

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end' —Marx

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Capitalism pits worker vs. worker



by B. Ann Lastelle

"Congratulations Helene Curtis anti-perspirant Stick Team members! Your lines have been the most efficient in the company since last fall. Cost per unit in January was 5.3¢, compared to 19¢ or more at an outside supplier. You set a production volume record in February, running at this plant every unit of Suave and Degree produced. Your reward? You may keep doing it—for now. And since the volume we demand cannot be produced even in six days, some of you will go to 12-hour shifts so that we can run 24 hours seven days per week."

Management assigned people to shifts in a way many thought unfair. Workers competed with one other for the privileges of sleeping at night rather than during the day, of maintaining current child care arrangements, of not leaving school-age children at home alone, of working the same shift as a spouse, of continuing their education: Why is that person on days and I am on nights?

That wasn't the only competition involved. A supervisor said, "This place needs to be open seven days a week. We cannot afford to let anyone else do this work." Unilever, which acquired Helene Curtis one year ago, has not invested any money in this operation and has made no commitment to keep this non-union Chicago plant open. It has other options: outside suppliers, one of which has a contract to produce a new anti-perspirant product, and Unilever's Chesebrough-Pond's plant in Raeford, N.C. Our labor costs are higher, but if we can keep other costs low, eliminate waste, eliminate downtime, work ourselves to death...

Another supervisor favorite: "If you don't want to work, there are plenty of other people out there who do. The door swings both ways." Those others are not only the nameless, faceless unemployed, underemployed and

(Continued on page 3)

Black World

Who is Laurent Kabila?



by Lou Turner

Few knew who Laurent Désire Kabila, and the guerrilla movement he heads, were when they came down out of the mountains around the Great Lakes region of eastern Zaire in October 1996. As they swept across eastern Zaire, occupying now nearly one half of the country, the ADFL (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire) became "the most potent and dynamic guerrilla force in Africa" (New African, February 1997).

Laurent Kabila comes from the Luba tribe in the northern Shaba town of Ankoro on the Congo River. As a university student he studied philosophy in France. In the course of the independence struggle in Zaire (then called the Congo) led by the martyred Congolese left nationalist Patrice Lumumba, Kabila adopted a Pan-Africanist perspective. Under the tutelage of his mentor Pierre Mulele, the Minister of Education in Lumumba's government, Kabila began to espouse a Maoist brand of Marxism. The confusion of ideologies which form Kabila's politics is by no means unique to him among African radicals. Along with Maoism and Pan-Africanism are African Socialism and the guerrilla fociism of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara.

In 1964, following Mulele, who had started an insurrection in Kwilu, Kabila and another major figure of the period Gaston Soumialot, initiated the Simba (young lions) rebellion in the Ruzizi lowlands. In July 1965, on

(Continued on page 8)

'Welfare reform' exposes depth of today's capitalist crisis

by Anne Jaclard

New York City—With the welfare reform (read: "repeal") law of 1996 now being implemented nationwide, millions of poor people are losing the "safety net" that barely kept them alive. Not only welfare recipients but millions of employed people can expect to be consigned to poverty-wage jobs for the rest of their lives.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, as the new law is called, dismantles the welfare system created as a result of the Great Depression, when the ruling class feared revolution. Sixty years later, the government abolished the guarantee of sustenance to children, mothers of infants, students, the disabled and elderly, by ending Aid to Families with Dependent Children, restricting and reducing food stamps, cash grants, SSI and Medicaid, and requiring recipients to work at unpaid workfare jobs. The new law also forbids most aid to legally resident immigrants. Already, nursing homes in New York state are refusing admission to all immigrants, saying it is too hard to distinguish which ones will still be entitled to Medicaid in the fall.

WORKFARE SLAVERY

Brenda is a mother of two and a member of WEP Workers Together!, a self-organized group of New York City workfare workers in the Work Experience Program, or WEP (commonly called the Workers Exploitation Program). She especially fears losing welfare because she is studying to get a high school equivalency degree. Under the new law, being in school no longer entitles her to benefits, so she may be cut off, or workfare requirements may force her to drop out.

Last year she was required to enter WEP as a file clerk in a hospital. She was able to continue in school by rushing around every minute of the day, studying on the bus, and having her older child take care of the younger one. For six months in WEP she worked alongside people who made between \$7 an hour (temporaries) and \$12 an hour (unionized employees), all doing the same work—while she took home \$214 every two weeks!

Brenda will probably be given a new WEP assignment soon, which she must take or lose her benefits. "They're really telling me not to go to school," she said, "and that it's my fault if I do, and lose my benefits." She added, "Under the new law, after 18 months they start cutting your check down. The little money they give you isn't enough to survive on now. Also, if your child is absent from school for so many days, they will reduce your check. They are trying to make people into slaves."

The new federal law mandates the states to create their own welfare programs, while requiring them to impose harsh and punitive restrictions on people like Brenda. It eliminates entitlement to any minimum welfare payments, replacing per person federal aid with lump sum "block grants" for the states to allocate. Thus, the states can spend as little on welfare as their political situations permit, and they are even rewarded



New York protest against welfare cutback.

financially for reducing the welfare rolls. This reform law is expected to cut \$55 billion in aid to the poor over the next six years.

Since the state implementation plans must be in place by July 1, welfare activists are now fighting to preserve minimal rights in every state as well as nationally. Over the past few years, sensing the political opportunity to blame the poor for poverty, 43 states initiated programs similar to those required by the new law. In fact, the number of recipients nationally have dropped by 20% since 1993, but no one knows why, or what happened to the people, whether they found jobs, joined the underground economy, moved or died.

Conservative estimates are that a million more children will be thrown into poverty by the loss of benefits, and as many as 3.5 million children may be affected once the five year lifetime limitation on benefits is fully implemented. Ironically, the right-wingers who wrote the new law bemoan the loss of "family values," at the same time as they force poor women with children to work.

DEMONIZING THE POOR, DRIVING DOWN WAGES

The politicians have gotten away with this in part by demonizing welfare recipients with racist and sexist stereotypes. The campaign begun by Ronald Reagan to present the mythical "welfare queen" (who is supposed

(Continued on page 9)

Liverpool dockers lead Peoples Charter march

London—One hundred forty-nine years after the Chartists held their massive gathering on Kennington Common for the Peoples Charter in April 1848, a march of 20,000 through London took off from the same spot to demand a new "Peoples Charter for Social Justice." The mobilization was initiated by 500 sacked Liverpool dockers and their families in alliance with environmental activists.

Delegates from the Liverpool Shop Stewards Committee have been travelling the world—from the USA to Japan (and utilizing the Internet)—to meet dockers facing similar attacks from globalized capital on working hours, union rights and job security. They have had successful solidarity actions and developed international links between workers at workplace level, without having to rely on union leaders.

