don't mean that a worker's attitude to team concept is unimportant, but if it doesn't send the capitalist scurrying for cover, what is the point of singling it out as a new stage?

Mitch Weerth
Bay Area

Value does not come from computers or well-dressed bankers, but from what workers do with their hands. It's important for us to know how much value comes from us and how unfair it is that the people who work the hardest are the lowest paid.

Latina
New York City

NEWS & LETTERS

WHO READS N&L?

I am interested in learning more about your views and ideas. My participation in the Left goes back to the years 1980 and after in Iran. I was involved in the organization Peykar. I was also involved in the labor movement and helped organize many demonstrations. I was in prison for two years, and my serious interest in Marxist philosophy unfortunately of discussions in prisons. Unfortunately, Farsi publications of Marxist philosophy are very few. Abroad, I have been able to study some works on Marxist philosophy. I'm looking forward to reading your publications.

Iranian activist
Australia

Ed. note: For Marxist-Humanist material in Farsi and other languages send for a free literature catalog.

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BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today**
1988 edition. New author's introduction \$17.50
- Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao**
1989 edition. New author's introduction \$14.95
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution**
1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich \$12.95
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** (1996 edition) \$15.95
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** \$8.50
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**
Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."
..... \$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

BY CHARLES DENBY

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

BY KEVIN ANDERSON

- Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study**
First full-length treatment of Lenin's studies of Hegel.
..... \$15.95

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Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby \$2
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South Central CIA-crack connections

Los Angeles—Over the past month there has been a mass outpouring of protest from the Los Angeles Black community over the exposure in the press of how the CIA attempted to fund the Nicaraguan Contras in the 1980s. They were shipping in crack-cocaine for profit in order to buy guns for an illegal war in Nicaragua against the Sandinista government who the Reagan administration saw as a threat to democracy in the U.S.

At a meeting I attended, sponsored by the Malcolm X Grassroots Association, a Nicaraguan man spoke about the CIA's activities in Nicaragua as "a tragedy for my country and for yours. Oliver North and others raised millions of dollars to kill Nicaraguans and scar this country." The news has touched every family in the Black and Latino inner city of Los Angeles. It has become an exposed nerve that has been picked. It had been rumored on the streets for years that "We don't have boats or planes to transport this drug to South Central L.A. from South America, it must be an outside force, the white man." But now the facts have become clear.

The economic reality of South Central, Watts, and Compton is that unemployment is at about 50% or higher for Black youth. Industries like Goodyear, Firestone, GM left town 10-15 years ago. Smaller companies lay hidden behind tall gates with barbed wire and no windows. Many of these jobs, almost 95%, go to immigrant workers, the other 5% to white bosses, "the brains."

This conspiracy upon the inner city is not alone this highly addictive and cheap "high" (escape), but unemployment, exclusion from a job. The only money around is drug money to poison the one who buys it, as well as the seller who sells to a friend, a neighbor, their homie. The feeding frenzy of poverty is a capitalist conspiracy.

There is the inevitable prison time that follows for those who smell it or sell it. California has a big boom economy for new prisons. In the 1980s there were about ten penitentiaries in California, but today there are around 30. Sentencing ratios, when it comes down to crack versus powder cocaine, are about 100 to 1. The difference in convictions and sentences is like night and day, Black and white, when it comes to who uses it and who goes to prison.

A speaker for the Malcolm X Grassroots Association stated that "we have to be willing to fight internal and external enemies within the community. But there is something wrong here when the state puts all of its money into the police department to fight drugs, and not into drug treatment. Although 70% of the cocaine use is in the white community, 80% of the war on crime is

fought in the Black community. There is something very wrong here. We need to fight the human rights struggle. We need the right to be treated as human beings."

—Gene Ford

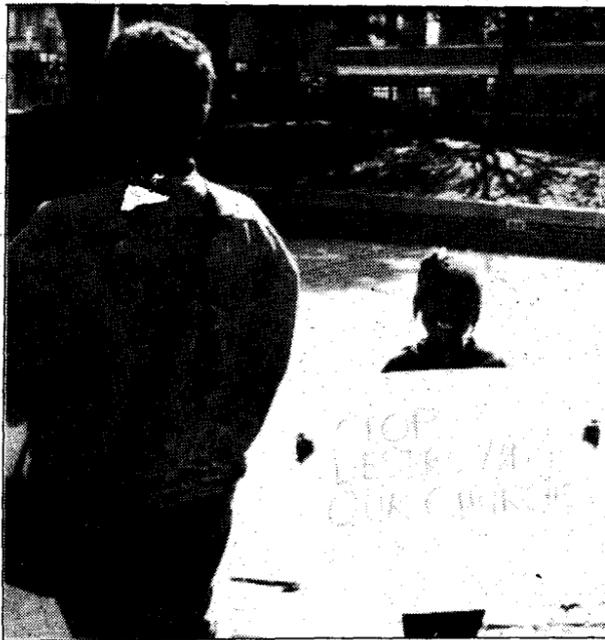
Los Angeles—There have been several very large demonstrations since the information about the CIA-crack connection became public. Several of these demonstrations had well over 3,000 in attendance. All the Black politicians are jumping on the bandwagon and all the white politicians are saying it "couldn't be true, the CIA wouldn't do that!!!"

At one rally held at King-Drew Medical Center, sponsored by the Brother Crusade, all the Black politicians were in attendance. The most powerful speaker was a young Black man named Mark Morrison from Inglewood (a Black community in Los Angeles); he was the last speaker and they tried to rush him off but he wouldn't be silenced. He spoke about his life in a Black ghetto, of how the police always harassed Black men. He spoke of a friend of his who was stopped, handcuffed, taken to jail and thrown in a cell; all of this without probable cause and while he was experiencing a sickle cell attack which almost killed him.

Mark felt that the drugs which were brought into his community were being used and sold because the young men and women felt there was no way out of their life in the ghetto. No jobs were available and no matter where they went, the police followed them. He felt he had to tell us about this so we would know the truth and help to change things.

—Judy Tristan

March assails burnings



Young demonstrator was one of many at Chattanooga, Tenn., march on Nov. 2 against the wave of church burnings in the South as well the torching of two homes owned by Black activists engaged in struggles against discrimination in the Chattanooga bus company and the school board.

Legal lynching in Miss.

A Madison County, Miss. district attorney named John Kitchens is seeking the judicial lynching of Azikiwe Kambule, a 17-year-old South African native. Azi was born in the former apartheid Black township of Soweto. Two years ago he moved with his parents to Jackson, Miss., after his mother won a scholarship to Jackson State University.

All through Azi's stay in America he did well in his classes, even though like many children in Soweto, he missed numerous days of instruction on account of school boycotts in protest of apartheid.

According to police reports, Azi was riding in a car driven by Santonio Berry on Jan. 25, 1996. While cruising around Hinds County, Berry spotted a car being driven by Pam McGill, 31. Berry followed McGill until she pulled into her apartment building's parking lot and forced her into the passenger seat of her vehicle. He then ordered Azi to get in the back seat.

Berry drove into neighboring Madison County. He took McGill deep into the woods and fired two shots into her body. Azi was arrested one week later. Even though he was little more than a bystander in the crime, and has no criminal record, prosecutors are seeking the death penalty.

Azi receiving a fair trial in this racially biased community is unlikely. The prosecutor bragged to a local paper how he was a force behind getting the trial moved from predominantly Black Hinds County to increase the chances of getting a death sentence.