Taking part in the march were other sacked workers who have been on strike for over a year-and-a-half, notably Magnet factory workers from Darlington and Black women hospital workers from Hillingdon, London. Participants also included "Reclaim the Streets" activists involved in direct action protests against roads and airport projects, animal rights supporters, Kurdish and Iranian trade unionists, human rights campaigners, anti-racists and gay activists.

As the march reached Whitehall, things got lively when youth blowing whistles and waving

red/green/black "lightning" flags stopped at the entrance to Downing St. Police guarding the "Thatcher-gate" soon found themselves enveloped in red smoke and fending off soft drink cans with their riot shields.

The afternoon rally in Trafalgar Square kicked off with Doreen McNally of Women of the Waterfront, who slammed both the union leadership's empty promises and the Labour Party's "promise" not to do anything at all for workers sacked for supporting trade unionism. "We're still here," she said. "Because WE are the union; WE are the working class." Her words were echoed by an organizer for the international Euro March against unemployment, welfare cuts and racism, which will converge on Amsterdam for the European Union Summit in mid-June.

What was notable, three weeks before a general election which promised to end 18 years of Tory corruption and oppression, was the absence of anyone prepared to say a good word for Tony Blair's "New Labour" Party, which has become so Clintonized that no one in Britain seems to expect anything apart from "business as usual." This mobilization was important to serve notice that, whatever the next government has in mind for securing a "New Britain" fit only for polluters and exploiters, the struggle will continue.

—David Black

ON THE INSIDE

- Five years after the L.A. rebellionPage 2
- From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya •
- Marx's 'new moments' alive for todayPage 4
- Essay • Helen Macfarlane and the dialectic of the democratic ideaPage 5
- Editorial • Netanyahu's Trojan HorsePage 10

Five years after the L.A. Rebellion

From Mississippi to South Central L.A.

by Georgiana Williams

I am the daughter of a sharecropper, the sixth of 13 children, born in the hills of Mississippi, where the white man was the law. You did what you were told. We were told that we were free. I am here to tell you that we were **not** free. We lived in a shack and raised our own food. When it was a bad year, and we could not raise a good crop, we only had brown gravy and bread to eat.

I still don't know how we survived had it not been for my grandmother who would speak out. She was the granddaughter of the Master of the plantation. She would say to Mr. Hawkins: "I want food for my family." He would tell her, "Dora, we ain't gonna make no money

Woman as Reason

this year." She would answer back: "We didn't make any money last year either."

I remember he told everyone on the plantation not to send the children to school. "They don't need to learn how to read and write in order to work in the fields." He put a padlock on the school room. When Big Mama finished her field, she got a friend to take her out to Mr. Hawkins' house. Big Mama told him, "I finished my crop and I want my children to go to school. And they are not going to work in anybody else's field." He said, "O.K." The locks were removed from the school as long as the plantation existed, until the early 1970s.

My whole life has been a fight for survival. It is better and clearer when your boss is a "bastard" because then you have no doubt who the enemy is. When he is nice and considerate, you think he is your friend—but the truth is both the "bastard" and the "nice boss" want the same thing—your labor, as hard as you can.

At an early age I made up my mind that I was not going to stay in those fields. I would not let any man hold me back. Women in the South, both Black and white, had no voice. We were taught to be submissive to **all men**. I would say to myself, "I'll be damned if I will do that!"

My grandmother is an example for all Black women. Had it not been for her, there's no telling what would have happened on that plantation. She did not allow things that went on in other families. My great great Aunt had no say over her body. Her sister's husband had four children by her. This made the plantation owner proud. The plantation owners were pleased when big men would breed women. The big man could breed **any woman he wanted**, and there was nothing any woman could say.

I said I'd be damned if it would happen to me. I barely made it out of high school. I did well in nursing school. Then I got the hell out, age 21.

I didn't know I had moved to a greater hell until May 12, 1992, when my son Damian was arrested following the L.A. Rebellion. I didn't know then what I know now, that all these years I was facing racism. I was too naive to understand, because it was nothing like where I came from.

Abortion debate heats up

Chicago—I have been told by friends and the media that my position on so-called "partial-birth abortion" (PBA) is unethical and extreme. They suggest that as a pro-choice activist I might have to maintain a public face on this issue, but I can't really personally support this "murderous procedure." A pro-choice Chicago columnist recently wrote that the abortion-rights position has "blurry moral underpinnings" that are particularly stressed by the PBA debate.

These are the successes of the anti-choice crusade to outlaw abortion step by step. Access to abortion has steadily eroded since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision by way of waiting periods, parental consent laws, Medicaid funding ban for abortions, and harassment and terrorism of abortion providers. Now the anti-choice movement has reinforced how "evil" abortion is—so this procedure, then the next, should be banned.

I have responded on two fronts: 1) Why would a woman "choose" a later-term abortion if she has access to an earlier, less complicated, less expensive abortion? and 2) We need to spend more time talking about women's needs, which requires that we step back from the current fetus frenzy.

Criminalizing abortion is not in the best interests of women's health. The PBA campaign's only mention of women is to suggest that they abort viable fetuses so they can fit into prom dresses and bikinis. Only impending death of the woman is an acceptable reason for a PBA...because women don't count.

Our biggest challenge in this sexist society is to truly convince ourselves that women do count—and they count first. As long as we are distracted by a relative handful of PBAs, we are not investing in good sexuality education, good family planning counseling, safe and affordable contraception, and good support systems for women to have healthy families.

Illinois will not be the first state nor the last—with legislation pending in almost 30 state legislatures—to probably make the ban the law of the land. We must use this costly wake-up call to redouble our efforts and reconvince our communities of women's worth.

—An unrepentant pro-choice activist

Years of combustion and anger is the reason for April 29, 1992, a rebellion against racism, police abuse, harassment, no work, homelessness, poor schools, and worthless politicians whose goals were to create wealth and power for themselves. Years of mistreatment left South Central bitter from empty promises of making life better. People were looking for that better life even long before the Watts Rebellion. Movement after movement, and nothing came out of it—no jobs, poor housing, no schools, and no food.

Businesses in the community charge higher prices and no money was put back into the communities. The police treated us like thieves every time we went into a place of business. By April 29, 1992, everyone was angry over the Rodney King verdict.

But the media did not tell how the police were at Florence and Normandie, beating up on young Black men. They even beat my son Mark, arrested him and Kermit and Shawndell. By that time, there were a lot of angry Black people—in the community and outside. They said, "We're not cavemen anymore. They beat Rodney King but they're not going to beat us any more!" Young Black men in the community took bricks and bottles, and "ran the cops' asses out of South Central." They said they were angry and would be angry until they received justice.

(Continued on page 9)

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey



More than 2,500 protesters marched through the streets of Tokyo, Apr. 6, demanding the expulsion of U.S. military bases and an end to rapes of Japanese women and children by U.S. servicemen.

Women's rights activists in Nigeria are enraged over increased restrictions on women's dress. In January, women were banned from wearing trousers in certain government buildings—with soldiers forcefully turning away women ignoring the dress code. In February, Ibrahim Sulu-Gambari, the Emir of Ilorin and a former Federal Court of Appeals justice, threatened public whipping for women wearing miniskirts in "traditional" areas. Women are challenging the bans in court as an infringement on human rights. "What one wears or eats should be nobody's concern. A woman ought to dress to satisfy herself, not even her husband."

Defend Camp Sister Spirit!

Ovett, Miss.—Camp Sister Spirit is a feminist education retreat dedicated to womyn's health, well-being, and personal space that hostesses a three-day Gulf Coast Womyn's Fest in April. Throughout the weekend womyn from all over the country roamed the beautifully wooded 120 acres.

I learned that when Brenda and Wanda moved in and turned the land into a wildlife sanctuary and a safe place for lesbians, their neighbor, who owns 100 acres on either side of the camp, began harassing them over his loss of a previously unowned hunting playground and having radical lesbians as neighbors. Brenda told me: "After years of struggle we've come out on top and he is very angry about that."

Over the past two years the water lines to Camp Sister Spirit have broken twice. They suspect this neighbor as a section of the pipes run under his property. When they asked him if they could check the pipes running through his property he said no and denied the water company permission to his land. To get access to the pipes, Wanda and Brenda would have to go through a long court battle. They decided instead to have the pipes re-routed under their property.

While waiting for the new pipes, Brenda said they "had to go to his house to turn the water off and on." When they did he "would set off fireworks, shoot his gun, and do all kinds of hateful things." In the end they installed the water lines themselves.

This man continues to harass Wanda and Brenda Henson and Camp Sister Spirit and has tried to enlist people in the nearby town to help him. Camp Sister Spirit needs our help. **Support your sisters! Defend Camp Sister Spirit!**

—Marie Tobin

Young Feminist Summit

Washington, D.C.—The National Organization for Women held a "Young Feminist Skills Building Summit: New Voices, New Visions; Young Feminists Taking Action for the 21st Century," April 11-13. The 1,200 women ages 11-25 joined together to fight for women, people of color, lesbians and people in poverty. Feminism meant we cannot fight for women without fighting against all oppression and that within each oppressed group, women are most attacked.

Almost every speaker talked about Clinton's "Welfare Reform" act and the need to stop it now. When two million women and four million children—who could be taken away from their mothers—are made homeless, and it's based on the total myth of the "welfare queen" I kept wondering why there hasn't been a revolution.

All the speakers were talking about revolution even when some didn't say the word—about how every time we've moved up there's been a complete backlash, and that this time, we won't be pushed back. It really made me feel like revolution was possible.

So many women came to the session on Women and Socialism that they had to open up another room. A lot of women didn't like what the socialist speaker was saying. She acted like Cuba and South Africa were so great because now women can get abortions, like that solved everything. People asked what happens after the revolutionary movement starts, then where do we go? What will our place be? Somebody brought up AIDS in Cuba and that it's a non-sexist society. They were wondering if that's how it would be with us after a revolution—where it seems like nothing really changes.

A workshop on the Promise Keepers and the Religious Right showed a video of a women's organization founded by the wife of the PKs founder. At one rally, this woman spoke with tears flowing down her face about how "we will be submissive to you." Then a man howled, "Women haven't been submissive because we haven't given them a reason to be submissive! But I promise we will!" The men cheered wildly. It was scary to learn how huge and organized they are and how much they've affected women's lives.

That was something I learned at the Young Women's Abortion Rights workshop: because of parental consent and notification laws, the incidence of young women dying from illegal abortions is rising fast.

Most empowering was the March on the Capitol. The 400 of us there incorporated demands from the conference into our chants and got fake tattoos of a woman's symbol with the word "Revolution" going through it. We left feeling like we could make it happen.

—20-year-old feminist

Lesbians under Nazism: 'Days of Masquerade'

Recently gay historians have revealed a most gruesome history of the treatment of homosexual men by the Nazis. However, the stories of lesbians have often been left out of those accounts. Claudia Schoppmann, in **Days of Masquerade: Life Stories of Lesbians During the Third Reich**, has brought out from the closet the history of lesbian oppression during, "the most terrible chapter of German history."

In the mid to late '20s, inspired by the Women's Suffrage Movement, lesbians in Berlin and other major German cities joined the movement to strike the anti-homosexual law Paragraph 175 of the German Criminal Code. Because it was illegal for women to gather politically, these lesbians creatively organized "bowling clubs" or "savings clubs."

This creativity did not save them from the early Nazi Party, and by 1933 when the Nazis took power, lesbians were added to Paragraph 175. Nazis began persecuting women who were unmarried and childless, many of whom were lesbians, and incarcerating them as political prisoners. Lesbians in relationships for years were forced to marry men to avoid the eye of the Nazi informants—the house superintendents and block leaders. The "lucky" ones found gay men to marry. The most unlucky found themselves in prisons and concentration camps.

Of the many tales of lesbians who survived the holocaust, the most interesting is of Hilde Radush, a revolutionary trade union organizer and Communist Party member. When she was arrested in 1933 for her political activity and imprisoned for six months, she continued organizing and with other women fought for and achieved better conditions for prisoners. Since this was 1933, she was not sent to a concentration camp, which later would become a matter of course.

After being released from prison, she became a manual laborer, and returned to illegal worker organizing. She managed to elude Nazi informants by refraining from meeting with other lesbians at clubs, and at one point escaping arrest with her lover by living in a remote wooden shed.

Hilde's persecution was not limited to the Nazis however. By 1946, she had recognized the "totalitarian politics" of the CP and broken with them. Her former "comrades" decided to report her lesbianism to her workplace at the Department for Victims of Fascism. They were successful and Hilde was fired. She never stopped organizing however, and eventually founded L74, a group for elderly lesbians, in 1970. Before her death at age 90 she said of herself, "I never saw myself as a victim, always a fighter!"

—Sharon Cannery

Outsourcing, overwork spur auto strikes

Chicago—UAW members at GM's Oklahoma City plant walked off their jobs on April 4. The union blamed the strike on outsourcing by GM, including farming out painting of small parts, and is demanding that GM hire several hundred workers and purchase more tools to reduce injuries.

The strike was the first in the plant's 18-year history. It follows four months of talks for the Local 1999 contract since passage of a national contract in December. About a third of GM's 105 UAW plants still have not negotiated local contracts.