Stephen Hawkins, executive director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, stated: "It is terribly ironic that a child like Azi Kambule could survive some of the most turbulent years of apartheid, only then to face the death penalty in Mississippi."

The capitalist system with its corruption, incompetence, discrimination and poverty is about to commit a horrendous crime of premeditated vengeance against a human being—"all in the name of justice." Those who want to help save Azi are asked to send letters of protest and tax-deductible donations to ensure he gets proper legal representation: NCADP/Save Azi Now!, 918 F. Street N.W., Ste 601, Washington, DC 20004. —D.A. Sheldon

Black/Red View

Clinton and Dole's 'dirty little secret'

by John Alan

On the first day of October, during the final month of the presidential election campaign, the bipartisan "Welfare Reform Bill" went into effect. Both Clinton and Dole gushed that "welfare reform" happened because of their joint political efforts. But they did not dwell on the fact that their "welfare reform" has nothing to do with helping welfare recipients out of poverty, but instead was the implementation of a political maneuver to cut the welfare rolls by introducing new punitive bureaucratic controls over the lives of welfare recipients.

For the first time states have broad powers in determining who is eligible for welfare and under what conditions they can get it. In other words, welfare stipends will cease to be a response to human needs, but will be doled out according to the political ambitions of local politicians and the prevailing morals and racist attitudes of local communities. For example: a welfare department in Florida is proposing that welfare recipients must pass a urine drug test to qualify for welfare. In California Governor Wilson, who built a now-waning political career on his opposition to educating children of illegal immigrants in public schools, immediately took advantage of the new welfare law to deny welfare support for prenatal medical care for poor immigrant mothers.

REGULATING THE POOR, ATTACKING LABOR

The Clinton/Dole "welfare reform" opens a door for the states to compete for larger block grants of welfare money if they can sharply reduce their welfare caseloads. Thus, many states have opted to cut the new federal five-year limit on welfare to two or three years. In Arizona, no adult can receive welfare for more than 24 months in a five year period. Florida has a welfare limit of no more than 24 months in any 60-month period.

Other states have cooked up a host of gimmicks to reduce welfare caseloads, from shipping welfare recipients to jobs outside of their state to paying businesses to train welfare recipients, to offering tax credits to employers if they hire welfare recipients.

If many of these state plans are implemented, they will mean nothing less than a reduction of welfare caseloads without making the slightest change in the existing high level of poverty in this country, especially among African Americans living in the inner cities.

Of course, the use of these kinds of draconian methods to statistically reduce the welfare rolls punishes the poor in the same spirit that 19th century capitalism once did, when it drove the poor to "workhouses" to work hard to support their poverty-ridden lives.

"Welfare reform" is not only trying to impose upon welfare recipients a form of compulsory labor, it also attempts to introduce welfare-controlled labor into a trade union. This happened last September during the contract negotiations between New York City's Transit Authority and the Transit Worker's Union. The Transit Authority persuaded the union's president, Willie James, to give up 500 union cleaning jobs to welfare recipients. When the Transit Authority insisted that the minimum wage welfare recipients couldn't be union members, opposition in the union stalled the idea.

This attempt to reduce union wage jobs to minimum wage jobs in New York City reveals that so-called "welfare reform" is an attack upon the standard of living of the entire American working class.

STINGING LASH OF 'MORALITY'

Tom Wicker, former New York Times columnist, wrote in his book *The Tragic Failure* that "the white backlash of the last several years and issues such as affirmative action, poverty, crime, unemployment and welfare have made race the subtext for almost all political debates — the 'dirty little secret' of American politics."

Wicker stated a historic truth about the nature of American politics. It is indeed dirty, but its racism is hardly a secret. For example, Reaganism gained political ascendancy by pushing back the gains of the Civil Rights Movement under the "moral/racist" banner of exposing Black welfare mothers allegedly getting enough money from welfare to own Cadillacs.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton, unlike Reagan, went directly to the Blacks in Memphis and told them how amoral their community was. He stood in the same church where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his last sermon in support of the sanitation workers, and talked about unwed Black mothers on welfare, violent Black crimes in the streets and the widespread use of drugs. All these social evils, according to Clinton, stood in the way of economic recovery and he urged African Americans to be more moral than the white community.

Clinton's 1993 speech in Memphis was directed not just at his Black audience, but to the white middle class. He wanted that class to know that he was a "New Democrat," who could separate himself from the political interests of poor African Americans.

There is no question that the Clinton/Dole "welfare reform" will make the lives of the poor more miserable. It will not end poverty in America. Most certainly, new political struggles will emerge to beat back the drastic cuts in welfare. However, what is on the historic agenda is not a restoration of welfare but the creation of a new kind of society in which the social production of goods for human needs does not automatically create poverty.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

submit voluntarily to the servitude of God by becoming the slave of another person, thereby learning obedience and humility, which are becoming of a slave. Reciprocity (*al-mu'awadah*) here rules that if a free person refuses to become the slave of God, he may be subjugated and made the slave of a slave of God, in fair and just retribution." That was written by Ustadh Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, a liberal Sudanese Islamic scholar.

What the Qur'an does not forbid it permits. It accepts, but supposedly regulates, slavery. "It...recognizes concubinage...urges, without actually commanding, kindness to the slave...and recommends, without requiring, his liberation by purchase or manumission."

What this means in the context of Sudan is that the current slave trade is justified on religious and moral grounds. (See the August-September News & Letters for my article on slavery in the Sudan.) There is no contradiction between beliefs and actions for the Muslim *murahaleen* who capture and enslave Dinka. Nor is there a moral dilemma for Muslim traders who buy and sell their "lost" pagan brethren. Nor is there any justifiable reason for the Islamic fundamentalist rulers to emancipate the enslaved.

Muslims believe further that the Qur'an is the literal word of God delivered by God's last messenger on earth, the Prophet Mohammed. A true Muslim and a true Muslim society must regulate all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the principles of Islam. This includes the mosque and the state. Therefore, Muslims are bound by the word of God to carry out the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the interpretation of Islamic laws known as Shari'a).

Shari'a has been advocated by the fundamentalist NIF, and both the ruling Umma and DUP parties. Under Shari'a, the Southern population, which is primarily Christian and animist, would have few rights. "Shari'a classifies people in terms of their religious beliefs and apports civil and political rights accordingly." Muslims would have the full rights of citizenship. Christians and Jews, *Ahl al-Kitab*, People of the Book, may or may not be offered a compact called *dhimma* in which they could enjoy security of person and property. But they would have to pay a special tax called *jiziah*. They would also suffer certain civil disqualifications. An animist, considered an unbeliever, would have no rights whatsoever. This strips most southerners of citizenship rights.

Shari'a thus creates a pyramid-like social structure akin to a form of religious apartheid. At the top are Muslims, then Christians. At the bottom are animists, considered non-believers. Islamic fundamentalism is the ideology that has created this edifice under which the southern Sudanese suffer.

—Robert Reed

Rage of the poor promise shaky second term for Clinton

(Continued from page 1)

country wound up with Clinton remaining as president and a Congress in a slightly reduced Republican majority amounts to Gingrichism with a better face.

WHERE IS THE OUTRAGE?