Outsourcing, which is just another word for buying components from runaway, non-union, cheap-labor suppliers, has been an issue in many of the local contract fights. So is too much overtime.

Long hours, sweated conditions, and the injuries that come with them helped provoke the Oklahoma City GM strike as it had in strikes elsewhere in the past two years. One former Oklahoma City worker explained, "They have been working 12-hour days to make Malibus and Cutlasses. GM has just been trying to work their butts off."

This strike had been years in the making. "We got a world class quality audit in the early 1990s," one GM worker recounted. "Every day, they audited cars for dents, dings, and wires not plugged in. The Oklahoma City plant surpassed the Japanese who had the record for quality before then. They gave us \$40 'GM-UAW' jackets for what we did. Then after six months, they announced a 10% labor cut. Of course, quality came down, but they thought they had some to spare.

"Then robotics went in starting in 1995. We lost 600 jobs. It has been an ongoing thing. There are around 2,000 people at GM Oklahoma City today. In 1983 there were about 6,200."

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

poorly paid masses outside. They are the temporaries who work at Helene Curtis, whose wages are so low and situations so insecure that they volunteer for all the overtime. They are the full-time, permanent, experienced Helene Curtis employees who have no jobs when the bottle plant, the professional unit and the warehouse close.

It is competition among workers themselves, Karl Marx wrote in the Communist Manifesto, that continually upsets their organization. The capitalist system had created "...a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition..."

Poor Black women in right-to-work Mississippi created a movement when they unionized the Delta Pride catfish processing plants a decade ago. They won a nationally supported three-month strike in 1990, which precipitated industry-wide organizing. Yet they, too, must remain vigilant against the evil of competition.

The Delta Pride contract ratified on March 4 will expire on the same date at all three plants so the company can't produce at one plant while the workers at another are in negotiations or on strike ("Delta Pride loses o.t. grab," *News & Letters*, April 1997). "What I feel we need to do now," a union activist wrote, "is to organize the three non-union catfish plants in the Delta, so they don't undermine what we have done."

There is no place to stop, no plateau upon which to rest in the struggle, because capital relentlessly tries to turn everything to its advantage. The **Communist Manifesto** ends, not with competition, but with a call for unity. As long as capital exists, we remain wage slaves and in chains. We have a different world to win.



UAW workers at Pontiac East join the strike wave.

GM's efforts to squeeze more work from hourly workers has reached into every plant. "Downsizing is really up-production," pointed out a longtime worker at GM Shreveport, La. "Last year we produced an extra 25,000 Hombre vehicles for Isuzu, with no extra people to make them. Basically, Isuzu got them for free. If your job was too much to take and you complained, the time-and-motion man would come to check you out. If he thought you could handle the work, you were screwed. If you could get the union to file a grievance, it wasn't likely you'd win."

The UAW struck GM's Pontiac East, Mich. plant that employs some 5,400 union workers. The issues there also include workforce size and outsourcing. The union wants GM to hire several hundred more workers. Workers at GM plants in Fort Wayne, Ind. and Moraine, Ohio won new local contracts after strikes this year.

—Autoworker

Detroit—More than 1,800 auto workers at Chrysler's Mound Road engine plant in Detroit walked off their jobs on April 10 in protest against the corporation's plans to transfer some 150 jobs to Dana Corp., a parts supplier that has many non-union plants. The affected workers produce engine drive shafts.

Within a week, the strike's effect spread to shut down five other plants with nearly 15,000 workers, halting production of Chrysler's highly profitable Jeep Grand Cherokee and Dodge Ram pickup. Outsourcing is but one of many problems, for as a union official at the engine plant pointed out, they now have 90 workers on an engine block line, whereas present technology will reduce that number to 26.

Chrysler makes more profit per vehicle than either Ford or GM and gets most of its auto parts from outside suppliers, which contributed to its first quarter record profits of \$1.3 billion.

—Supporter

Delta Pride is sickening

Indianola, Miss.—People here at the Delta Pride Catfish plant sometimes work long hours. We get tired and sick when we work in these conditions. So last month the strangest coincidence happened: almost 400 out of 600 workers called in sick or had other business we had to do. The company couldn't get out production.

We just won our contract (see *News & Letters*, April 1997) but the company is pulling a dirty trick on us. Before this contract we had twelve absences allowed. If we went over we got fired. Every 28 days you could work off a day. In negotiations the union asked Delta Pride to clear all our files of the absent days we had accumulated and not change the absentee policy for the duration of the contract. The company agreed; it was a verbal agreement. Two weeks later they changed the whole absentee policy!

They took the absence days allowed from 12 down to seven. Now we have to work 56 days to take off one absence. If we miss Monday and don't call in, they give us two absences. Before we used to get a tardy if we were two hours late and four tardies would count as one day absent. Now we get a tardy if we are one hour late and three tardies count as an absence. Already workers have been fired because they've missed seven days of work.

They had said they would clear all our days, but they didn't. Those with over seven absent days were taken back to four. Those with four days or less went back to zero. These absences are our sick time. To get a sick day to not count as an absence we have to get a note from the doctor, take three days off as a leave—and lose our pay.

Say at noon I get sick and go to the supervisor and say, "I'm sick, I just can't make it the rest of the day." If she says, "I need you at work, go take an Advil. I'm not authorizing you to leave," and I leave, that's termination. No matter what.

That's what we're dealing with. It's just been chaos. We are so fired up.

We heard that Delta Pride wants to sue the union. They think it is behind this strange coincidence. But we think this company is just making us all sick and tired. In fact, we wouldn't be surprised if this strange incident didn't repeat itself in another 56 days or so!

—Sick and tired Delta Pride workers

Kaiser HMO shut down

Oakland, Cal.—On April 16, 7,600 nurses and 19,000 other health care workers in 45 different facilities staged a one day strike at Kaiser Permanente, a huge northern California HMO. It was a near total shutdown over Kaiser's declining quality of care and lack of control of health care by those who deliver it. Many patients came to support the workers against the Kaiser closing of health care facilities in poorer areas. Kaiser was recently found culpable in the deaths of three patients who came to the Richmond emergency room. They died in transport to other facilities due to Kaiser's deliberate elimination of critical care beds.

There was a lot of pre-strike discussion over why service workers should support the nurses. Everyone realized that there is a principle at work greater than the wage and benefit issue of a wage freeze in the hospital and a 15% wage cut in the clinics. It is about denying patient care driven by excess greed.

One nurse said that the attitude toward the caregiver is that she is disposable, thereby trivializing care-giving. This trend includes denying serious therapies deemed too costly, and eliminating skilled nurses now seen as overhead. They now use the term "product" to refer to health care where both patient and care-giver equally feel like parts on an assembly line.

The prevailing view on the 24-hour picket was that this strike is a dress rehearsal for a more serious confrontation. The magnificent show of solidarity revealed that the money-managers can't just continue to steamroll the workers and patients in their restructuring towards the total commodification of health care.

This is fundamentally what our fight is about. It is about putting the human being back into health care. We've been warning about impending tragedies like the deaths in Richmond for years now. We're on the sidewalk today because we can't make our point from within.

—Kaiser rank-and-filer

Scabs at Detroit papers

Detroit—Legal and tactical sparring continues between the Detroit News and Free Press management and the 1900 locked out union workers who went out on strike in July of 1995.

Some 200 workers, mostly members of the typographical and pressmen's unions who have "lifetime work contracts," are expected to be recalled by the end of April—not to go back to work, but to be offered contract buyouts. Many of the recalled workers have said they would accept a buyout because they know they will face job harassment, unsafe working conditions and the threat of being fired for any pretext. As one printer said, "I just can't see myself going back to work under those conditions, especially with scabs all around me."

Older workers accepting buyouts will be replaced with lower-paid employees under an expected two- or three-tier wage system.

Printer Armand Nevers said that the first day of recall, returnees were given tests on a computer. Those "passing" the test receive \$17.50 an hour and those failing \$12.00 an hour. Nevers, who had expertly operated a computer before the strike, but had been an active striker, laughingly noted, "As soon as I saw that the guy giving the test was a scab, I knew I would never 'pass' that test—and I didn't."

Detroit's Labor Board regional director filed a complaint against the newspapers charging them with refusing to rehire all of the locked out workers when the unions offered their unconditional return to work in March. This complaint will support the appeal to the Labor Board by the unions for a federal court "10(j)" injunction, which could force the newspapers to recall all of the locked out workers with back pay from the date of the unconditional offer to return to work. A hearing on the injunction is expected this summer.

—Andy Phillips

Sinai Kosher harassment

Chicago—Kiran and Mason are at it again. People have complained plenty to management about these two foremen and the way they harass us. During the winter, there was even a petition going around about them. Those two are really bad when they tell you to work 13 or 14 hours—twelve hours is mandatory. They will holler if you want to go home or if you're not working fast enough. The people they holler at are women, mainly Mexican, Black and Polish.

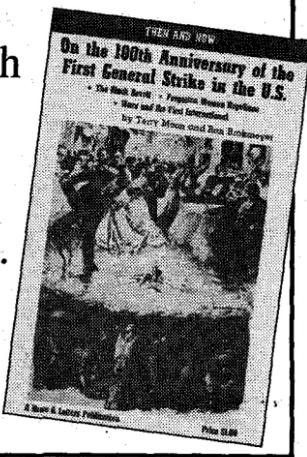
Local 100 (United Food and Commercial Workers union) stands with the company whenever there's a complaint. When Kiran and Mason find out the union isn't going to do anything, they feel free to make up their rules instead of going by the contract. They say seniority works for layoffs and vacations, but not for jobs.

And it's not like it's just those two who are against us. Sinai Kosher closes down every year for Passover. They don't pay us and they tell us we can't file for unemployment. If everybody—all of us—say we are not going to stand management walking all over us, maybe we can put up and to it.

—Sinai Kosher worker

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

Editor's note

Karl Marx's birthday (May 5) and May Day, the historical anniversary of the struggle for the eight-hour work day (May 1), give us the occasion to present excerpts of a lecture by Raya Dunayevskaya on the newly completed manuscript of her book, **Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution**. The talk, given in Detroit on Dec. 13, 1981, was first published in Dunayevskaya's collection of writings titled **Women's Liberation and The Dialectics of Revolution**, first published in 1985 and re-issued last year. The totality of Marx's development and writings is the focus not just this lecture, but of the current series of classes sponsored by News and Letters Committees (see announcement on page 5).

YESTERDAY, AT MIDNIGHT, THE COUNTERREVOLUTION took its greatest step forward in Poland; so we must be conscious today that we are meeting under the whip of counterrevolution.* It's sad, indeed, to think that 39 years ago it was precisely such a move—that time it was the fascists and the Stalinists both—that the world witnessed. I'm referring to the crushing of the Jewish Ghetto Uprising in Poland and the Warsaw Uprising when the Red Army stood outside the gates to make sure that the Nazis first destroyed it before the Russians moved in. What was opposite to that (and that's what dialectics means—that you always have to see the opposites as struggle) was that, at that time, we issued the slogan, "All roads lead to Warsaw," by which we did not mean the counterrevolution but the new beginnings, the new age that began with the national resistance movement. That fight has continued for 39 long years.

It is important to recognize that, precisely because we are meeting under the whip of counterrevolution, we must hold high the banner of revolution and see to it that it is not a confrontation in which the counterrevolution wins, but in which we will win. What becomes ever more imperative is the Absolute Method of the dialectic—how to overcome, how to see the dual rhythm of revolution, the overcoming of the old and the creation of the new. The adventurous journey that we're starting on here will permit us to see 150 years of confrontation, revolutions, forward moves, and unfortunately also backward moves. We will have a chance to meet great revolutionaries—Marx, Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky; and those not so great, like Plekhanov. And we will examine the great revolutions—from 1848, to 1905-07, to 1917-19, to those in our own day.

In order to establish this intercommunication between the ages, in order to see that philosophy and revolution is not an abstraction, in order to grasp what is the task for today, let me begin first with the purpose and the method of **Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution**: Why today? Why now? What is its significance?

First, we had in the early 1970s the transcription and publication of Karl Marx's **Ethnological Notebooks**. It's the raw transcription as to how Marx was thinking in the last years of his life. Now, we want to always have before us the phrase "at one and the same time," so that we always get the opposites together and see that it isn't a matter of development as just quantitative, but development through contradiction. Thus, with the publication of the **Ethnological Notebooks** came the realization, at the same time, that far from Marx and Engels being one person, they were not. It wasn't because Engels betrayed; it was that there is only one founder of a movement.

Engels published **The Origin of the Family** just a

* Poland's Communist Party First Secretary, General Jaruzelski, imposed martial law on Dec. 13, 1981 to arrest the 18-month-long Solidarity union movement sweeping the country.

**Women's Liberation
and The Dialectics
of Revolution**

Reaching for the Future

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Part I

Women, Labor and the Black Dimension

Part II

Revolutionaries all

Part III

Sexism, Politics and Revolution—
Japan, Portugal, Poland, China, Latin America, the
U.S.—Is There an Organizational Answer?

Part IV

The Trail to the 1980s: The Missing Link—Philosophy—
in the Relationship of Revolution to Organization

To order, see page 7.