The low turnout was not a question of apathy which Dole in particular railed against the week before the election. The very day he demanded to know "where is the outrage?" the Black youth of St. Petersburg, Fla. showed the world exactly where and how volatile the outrage is when they exploded after white police officers killed still another Black teenager. It was the sixth police shooting this year in St. Petersburg and came just one week after another shooting in the same area. It took three days to quell the rebellion.

Florida is not the only place where youth were serving notice they will no longer tolerate the rampant police brutality that pervades this land, North and South, East and West, in small towns and large cities alike. In the same week as the Florida eruption, there was not only a demonstration against police brutality in Chicago, but also in the small town of Leland, Miss. After a crowd of 450 people marched to the police station to demand answers to the shooting of a Black man, the mayor declared a curfew, and 30 officers of the Highway Patrol were called to line Main Street before the crowd was assured that the U.S. Dept. of Justice would look into the case. (See page 11 for stories also from Los Angeles, New York, and Joliet, Illinois).

It was in St. Petersburg, moreover, that one of the signs carried by the youth made a global connection in demanding: "Stop the genocide!"

During the entire campaign neither Dole nor Clinton even pretended to address the outrage of the Black community that simmers so close to the surface. That is, neither addressed it, except to attempt to contain it by 1) vying to be the strongest proponent for "law and order," and 2) criminalizing an entire generation of Black youth. But just as coldly, neither so much as uttered a single syllable about the impending human disaster in Central Africa.

Four nations, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, face a situation of such unimaginable proportions that relief organizations have been warning it will dwarf the Goma death toll of two years ago.

On the eve of the election, Barnett Rubin, of the Council of Foreign Relations in New York put it bluntly, "You just aren't going to get the U.S. President focusing on this at this moment."

That does not mean Clinton can be expected to focus on it after the election. The truth is that the West has been indifferent to Africa ever since the Cold War ended, an indifference to genocide extended by the U.S. responses to the slaughter in Bosnia.

The complete disregard of an impending disaster in Africa showed the extent to which both candidates were determined to maintain total silence during the campaign on any matter concerning foreign relations, about which they thought very much alike. The silence will not, however, make the multitude of international crises lying in wait go away, any more than Clinton telling us that we are all better off than we were "four years ago" can cover up the grim economic reality in the U.S. today.

That grim reality is the relentless "downsizing" spelled out in continuing layoffs and wage cuts for the American people. The very week before the election, revised figures released by the Labor Department showed that, far from declining, the number of people who lost their jobs had increased in the middle of the decade.

According to the Council on International and Public Affairs, if the jobless rate were adjusted for part-time workers and those who want to work but have given up on looking, the number of jobless in the U.S. would be 14.6 million and the jobless rate would be 11.4% (more than twice the official unemployment rate of 5.6%).

Most significantly, the rate would be 2% higher still if it included the vast American prison population which

reached 1.6 million last year as more and more of our unemployed youth, especially Black and Latino, are being warehoused in the new prisons this country has been building at unprecedented rates.

CHRISTIAN COALITION IN WAIT

Far from the American people basking in a "feel good era," the economic anxiety that pervades the land is palpable. It translated into votes for Clinton only because the American workers saw over the last two years how far back to pre-union, Depression-era conditions Dole and Gingrich's agenda intended to take them. Yet never has it been more evident that no candidate was seen as offering a way out of the morass of political, economic, and social crises confronting us.

Precisely because of this situation the ultra reactionary Christian Right has found its chance to grow and has become a serious threat to the freedom forces struggling against the retrogression that Reaganism set in motion in the 1980s, when it vowed to shape America well into the 21st century. That is what we are now seeing come to pass. So alarming is the speed with which the Right has been moving that in the past two years that a "Christian Left" has raised its voice to fight them, organizing itself as the Interfaith Alliance.

New immigrant militancy



Washington, D.C.—The first ever national demonstration of Latinos drew 50,000 people from all over the country here Oct. 12, to celebrate being Latino and to protest poverty and discrimination in the U.S.

Put on without the support of large organizations, the Latino and Immigrants' Rights March brought together Chicanos whose families have lived here for centuries, Puerto Ricans whose families have lived here for decades, political refugees from the Central American revolutions, and recent economic refugees from Mexico and every country in South America and the Caribbean.

Held on Columbus Day—known to Latinos as the Day of the Beginning of the Invasion of America—the mood of the march was indignant. "Basta Ya!" (Enough!) was the cry, enough of scapegoating immigrants for all the problems here, enough of "Gingrich balancing the budget on the backs of our children."

Plans for the march began two years ago with the protests in California over anti-immigrant Proposition 187, and the need to protest became urgent with the recent rash of state and federal anti-immigrant laws that followed. The marchers shouted, "We're not immigrants, we're indigenous" (to this continent), and "We are here and we're not leaving!"

Signs proclaimed, "If we were good enough to build this country, we are good enough to get equal rights," and "We paid for our rights with our sweat and blood." About the "English only" laws, people pointed out, "There are parts of the U.S. where Spanish has been spoken for hundreds of years. Look at the names: El Paso, San Antonio, California, Colorado."

There were banners and demonstrators with ski masks in support of the Zapatistas in Mexico, and newspapers about that continuing struggle. Many people wore their national dress or waved flags and banners.

The demands of the march included: amnesty for undocumented immigrants, a minimum wage of seven dollars an hour, support for affirmative action, a halt to police brutality, free public education for all through college, and expansion of health services. The march was largely a grass-roots effort. Many groups did not endorse it, or did so only at the last minute.

Yet contradictions were evident on the rally stage. La Raza, which called for a stronger border patrol, was invited to speak before it even endorsed the march. Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, and the Democratic Party politicians present, tried to channel the new consciousness and indignation into electoral politics, specifically, support for Clinton.

On top of that, the many union delegations present were plastered with Clinton-Gore signs—this, while Clinton has been signing the most repressive anti-immigrant legislation in years! There seemed to be a real schizophrenia between the leaders, whose rhetoric ended in a whimper of support for Clinton, and the mass of the marchers, many of them workers and youth who had spent days on buses to get there, and who were demanding something now.

A new generation of U.S. youth, who came in solidarity from all over the country and a small presence of African Americans Caribbean Americans, Asians and Irish—these were the many signs of possible new beginnings in pan-Latino and pan-immigrant solidarity, activity and thought.

—N&L Committees participants

What is frightening is the extent to which the Christian Right has moved far beyond the "poor-white" Bible Belt stereotype associated with conservative, religious movements in the past. Ralph Reed's Christian Coalition, with Pat Robertson as its figurehead, has more than tripled in the last few years to 1.7 million members who include lawyers, doctors and business executives and who communicate by e-mail and fax machines.

They have been increasingly influencing local elections from school boards to governorships. They kept a lower profile in the Republican Party this year because they are looking ahead to take over the Republican Party via the "grassroots" for the next election. Generally careful to present himself as "reasonable" and "reasonable" (a pose the media has helped him maintain), Reed recently let the cat out of the bag in one interview when he suddenly and angrily declared, "We no longer will be the lapdogs for the Republican Party."

He is counting on drumming up the most reactionary tendencies in the country. It is why the most important election returns to watch this year were not the presidential one but the local ones, including no less than 93 initiatives in 20 states, and the decisions on who would control the House and the Senate. There the serious contradictions the freedom forces are confronting in this country are glaringly evident.

THE BATTLE AHEAD

The fate of California Proposition 209 to overturn affirmative action is among the most significant. Its passage cannot be blamed only on the enormous amount of money poured into the campaign by its proponents, or on the Orwellian language they used, daring to call it a "Civil Rights" initiative "against discrimination."