Marx's 'new moments' alive for today

few months after Marx's death. He said he published it as a "bequest" of Marx and referred to those particular studies of Morgan's **Ancient Society** that Marx did not have a chance to write up. But we never saw Marx's **Notebooks**. When we did, we found that, far from there being the three or four paragraphs that Engels quoted in his **Origin**, there were 250 page's worth of notes. They weren't only on the American study, they were also against the imperialists of Great Britain. And Marx's work, above all, was not at all a unilinear study; it was a multilinear study. Whereas it was very great to find out that, far from being backward, primitive society was a very high stage of development, it wasn't a question of adding a Frigidaire to primitive communism to have the new society. Marx was using that study to show what the actual development of humanity was, but was not saying that's all the future society will be, much less that the move from matriarchal or matrilineal societies to patriarchy was the "world historic defeat of the female sex."

This does not mean that we forget that Engels was Marx's closest collaborator, without whom we would not have had Volumes II and III of **Capital**. But neither is it a matter of needing to delude oneself by considering that Engels said all there was to be said on the subject when he stated that Marx was a genius and all the rest, including himself, only talented. What is needed is to view their complex relationship in the context of our age. It is our age that is the first to have Marx's works as a totality. It is thus incumbent on us to draw a dividing line between what Marx's Marxism is and what

**"Every moment
of Marx's
development...
spells out the
need for
'revolution in
permanence.'"**

Engels interpreted that to be. To do this we cannot consider the category "post-Marx Marxists" as a mere chronological designation. Rather, the category must be seen as the essential dividing line between Marx's own works and those of any interpreter, and that includes Engels...

IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE ABSOLUTE METHOD, we have to ask: How does it happen that we still have to return to Marx? Why didn't the women recognize the revolutionary, Rosa Luxemburg? What was it that was so great in Marx that we suddenly developed the expression of "post-Marx Marxists" as a category that was a deviation from Marxism and wasn't the challenge to our age?

I will start way in advance first and then go directly to Marx's high point. By way in advance I mean when Marx was just a college student. Believe me, he was no Marxist yet. He hadn't found the class struggle. It was even before 1841; it was 1837. He was just choosing an occupation, and his father wanted him to be a lawyer. The greatest philosophy of law was [by] Savigny, who was Marx's teacher, and Marx wrote 300 pages on that. Here is what he said afterward about his own great work—the 300 pages he had just written on Roman law which he called the "unhappy document"—and about why he was giving up that work and turning to Hegel: "The whole thing is replete with tripartite divisions, with tedious prolixities. And the Roman constitutions are misused in the most barbaric fashion in order to force them into my system." (Talk about self-criticism!)

He then went to the Hegelian dialectic. He thought that, compared to Law, it was going to be really great and he wrote to his father how wonderful life was going to be now that he had discovered negativity. That was 1837; he was 19 years old. Four years later, in 1841, he was writing his Doctoral Dissertation on Epicurus and Democritus. Now if there is any strong part in Hegel it's thought, the history of thought. Whereupon, Marx decided to disagree with Hegel's interpretation of the history of Greek thought of 500 or 600 B.C. He said that of course Hegel was the greatest philosopher, but because he was so comprehensive and so total he couldn't pay attention to detail. And the detail Marx wanted to look at was Epicurus... What, however, was really happening? Marx was seeing in Hegel's Absolute a new beginning. What he was breaking with was that, in Hegel, Absolute meant some sort of God. What he was accepting was self-development, self-determination, self-transcendence, in the sense that it all comes from inside. The revolutionary nature—whether it's in you

as an individual, or whether it's in the nations that will fight for freedom—is there.

I have to appeal to literature at this point, because I think that Melville had the greatest sense—not of Marx, I don't think he knew Marx—but of what he called "abrupt intermergings." Let me read you what Melville says happens to a writer who doesn't know where he's going, but who is going somewhere great: "The profounder emanations of the human mind intended to illustrate all that could humanly be known of life. These never unravel their own intricacies, and have no proper annex but, in imperfect, unanticipated, disappointed sequels as mutilated stumps hurry to abrupt intermergings with eternal ties of time and space."

We see these abrupt intermergings in the 1840s when the question Marx posed to himself in challenging his master, Hegel, was: Is it possible to continue something as great as Hegel's dialectical philosophy after he has gone? What are the new beginnings? How do you begin anew? Marx said that the totality Hegel had achieved was very great but that there are two totalities: the totality of thought as it self-develops to the Absolute Idea; and the objective world. Here are the Moselle peasants, Marx said, and they are stealing wood. He counted all the laws against wood theft and proved there were more laws against that than against all other crimes including murder—without anyone bothering to ask why the peasants had to steal wood to stay warm. He concluded there were really two worlds—the world of thought and the objective world. He wasn't saying the world of thought was no good, because he was going to take a lot from Hegel. But, he said, we need to oppose the philosopher for being abstract; and we need to oppose the actual reality for all the misery we have—whether that's the Moselle peasants, or press censorship, or whatever. And now Marx had a new Subject—the proletariat... Declaring the proletariat to be the "universal" class did not mean that Marx abandoned either all other forces of revolution, like the peasantry, or other lands than the industrialized ones. That is seen most clearly in his last decade. The universal that Marx never abandoned was revolution—whether that was in relation to the proletariat or the peasantry or the Arabs in Algeria or the "intelligent black," i.e., the Aborigines in Australia...

Look at what Marx was writing at the end of his life, after he had finished **Capital**. Think of it—he spends 25 years working out **Capital**, his greatest theoretical work; and its greatest part is "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation." (The idea he developed there was that capitalism develops to this point and then finally collapses; and that since the capitalist lands are the technologically advanced world, they will show the backward world its path.) Now he says that was true only of West Europe. It is not a universal. The Russians could escape that horror of capitalism if they had a revolution and saw to it that it was related to the other revolutions.

The question always was: What is the relationship of revolution in your own life, in the life of your country, in your international life, and in the world revolution. And what is the relationship of your activity to a particular thought—whether that be against capitalism, or against feudalism, whether it be against the old relationship, or the new relationship, of Man to Woman.

WHAT HE HAD LAID AS A TRAIL FOR US, therefore, was that the question of permanent revolution was not something that happened only in 1848 or 1850, or even in 1871 with the greatest revolution of his lifetime, the Paris Commune; it was also in the 1880s when there was nothing like that happening. What he was saying was that there might be something happening if the Russians really had a revolution. The so-called backward countries, instead of being the ones that would be "shown the light" by the advanced, would themselves show the light to the world.