That so many African-American, and Latino voters rejected it, and yet it won, means that the white vote for its passage was enormous. That does not mean that there were not a large number of young white men seen at the anti-209 demonstrations, or that white women as well as Black were not among the most active in the fight against it. It does show how deep the racial divides remain not only in California, but in this entire land.

The retrogressive tide today can also be measured by the fact that the number of Black members in the U.S. House of Representatives, which had been ever so slowly increasing up to 1994, has gone down with this election. It was clearly thanks to the reapportionment engineered by the Republicans last year and upheld by the Supreme Court. More such realignments are in store next year.

It makes it all the more important to recognize that, despite what might look like a solid South for Dole, he had some very close fights in many of those states where there was both a high Black turnout and where he did not do well with poor white voters who have also felt the brunt of all the cutbacks.

In California the proposition to increase the minimum wage passed. In Colorado the religious right was tried to slip a misleading "parental rights" bill into the state constitution, and planned to introduce it into 20 other states next year if it passed. It fortunately failed.

It is well to remember that the very pattern of "States' Rights" which Gingrich resurrected, ever since the Civil War, been designed to give the power to the Right, free from any constraints on its racism and class interests. It took the Civil Rights Movement to turn that around. Now that we are on the way back to the old status quo it seems clear that only a movement can overturn that tide again. That seems to have been the response to the passage of 209 in California; demonstrations broke out at a number of campuses where speakers reminded students that "if slavery had been up to a vote, it wouldn't have been defeated."

It is therefore worth asking whether the all-time record low turnout to choose a president for the four years that will take us into the 21st century is part of the recognition of something important? Do people want a very different way out of the political, social and economic crises confronting the world at such a crucial point?

In the face of the intractable economic crisis today there have been the first faint signs of new stirrings by labor. Yet the plans of the AFL-CIO leadership last spring to devote a sizeable fund to organizing the unorganized was quickly shifted to re-electing Clinton. No less than \$35 million was targeted on winning 40 seats in Congress. That the effort succeeded in electing only 6 of the 40 means that \$6 million was spent on each seat won. Still, the greatest achievement of the Union Summer campaign was that the young people, primarily students, sent to do the organizing learned that only workers themselves can do that from below. The most important kind of such worker self-organizing has been going on especially in the South over the past few years, and has been reflected in the workers' own reports in the pages of News & Letters.

The appearance of "teach-ins" on labor such as the recent one at Columbia University, where hundreds of students poured out to hear professors, labor leaders and feminists speak about class questions as being at the center of American concerns today, is another small sign of the search for a way to unite theory and practice to find a way out of a retrogression that seems intractable (see page 11).

In face of the enormity of the problem and the ever-further move to the right which these elections have just confirmed, all the signs of a social movement of any dimensions struggling to emerge may appear feeble. It is what makes so important a paper like N&L where all the voices are heard unseparated from a philosophy of revolution that can help them find a direction. Working out that kind of unity can determine a very different future for us as we move toward the 21st century.

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Editorial

New Edge of revolt in Indonesia and East Timor

Indonesia's President Suharto undertook a fleeting visit to occupied East Timor on Oct. 15 to review firsthand the state of affairs in what his government calls Indonesia's 27th province. Perhaps it was a face-saving move motivated by the recent awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to two high-profile activists for the self-determination of the East Timorese people, Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo and Jose Ramos Horta. Suharto was nonetheless unable to conceal the reality of genocidal brutality Indonesia has enforced since its invasion in 1975. Army troops lined the streets of Dili, the capital, to ensure that there was no display of opposition by the East Timorese people.

The tension that underlay Suharto's visit is one he is no doubt familiar with, as his own country is rife with hostility towards him and the ruling class which has enriched itself under the authoritarian regime he has led since he seized power in the wake of the coup of 1965. This tension has global importance, for Indonesia is a giant country with a crucial position in the vital Pacific Rim economy. In the past five years alone foreign companies have invested \$13 billion in Indonesia, much of it in the form of maquiladora-like subcontractor factories in which workers toil in appalling conditions for as little as \$2 a day.

BROAD OPPOSITION

Indonesia's social tension exploded in July as the government carried out a plan to remove Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno, deposed in Suharto's rise to power, from the leadership of the Indonesian Democratic Party, a legal opposition party. Official control of Jakarta was lost for days as opponents of the government battled the army from behind barricades.

Arrests not dissimilar to the massive roundups of 1965 followed the summer unrest as the government moved against members of what it calls "formless organizations." Those arrested include Budiman Sujatmiko of the illegal Democratic People's Party (PRD) and Mughtar Pakpahan, the leader of the Indonesian Welfare Workers' Union, a man already familiar with the insides of Suharto's jails.

Independent labor activity is perhaps at the top of the list of the Indonesian state-capitalists' nightmares. A worker uprising in the Sumatran city of Medan in April 1994 shook up the rulers, already worried by a large foreign debt. The fear that transnational corporations like Nike and Levi Strauss will seek out countries with a more quiescent labor force weighs heavily on their minds.

The conditions in the factories of companies like Nike

Kurdistan betrayed

In the Oct. 17, 1996 issue of the *New York Review of Books* Iraqi author Kanan Makiya writes about the shock of hearing that Massoud Barzani, the head of the Kurdish Democratic Party, invited Saddam Hussein's army inside the U.N.-protected enclave in the north, and tries to account for his own failure to see it coming ("The Politics of Betrayal," pp. 8-12).

Saddam's forces promptly moved to capture as many members of the Iraqi opposition as they could get their hands on, including Arab intellectuals and defecting soldiers. In some places people fought back; many died, were executed, or taken away to a horrible end. Makiya writes: "A five-year experiment in autonomy and self-rule has thus come tumbling down. A historic opportunity has been wasted."

His sense of betrayal is all the more pronounced because in 1991 he has proposed Barzani to head the Iraqi opposition: "Iraqis could not do better than have someone like this preside over the reconstruction of a post-Saddam Iraq." How could he be so wrong?

Makiya's is one of the finest voices to emerge in the last decade challenging the violence of the Ba'athist regime and the complicity of many Arab intellectuals. His *Republic of Fear* (1990) was published at a time when the U.S. was still embracing Saddam as an ally in maintaining regional stability. Makiya showed how all-pervasive is the Iraq state's strategy of instilling fear in the Iraqi population, not only by brute force but also in its language and its architecture.

His second book, *Cruelty and Silence* (1993), written after the Gulf War, documents the cruelty of, the "Anfal" campaign of genocide which killed 300,000 people. It also describes the deafening silence in the writings of Arab intellectuals about these issues.

In joining the Iraqi National Congress, Makiya tried to promote a democratic political process "in which their would be room for Shiites and Kurds and radicals and technocrats," because in his words, "I was sick of the sloganeering and empty Arab nationalist rhetoric."

In the NYRB article Makiya is very articulate in pinpointing Barzani's "inability to see the larger interests of Iraqi Kurds outside the parochial concerns of his own tribal and family alliances." Makiya states that he failed to see that Barzani "had accepted the 'Arabness' of the state of Iraq accepted, that is, that there was no alternative to an exclusionist, dictatorial, Arab nationalism."

That notion, I am afraid, pre-empted the Iraqi and Kurdish masses from being heard and from fully participating in the process of conception, formation, gestation, and labor of giving birth to a new human society.