The post-Marx Marxists have not only kept hidden the various writings of Marx so that each generation

(Continued on page 10)

1. Herman Melville, **Pierre** (Evanston: Harcourt Brace, 1971), p. 199.

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759-C

Essay Article

On the 150th anniversary of Marx's *Communist Manifesto*

by David Black

Author's note: This essay introduces a few of the themes of a forthcoming book-length study—the first-ever-of Helen Macfarlane, feminist, Hegelian and 'Red Republican.'

Helen Macfarlane is "known" to historians of Marxism and the British labor movement for her translation into English of the *Communist Manifesto*. Presented by the great English Chartist leader George Julian Harney as the "most revolutionary document ever given to the world," it was serialized in the weekly paper of the Fraternal Democrats, the *Red Republican*, in November 1850.

Macfarlane wasn't credited in the paper for the translation, and even as one of the *Red Republican's* most prolific contributors, she had to write under the male pseudonym, "Howard Morton." Her writings, which poured out in a torrent of passion and intelligence during the year 1850, have been universally ignored by historians for a century-and-a-half; so much so that there is no known portrait of her and even the dates of her birth and death are unknown.

To make an informed guess, she was probably born during the "baby boom" at the end of the Napoleonic Wars—one of that rebellious generation which included other original rebels such as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Harney. Macfarlane's voice is also representative of that generation's creative—and indeed rebellious—women thinkers, such as George Eliot (born 1819) and the three Bronte sisters (born between 1816 and 1820), who also had to use male pseudonyms. However, in the case of Macfarlane, a fervent revolutionary and feminist, the obscurity inflicted on her was to be near total.

PHILOSOPHY IN A WORKERS' PAPER

In her first article for the *Red Republican*, Macfarlane looked at Chartism in 1850 as "a different thing from Chartism in 1840" now that "English proletarians" had proved "they are the true democrats and had progressed from the idea of simple political reform to the idea of Social Revolution. Returning lately to this country after a long absence of some years I was agreeably surprised by this fact. 'What old mole; workest thou in the earth so fast?'"

Macfarlane informs her readers in Harney's other publication, the *Democratic Review*: "I am free to confess that, for me the most joyful of all spectacles possible in these times...[was] one which I enjoyed extremely at Vienna, in March 1848, i.e., 'a universal tumbling of imposters.' For it amounts to this; that men are determined to live no longer in lies...Ca ira! And how do men come to perceive that the old social forms are worn out and useless? By the advent of a new Idea."

The first half of the 19th century had been an almost continuous period of revolt throughout the British Isles, as "King Cotton" consolidated its rule and the landowning aristocracy held onto its powers and privileges. Queen Victoria's Inferno consisted, as Macfarlane puts it, of the "thirty thousand women, in London alone...starving at shirtmaking"; the jails and hulks "recruited from the starving ranks of labor"; and the men working "18 hours a day, baking bread in hot, unhealthy places, for a pittance hardly sufficient to keep soul and body together."

Since the reaction of "Moral England" to the working class revolts of the 1840s had been a frenzy of church-building and bible thumping, for Macfarlane the battle of ideas demanded a philosophical/political intervention in "spiritual matters."

Her overall attitude can especially be seen from her view of pantheism. Pantheism, she wrote, is "the sublime and cheering doctrine of man's 'infinity'—as the oak lies folded in the acorn...the divine nature (or at least in a manifestation of it which is found only in man) is common to us all...we are bound to do to others, as we would they should do to us. This rule is universally valid, without distinction of birth, age, rank, sex, country, color, cultivation, or the like."

"This great work had been begun by the Lollards and other heretics of the Middle Ages, but its accomplishment was reserved for Luther...that unique and profound investigation into the nature of man—which, conducted by a phalanx of modern philosophers, was terminated by Hegel, the last and greatest. The result of this investigation was the democratic idea, but as thought, not in the inadequate form of a history or saga. As Hegel expresses it, 'Freedom is a necessary element in the conception, man'...The next step in the history of this idea, will be its practical realization."

For Macfarlane, this Idea is the same "democratic idea" which appeared in "the person of the poor despised Jewish proletarian, the Galilean carpenter's son."

She quoted Hegel's statement on the relationship between Christianity and freedom: "In Christianity...these modes of representation make freedom independent of rank, birth, cultivation and the like; and the

progress which has been made by this means is immense. Yet this mode of viewing the matter is somewhat different from the fact that freedom is an indispensable element in the conception of man. The undefined feeling of this fact has worked for centuries in the dark; the instinct for freedom has produced the most terrible revolutions, but the idea of the innate freedom of man—this knowledge of his own nature—is not old."

Macfarlane said of this: "These two modes of viewing the matter are the necessary complement of each other. The one is imaginative, the other intellectual; the one is religious, the other philosophical. The first mode presents the democratic idea in the form of a myth; the second presents it in the more appropriate and developed form of a conception—as a product of pure reason. But they both belong to the modern world."

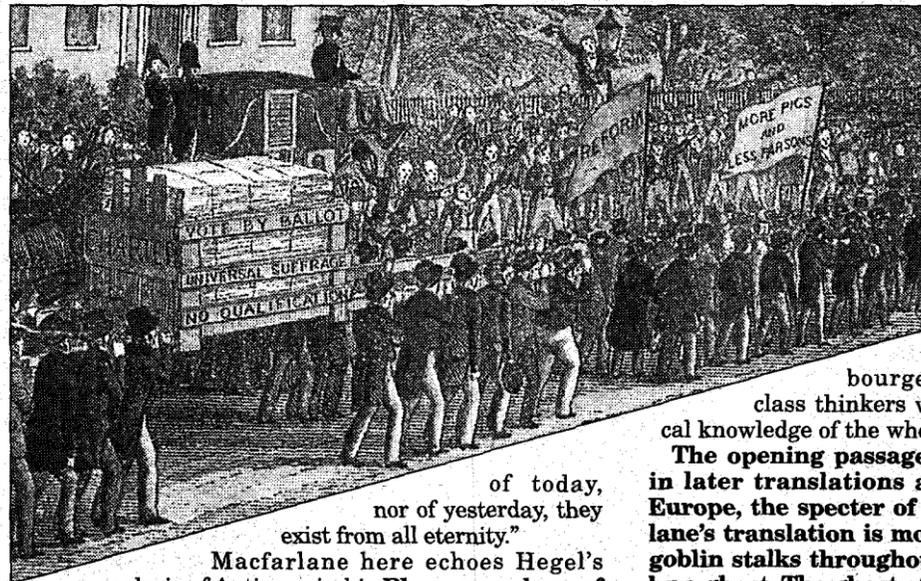
HELEN MACFARLANE and THE DIALECTIC of the DEMOCRATIC IDEA

Hegel argued that philosophy sometimes has to exercise "audacity." So also, for Helen Macfarlane, must its practical realization.