The question that remains unanswered in Makiya's self-examination is his own notion of what would constitute a "commitment to a whole that is larger than the sum of its parts, a commitment, in other words, to a convincing idea of Iraq." —Cyrus Noveen

have sparked resistance on the part of the workers who have left their farms and villages to seek work in production. Pakpahan's union, which operates outside the confines of the official trade union structure, has grown to half a million members despite the clandestine organizing methods it must resort to. This resistance, despite official claims, has no continuity with the huge Communist Party of the 1960s — the PRD's Sujatmiko is 27 years old. Today's workers are young and increasingly female. They are confronted with ruthless exploitation and are responding with their own creative power.

EAST TIMOR

In East Timor too, resistance exhibits both continuity and discontinuity. Indonesia succeeded in eliminating most of the armed struggle against the occupation, but as Jose Ramos Horta stated in a visit to Chicago earlier this year, "The resistance followed the people out of the mountains" and has assumed new, mass forms in the towns."

The importance of Indonesia had an impact on a U.S. presidential campaign in which international affairs played almost no other role. But the money funneled into the Clinton campaign by some Indonesian capitalists is only a small sign of the American relationship with that country. The invasion of East Timor was carried out with the approval of Washington and with U.S. arms. The cold reality that continues to the present is that Indonesia is seen as both a valuable market and a



Jose Ramos Horta

'Bisexual Politics'

Bisexual Politics: Theories, Queries, & Visions edited by Naomi Tucker with Liz Highleyman and Rebecca Kaplan. (Haworth Press, Binghamton, N.Y. 1995).

Until I read this anthology of articles from some of the most active bisexual theorists/activists of the past quarter-century, I did not know that a Bisexual Movement has been developing since the pre-Stonewall days of the 60s "Sexual Revolution."

I also was not aware that Bisexual Liberation has mostly been spearheaded and carried out by feminists and that "Bisexual Politics" often begins from a radical feminist perspective, calling for an end to patriarchy and all sexual divisions. Just as much of the history of gay and lesbian struggle has been overlooked because of the heterosexism in society, so too the Bisexual Movement's achievements have been largely overlooked by the Gay/Lesbian Movement because bisexual politics were rejected by them.

Many of the authors write about their painful experiences coming out as bisexuals after believing themselves to be lesbian, only to be rejected by lesbian and gay friends who accused them of "betrayal" or "sitting on the fence," between the two opposing "binary" worlds of gay/straight. These women who had struggled for lesbian inclusion and visibility in the early Gay Liberation Movement now found themselves fighting the same battle again for bisexuals. Their decades-long struggle with both queer allies as well as the heterosexist outside world has resulted in a unique political perspective fascinatingly documented and debated by the 37 authors (31 of whom are women).

Though this historic perspective makes clear why a strong identity politic has arisen among bisexuals defending the legitimacy of their fluid sexuality, what is most interesting and challenging about this collection are the essays by those who wish to go beyond identity politics to an "idea politics...based on a radical, choice-based, consensual, sex-positive, diversity valuing ideology rather than any specific characteristic-based identity." (Highleyman)

Many authors have developed theories to challenge monosexism,¹ genderism² and "capitalist patriarchy" within the context of a broad-based "Human Liberation Movement." Looking beyond debates over inclusion within the gay and lesbian movements, feminist bisexual radicals are working to develop a transformative vision for humanity which challenges all oppressive societal divisions. This collection is a must-read for radicals of all sexualities who are serious about developing revolutionary pathways to new human relationships.

—Julia Jones

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political bulwark against the unruly Chinese giant.

The future of Suharto's order is uncertain. He will face no real opposition in next year's elections, as Magawati will not appear on the ballot. His government is increasingly harried by worker revolt and the struggle for self-determination by the peoples of East Timor and Irian Jaya. World capital is hoping for an eventual smooth transition into a less blatantly coercive form of government in Indonesia. But the dreams of the financiers may go unrealized. The masses of Indonesia, Irian Jaya and East Timor may succeed in taking matters into their own hands.

A statement in the underground East Timorese youth publication *Neon Metin* may foreshadow the future: "The end of the conflict in East Timor will generate the destruction of Indonesia itself." Every country is really two worlds — the rulers' world and the workers' world. The destruction of the world of the Indonesian rulers may well be drawing near.

Ogoni fight continues

Berkeley, Cal.—At a meeting commemorating the anniversary of the Nov. 10, 1995 hanging of Ken Saro Wiwa by the Nigerian military government, regarded to be at the urging of the Shell Oil Company, Dr. Owens Wiwa, the brother of Ken Saro Wiwa, told the story of the movement against Shell's destruction of Ogoniland and Ogoni peoples.

Dr. Owens Wiwa mentioned that at the beginning of Shell's exploration in Nigeria, the Ogoni were looking forward to the prospect of jobs, better hospitals and schools that the income from oil would bring them. But Shell did not hire Ogoni workers. They brought in all-white construction crews. They never negotiated with the Ogoni for their land; they just took it.

Without any warning, the construction company bulldozed over cultivated fields literally a few days before they were to be harvested. The women, whose fields were bulldozed, came to ask the construction company "why?" The Nigerian soldiers fired at the unarmed women. This was the first of the "ethnic clashes" in which thousands of Ogoni died.

Shell poisoned what they didn't bulldoze, since they never cleaned up any of their spills, caused many flare-offs and in general caused the living conditions to drastically deteriorate. In 1989, Ken Saro Wiwa, a journalist, wrote papers documenting the effects of Shell's destruction of the land and its effect on the people. A collection of his papers, called the Ogoni Bill of Rights, was signed by every Ogoni intellectual. Shell's response to the organization among the Ogoni was a campaign of misinformation and hostility ending in the trial and hanging of the nine Ogoni leaders. Referring to the recent Headquarters demonstrations, Dr. Wiwa asked what can the Ogoni do to be considered as important as the trees are to the environmental movement? He asked the people of the U.S. to help stop Shell. Shell wants to be invited back by the Ogoni because new oil reserves were found under their land. They are pressuring the chiefs to sign such an invitation. If they do, the Ogoni people will lay down on the roads and the military will roll over them.

Dr. Wiwa spoke about the remarkable change in the way of thinking among the Ogoni. After 3 years of organizing, they no longer bowed to the inevitability of corruption. They regained their sense of human dignity.

When I mentioned that a similar story — of looking forward to "development" only to be disappointed by it and finding a new way of thinking in overcoming the "plantation mentality" — is told by Black women organizing in the South, Dr. Wiwa immediately saw the universality of the process. He mentioned that the strongest labor union in Nigeria is one of Ogoni women.

Since appeals to all governments and all international bodies has not resulted in any help for the Ogoni, Dr. Wiwa is turning to people fighting for their dignity everywhere to forge solidarity.

—Urszula Wislanka

1. A TITLE OF PUBLICATION: NEWS & LETTERS 2. PUBLICATION NO. 3854-20
3. DATE OF FILING: Oct. 1, 1996 4. ISSUE FREQUENCY: Monthly except bi-monthly January-February, August-September. 5. NO. OF ISSUES PUBLISHED ANNUALLY: 10. 6. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$2.50 7. LOCATION OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago IL 60605 8. LOCATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS OR GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHERS: 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605 9. NAMES AND COMPLETE ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHER: Olga Domanski and Peter Wernuth (Co-National Organizers), 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605. MANAGING EDITOR: Lou Turner, Managing Editor, 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605. 10. OWNER: News & Letters, an Illinois Not-For-Profit Corporation, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605 11. KNOWN BONDHOLDERS, MORTGAGEES AND OTHER SECURITY HOLDERS OWNING OR HOLDING ONE PERCENT OR MORE OF TOTAL AMOUNT OF BONDS, MORTGAGES OR OTHER SECURITIES: None 12. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. TOTAL NO. COPIES PRINTED:		
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2. Mail Subscriptions	2958	3150
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Youth

Rising tide of anger puts cops on trial

Manuel Salazar is innocent!

Editor's note: As we go to press, a Will County jury decision has effectively freed Manuel Salazar. He was wrongly convicted of killing a cop in 1985. He was enduring the final days of a new trial after his previous conviction was overturned by the Illinois Supreme Court due to enormous support for him in the Latino community. Below we print the story of one of his long-time supporters.

Joliet, Ill.—In 1984 I came home from work and saw a bunch of squad cars going up the hill to the Black community. I knew it was big because I'd never seen so many police cars before. The cops were going crazy, knocking on every door, stopping people in cars. My wife was stopped and asked to give information on where Manuel Salazar was. She heard on the police radio: "He's armed and dangerous, kill him on sight." Manuel fled to Mexico.

Before the policeman died he had brutally beaten Manuel with his fists and his gun. Manuel was 17 years old, weighed 145 pounds and was skinny. The police officer was over 200 pounds.

We have to ask why the officer stopped the car to begin with. Us Black and Latinos have one thing in common—we look suspicious. It was Blacks and Latinos in the car together—that's why they were stopped.

He was brought back illegally to this country, kidnapped and taken to trial with an all white jury in an all white community in Bloomington, Ill. in 1985. His attorney at that time was under investigation for bribery in California and then was convicted. Everything was against Manuel.

The Latino community back then did not get involved. There was no organization, no activists, so therefore nobody did anything for him. But now there's a lot of support for him internationally. Now they can't ignore his call for self-defense.

When I got involved the police started harassing my family. We had a hard time finding a space in a church to hold a meeting for Manuel.

Why did this have to happen? It always happens in a Latino or Black community—never in a white community. It only happens to us.

Me and my wife and children have been attending the trial since it started—every day. There are three Black people on the jury. One Latino woman was on the jury but she dropped out. The prosecution fought to have no Latinos on the jury. The attorney for Manuel fought to have the trial in Chicago, but the judge fought to keep it in an all-white community.

Manuel faces death in Joliet. I fear he can get no justice when the system wants to kill him.

—Latino against death penalty and police brutality

L.A. marchers: End police brutality!

Los Angeles—About 300 mostly young Black and Latino activists marched through the streets of L.A. and then gathered at a rally in front of police headquarters to protest police brutality, Oct. 22. The speakers includ-

Columbia teach-in brings new friends to Big Labor

New York—Billed as "The Fight for America's Future: A Teach-In with the Labor Movement," organized labor conferred with Left academia before an overflow audience of well over a thousand students and activists at Columbia University, Oct. 3-4. The conference was an historic expose of the failures of the union movement in recent times and the dire conditions of immigrants, the unemployed, Blacks and women today. Similar conferences are planned around the country.

If there was a new beginning made by the conference, it was due to the presence of so many youth, some of whom had taken part in "union summer." The students were urged to help organize unions, teach labor history, study the economy, expose the sweatshops, and pressure universities to spend money for these things.

The plenary sessions featured the new leaders of the AFL-CIO, who, pushed by their membership, the majority now made up of minorities and women, tried to address contemporary problems. President John Sweeney even referred twice to lesbian and gay rights. Union officials were joined by social democrats such as Cornel West, feminists such as Katha Politt and Betty Friedan, and prominent labor historians and sociologists.

CAPITALISM WITHOUT EXPLOITATION?

Everyone decried "corporate greed," unemployment and low wages, yet no one named capitalism as the enemy, or proposed changes beyond making this system more fair through "radical democracy." The union people spoke of reviving some mythical "social compact" between capital and labor.

Some advocated limiting immigration for fear it brings down wages, including Orlando Patterson, a Black immigrant Harvard professor. He warned that the unions must face their complicity in not organizing the low-wage "informal economy" of Blacks, women and immigrants. The formal sector is now being incorporated into the informal, instead of vice versa. There was sharp debate on whether to fight for rights for documented immigrants. Most speakers assumed it was "indefensible" to demand rights for the undocumented.

The lower level leadership of the "new" AFL-CIO talked a good talk. Executive Vice President Linda Cha-

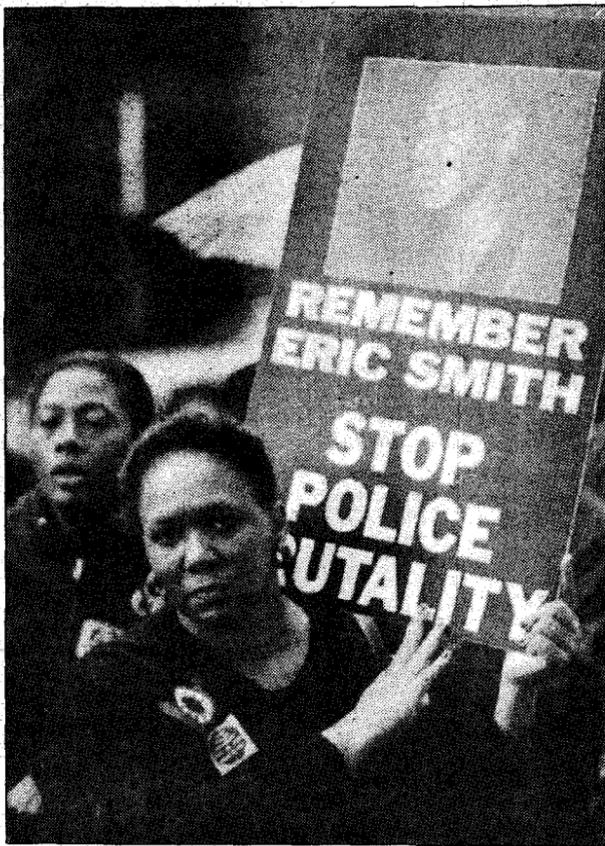
ed friends and family members of victims of police killings.

Richard Beitty spoke about how his nephew's death in a police shooting led to the formation of the Coalition for Victims of Police Abuse. "Now, every time I hear of a police shooting I pay attention," he declared. "because they lie—they lie in your face." Sebastian Ramirez said his friend was shot 13 times by the police. "We want them to get charged as murderers," he demanded, "to go to jail and to stay in jail."

Molly Bell, an activist from Compton, spoke about the CIA-crack connection: "My community is dying and the police let it [crack] in. We are all victims of police brutality. We have to stand up or we'll all be part of a police state. In our courts today people are getting 25-year sentences for possession of crack. We want jobs, not more jails. We took the chains off our legs. We are not going to let them put them on our minds. We'll shut L.A. down like in '92."

—Cyrus Noveen

Oct. 22 National protests



Rally and march Oct. 22 against 5,000 incidents of police brutality a year in Chicago, including the police killings of unarmed and deaf Eric Smith in April, homeless window-washer Joseph Gould last year, and 24-year-old Bilal Ashraf. Similar protests took place throughout the country in a growing movement of outrage against the U.S. in-justice system.

vez-Thompson reported that workers no longer believe that education and hard work guarantee jobs. Whereas most people believe the government taxes and spends too much, she said, 48 percent also think that government does too much to help the corporations.

Karen Nussbaum, head of the AFL-CIO Women's Department, cited the gender gap in politics and organizing. The workforce is now about half women. Since 1985, more women than men have organized into unions. With five and a half million women members, the AFL-CIO is the largest women's organization.

To loud cheers Jose La Luz of AFSCME, called for "changing the culture of the institution called union" by changing the relation between leaders and members, and for "transforming reality rather than accommodating to it." In contrast Richard Trumka, AFL-CIO Vice President, declared that labor is winning battles and we should support Clinton; when booed by the audience, he asked if we were for Dole.

STRATEGIC ORGANIZING

Bill Fletcher, AFL-CIO Director of Education, said the unions are faced with a choice: to fight against welfare repeal and organize "workfare" workers, or to ignore them and cut the best possible deal to restrict their replacing paid workers.

He put forth his own radical solution, that the unions resist welfare repeal and states' rights; confront the growth of forced labor, including prison labor; and change the union movement's outlook about who we are, so as to organize workfare and unemployed people. He also reminded us that stigmatization of the poor is only possible because of racism.

However, when he was confronted by members of the New Directions Caucus of the Transport Workers Union, which was trying to defeat a proposed union contract that allows lay-offs and replacement of subway workers by workfare workers, Fletcher declined to "get involved in a local dispute."

It remains to be seen whether the conference marked merely a new period of academia and the union movement using each other, or a period of new labor struggles.

—John Marcotte and Anne Jaclard

NYPD murderer walks scot-free

New York—In December 1994, Anthony Baez, a 29-year-old Puerto Rican man, was playing football with his brothers in front of their home in the Bronx. The ball hit police officer Francis Livoti's patrol car. Livoti became enraged and murdered Anthony Baez by placing him in that infamous illegal choke hold responsible for the police murders of a number of Latinos and African Americans over the years.

It took two years for the Baez family and community pressure to force the district attorney to indict Livoti—a cop with 11 previous complaints of violence against him. Charged with criminally negligent homicide, Livoti chose a trial before a judge. Cops can avoid trial before a jury of the communities they terrorize.

The defense at the trial was ludicrous. The judge called police testimony "a nest of perjury." A Latina police woman broke the "Blue Wall" of silence and testified against Livoti's version of the events. She now fears for her life. The cops had testified about a "mysterious pair of Black hands" that appeared out of nowhere to choke Baez! This is not a joke! Willie Horton's hands somehow appeared, disembodied!

By Friday, Oct. 4, it was clear Judge Sheindlin would have to convict. On Monday, Oct. 7, the judge said Livoti was not innocent, excoriated him—and then pronounced him NOT GUILTY. All hell broke loose in the courtroom. The anguish of the Baez family and the community was almost unbearable to witness.

Anger and outrage poured out of the courtroom in a spontaneous demonstration and march. Police responded with more brutality, confident they can do anything they want. They shut down the courthouse and swept the sidewalks in military formation with riot sticks and assault-type weapons, helicopters flying overhead.

As a caller to a radio station said, "If we cannot get a conviction in this (Livoti) case, what does it take to get a conviction of a cop who kills a person of color? It becomes a pure color line. And it's their courthouse. There is no justice."

—John Marcotte

Students fight for AIDS education

Chicago—Students for Peace and Justice at Oak Park-River Forest do lots of things: We work with Jobs for Justice on the Nike campaign fighting against sweatshop labor and now we're working on the AIDS curriculum and AIDS awareness week.

Last year the School Council treated AIDS Awareness Week like an event, handing out red ribbons. But that doesn't do anything. Our ultimate goal is to get a clinic in the school where you can get birth control and information about AIDS and pregnancy. We'd like a social worker who you can go to if you can't go to your parents, but are afraid you're pregnant or HIV positive.

We made up a survey to find out what kinds of protection people used, how often they used it and what Health class taught them. All that was being "taught" about AIDS and sexuality was that you should practice abstinence. One of the questions on the survey was "Are you sexually active?" But the principal made us rephrase it to say "Do you practice abstinence?" because the school policy on sex is "abstinence."

We can teach the student body rather than waiting for the administration to do anything. We got two speakers but had to give the administration their names and their phone numbers so they could tell them what they could and couldn't say and do. We told them the speakers would show the students how to use a condom using a banana to demonstrate and that they'd pass out condoms. The administration said no and said that they had to say that abstinence was the best way and couldn't pass out any information unless it was pre-approved.

The posters and pamphlets we ordered were good ones that teens would listen to. But the administration wouldn't approve them unless they said abstinence is the only way. One pamphlet said something like "Are you unsure whether or not you want to have sex," "Are you unsure about being gay or bi." We were told "That would make the student body uncomfortable." I don't think it would. High school students want to figure out who they are. I think it makes the administration uncomfortable! The principal could not even say the word "condom" or "sex" in the meeting we had with him. He kept dancing around the words.

—Two white high school feminists

Mario Savio

As we go to press, we have heard the sad news of the sudden death of Mario Savio, leader of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement of 1964-65, with whom we carried out an active dialogue over the years (see especially his contribution to the pamphlet, *The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution*, published by News & Letters in 1965).

A vigorous and committed activist and humanist, Mario Savio had redoubled his political efforts recently, throwing himself into activity against California's racist Proposition 209 ballot initiative which calls for the abolition of affirmative action. Our next issue will contain a fuller discussion of his life and legacy. The struggle continues!

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

As autumn began, the labor battles of 1995 and 1996 were renewed in a number of countries in Western Europe, especially Germany. There, over 100,000 workers went on strike on Oct. 24, after some employers in the steel and auto industries reneged on a pledge three weeks earlier on cuts in sick pay and other social benefits.

In a previous series of strikes, on Oct. 1, workers from Mercedes Benz, General Motors, and Ford shut down assembly lines for a day to protest management plans to violate current union contracts by taking advantage of a new law allowing them to lower sick pay from 100% to 80% of regular pay. At least 63,000 workers from Mercedes alone participated in the strike, prompting a stunned management to change its tune, immediately promising to keep rates at 100%.

One union official stated at an Oct. 1 rally, to thundering applause, "We will defend what our fathers and mothers fought for in a long strike," while a rank and filer argued very concretely that cutting sick pay would "force sick workers to drag themselves into work. That we will never accept" (*Die Tageszeitung*, Oct. 2, 1996). Workers were well aware that, as another union leader put it, "the question of sick pay is the Trojan horse of the employers, who want to restructure the entire system of social benefits" (*Le Monde*, Oct. 11, 1996).

Many more serious battles lie ahead, with employers sure to demand take-backs in next year's contracts, and with the conservative Kohl government moving ever further to cut social benefits as well as regulations and taxes on capital, all in the name of making Germany more "competitive."

In France, a large public sector workers strike against

Middle East talks break down

A month after Clinton's "photo-op" Oct. 1 Middle East summit with Israel's President Benjamin Netanyahu, Palestinian Authority President Yasir Arafat, and Jordan's King Hussein, nothing has changed. The reactionary Netanyahu continues to view his razor-thin electoral victory in May as a green light to scuttle the Oslo peace agreements. On Oct. 28, U.S. negotiator Dennis Ross left the country, as did Arafat, without even an agreement on Hebron, the focus of intensive international diplomacy since Oct. 1.

Netanyahu says publicly that he'll implement the Oslo agreements by withdrawing from Hebron, a city of 100,000 Arabs and 450 fanatical Jewish settlers. All he wants are a few "adjustments." These, which he never details in public, include: 1) total control over the water supply; 2) "hot pursuit" of suspects into Palestinian-controlled areas of the city; 3) limiting Palestinian police to pistols; 4) keeping some large streets closed permanently to wall in the Arab population; and 5) joint Israeli-Arab patrols in Arab areas but Israeli-only patrols in Hebron's Jewish enclave.

For his part, Arafat continues to excel at hobnobbing with foreign heads of state. He is reluctant to allow the Palestinian masses to mobilize and he also continues to use words such as "jihad" which drive away even Israelis committed to the peace process. In addition, Arafat suppresses all dissenting Arab voices within his area of control.

Labor unrest continues in Western Europe

continuing government austerity shut down many schools, colleges, trains, and post offices on Oct. 17.

The strike was strongest outside Paris, however, in cities such as Marseilles, Caen, Rennes, and Strasbourg. In Marseilles, 40,000 took to the streets. To the surprise of both press and politicians, the French public remains solidly pro-labor, with 64% in an opinion poll saying they supported the strikers. Unlike in Germany, the French strikes have been limited to the public sector.

In Spain, a massive strike involving two million public sector workers took place on Oct. 15, after the newly



Mercedes-Benz workers in Stuttgart demonstrate against company cuts in sick pay.

elected conservative government announced plans to freeze salaries. Massive demonstrations filled the streets of most cities. In Britain, public sector workers engaged in some determined strikes during the summer.

In France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe, the governments which are today attacking labor have often gained public support by their scapegoating of immigrants on the issues of crime and the economy.

In Austria, on Oct. 14, the fascist-tinged Freedom Party scored a shocking 28% of the vote in European Parliament elections, just behind the Social Democrats and ahead of the traditional conservative party. France's neo-fascist National Front has also gained recently, while racist skinhead attacks have occurred in Germany.

While most labor unions in Western Europe have given some support to the anti-racist movement, that support has too often been of a token nature, like the struggle in Paris this year to support a group of Africans on hunger strike. This has helped racism to fester even among union members, something which has aided the rise of conservative, anti-labor governments. This reluctance to become deeply involved in the anti-racist struggle has also deprived the labor movement of the revolutionary energy of immigrants and anti-racist activists.

Lebed's firing in Russia

President Boris Yeltsin's long-awaited dismissal of his security adviser, General Aleksandr Lebed, only served to deepen the crises tearing at post-Communist Russia. Lebed's growing popularity was due in part to his militarist and nationalist posturing, but most of all to his having negotiated an end to the war in Chechnya. That reactionary war has taken up to 80,000 lives, leaving 240,000 people wounded.

On the one hand, the war revealed the determination of the Chechen people to be free of Russian domination and, on the other, the near collapse of what had been the world's second most powerful military machine. Seldom paid, often unfed and without gloves or even boots, the Russian draftees basically refused to fight any longer in this unpopular war, allowing tiny Chechnya to emerge from the conflict battered but victorious.

Since his firing, Lebed's popularity seems to have grown further, given the absence of any truly left or even bourgeois liberal alternative to Yeltsin's corrupt and increasingly authoritarian regime. Besides the Bonapartist Lebed, the only other sizable anti-Yeltsin force is that of Gennadi Zyuganov's Stalinist Communist Party.

The possibility of a different direction for Russia was indicated by the one-day strike of hundreds of thousands of teachers, miners, and other workers on Nov. 5, in a protest over unpaid wages. Whether this will coalesce into a rank-and-file labor movement independent of the major political tendencies remains to be seen.

Zaire on brink of collapse

What may well be the biggest crisis of post-independence Africa is brewing in Zaire. The three-sided war that has intensified in eastern Zaire over the last two months has precipitated a refugee crisis among 1.4 million displaced Rwandan Hutu that threatens to be as great a humanitarian catastrophe as the one the world witnessed in 1994. Then, thousands of Hutu refugees in massive camps around the Zairian town of Goma perished from disease and hunger. More than 1 million Hutu fled Rwanda in 1994 after the genocide of 800,000 Tutsi and anti-government Hutu by the Hutu army and civilian militias led to the ouster of Rwanda's Hutu government by the Tutsi-led RDF (Rwandan Patriotic Front).

The refugee camps around Goma have been both a safe haven for 250,000 Hutu who participated in the 1994 Rwanda genocide and a staging ground for Hutu guerrilla incursions into Rwanda. Before they pulled out in October, the UN and humanitarian agencies had provided food, lodging and medical assistance to the camps and the *genocidaires* at the cost of \$1 million a day.

A new war broke out when Zaire's military tried to ethnically cleanse Zairian Tutsi called Banyamulenge from the plateaus above Lake Tanganyika, at the end of October. The Zairian army was repulsed, and has since suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of the Banyamulenge rebel group, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire. With the rebels taking control of Goma, Hutu refugees have once again fled westward into more inhospitable regions of Zaire.

Aid agencies have pulled out, leaving the refugees with a week's rations and little in the way of drinkable water. In the meantime, the Zairian government is unraveling even as it accuses the RDF and the Tutsi-led government of neighboring Burundi of backing the Zairian Tutsi rebels. Though the latter deny the charges, the Zairian Tutsi take over of Goma has effectively dispersed the Hutu militias on Rwanda's border.

Despite threats of war from Zaire's ailing dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko, the more far-reaching consequence of the present crisis is that deeply divided, mineral-rich, underdeveloped Zaire, in the heart of Africa, is on the verge of completely coming apart. After weathering a massive democracy movement in 1992, and autonomy movements in the southern provinces of diamond-rich East Kasai and mineral-rich Shaba, this latest movement by the Banyamulenge could become the final impetus leading to the collapse of Zaire.

It is this prospect that motivates the narrow interests of the U.S. and France to find a solution to the refugee and political crises in Zaire.

—Lou Turner

Nicaragua elections

The right-wing Liberal Alliance delivered a heavy electoral defeat to the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in Nicaragua's October national elections. The president elect, Arnaldo Aleman, won with 48% of the vote. He defeated former president and Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega who got 38%.

Many within the FSLN are blaming Ortega for their stunning defeat. Ortega campaigned as a post-socialist non-revolutionary, promising respect for free market capitalism and foreign investment, and making friendly overtures to the U.S. government, which under Ronald Reagan had inflicted years of war, economic ruin and death by backing the contras against the Sandinista government. Referring to the worldwide collapse of state-capitalist Communism in 1989, a year before the Sandinistas were voted out of office, Ortega stated that "the international reality has changed and the Sandinista Front has changed with it."

The reality for Nicaraguans is grinding poverty. Nicaragua is rated as the second poorest economy in the hemisphere. Aleman was able to sell free market capitalism as the way to bring jobs to people suffering from over 50% joblessness and underemployment. He triumphed despite his ties to the Somoza family and his leading position among Nicaragua's capitalist elite. (Aleman is a lawyer and coffee plantation grower.) For the moment, the right has won, and the left has suffered from past and present failures to present a convincing alternative.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 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*.