She wrote: "We, who rally around the Red Flag, are reproached with entertaining the nefarious design of completely destroying the existing order of things.... In ancient times we were accounted 'the enemies of the

human race,' and accused of setting fire to Rome....I am happy to say we still retain our old reputation. Yet even in England a few of us who belong to the 'better sort' who have repudiated all claim to be considered respectable, because for them the words Justice and Love are not mere empty sounds without a meaning; because they say—like Antigone in Sophocles—the laws of God are not

Chartists present a petition demanding labor and voting rights to Parliament in May 1842. It was signed by 3.3 million people and had to be brought to the House of Commons in a crate carried by 24 men.



of today, nor of yesterday, they exist from all eternity."

Macfarlane here echoes Hegel's analysis of Antigone in his *Phenomenology of Mind*. Antigone chooses to be buried alive rather than let Creon, the ruler of the state, violate the burial rites of her people by leaving her dead brother to be devoured by the birds. The dramatic clash takes place between two irreconcilable principles: on the one hand, that of the city-state, which is cruel, but nonetheless, in Hegel's view, historically "progressive"; on the other hand, that of "natural" family honor, based on the kinship principles of a stateless tribal society. The dialectical tension is the result of the supposedly less "civilized" of the two colliding forces gaining a "self-conscious actual universality."

As Georg Lukacs points out in his monumental study *The Young Hegel*, Hegel sees a similar "tragedy in the realm of the ethical" in capitalism, where great wealth is "indissolubly connected with the direst poverty." Economics now

expresses the powers of the "lower world"—which is now inverted with the "higher world" and threatens the very notion of an ethical state by dissolving the "bonds uniting the whole people."

Lukacs argues that Hegel, in a sense, anticipated the anthropologist Bachofen, who saw in the Oresteia/Antigone stories the values of a forgotten but real tribal society based on matriarchy. Bachofen's findings were used by Marx in his *Ethnological Notebooks*.

Engels reworked Marx's notes for his own *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, in which the notion of the "world historic defeat of the female sex" became the theoretical basis for later Marxists to subsume women's liberation into the over-arching statist "socialism" of the vanguard party. Engels' work was quite different, according to Raya Dunayevskaya, than Marx's insights into the development and potential survival of ancient collective social forms, in which women at times enjoyed freedom denied to them under capitalism.

In the context of the 1970s women's liberation movement, Dunayevskaya took up Lukacs' analysis of the Oresteia and suggests that Antigone is a precursor of a subversive collectivity of consciousness in which the individual's objective experience in revolt can lead to a new subjectivity, one "purified," to quote Hegel, of all that "interferes with its universality." Rather than simply "externalize" itself in the totality—the fate of all "subjective factors" according to Lukacs—the "autonomy" of self-liberation prevails because the objectivity is, as in Antigone, reabsorbed as a "principle."¹

Macfarlane, who opposed the miseducation of women in bourgeois society in roles as "admirable wives and mothers," saw family ties as having a different meaning for women of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. Writing in the *Red Republican* on the stripping and flogging of women by Austrian troops which enraged her, Macfarlane points out that the women "had aided those to whom they were bound by every natural and legal tie" as part of the struggle for Freedom. Like Antigone, they upheld a "higher law" than that laid down by the state.

TRANSLATING COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Macfarlane's recognition of her own subjectivity as one of the "few of us belonging to the 'better sort,' who have defected to the side of the oppressed, comes not from Hegel, or Sophocles, but from her own encounter with Marx and Engels in the light of her own political experiences. The *Communist Manifesto*, as translated by Macfarlane, celebrates the fact that: "A part of the bourgeoisie is joining the proletariat, and particularly a part of bourgeois ideologists, or middle-class thinkers who have attained a theoretical knowledge of the whole historical movement."

The opening passage of the *Manifesto* appears in later translations as: "A specter is haunting Europe, the specter of Communism." But Macfarlane's translation is more exotic: "A frightful hobgoblin stalks throughout Europe. We are haunted by a ghost. The ghost of Communism."

The rest of her translation is less controversial. It was reprinted twice in New York in 1871; first, in abridged form in *The World* and then as a whole in *Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly*.

Macfarlane's translation is interesting to compare with the 1888 version by Samuel Moore, which was commissioned by

(Continued on page 9)

Celebrate the 150th anniversary of Marx's *Communist Manifesto* by attending our ongoing six-part class series on



Marx's Philosophy of "Revolution-in-Permanence": Its Meaning for Today

This class series explores the full range of Marx's work, from his doctoral dissertation of 1841 and epochal 'Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844', to the 'Grundrisse' and 'Capital', to his writings on technologically underdeveloped societies, man/woman relations, and dialectics of organization in his 'Ethnological Notebooks'.

Contact the News and Letters Committees local in the area nearest you for information on date and time of the meetings. See the directory on page 11.

1. Georg Lukacs, *The Young Hegel* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1975), pp. 411-12. See also Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991). Not until 1872 did Marx and Engels publicly reveal, in the Preface to the German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, that it "was published in the English for the first time in 1850 in the *Red Republican*, translated by Miss Helen Macfarlane."

ON THE 150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO, MARX'S MEANING FOR TODAY

The spirit of the **Communist Manifesto** was described by Raya Dunayevskaya in **Philosophy and Revolution** as part of the dialectic movement of becoming: "We are not saying that Marx said all he wanted to say in 1844 ... the very opposite is the case. Just as this historic class manifesto did not 'forget' the individual... neither did its theory of the economic interpretation of history depart for a single instance from actual live battles ... All the ideas in the **Manifesto** and many new ones underwent a continuous self-development along with fundamental objective development." That is what I understand to be the spirit of the classes N&L is sponsoring on "Marx's Philosophy of Revolution and its Meaning for Today."

**Jennifer Pen
California**

To dig out Marx for this generation requires digging our way out of a lot of garbage thrown upon Marx by post-Marx Marxism.

**G. Emmett
Chicago**

Maya Jhansi's essay, "Theorizing Third World Feminism (April N&L)" presents a much-needed Marxist-Humanist critique of postmodernist views on feminism. The crux is that it is not so much a question of theorists moving away from real life struggles but avoiding philosophic responsibility for those struggles, which explains the illusion that tensions of race, class and nationalism will be solved through practice—a sure formula for falling into the "shortcuts and substitutions, religion included" that Dunayevskaya showed led to aborted revolutions. Never was the banner of Marx's philosophy of liberation more needed.

**Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis**

The reformist Social Democrats of the Second International tended to see Marx as a symbol of rigor and scholarship rather than as a source of continuing, living insight. Though the situation improved markedly when the fledgling Bolshevik regime approved David Riazanov's projected "complete edition" of Marx's works in the 1920s, Stalin's conquest of power spelled doom for Riazanov's plans (and for himself). The "official" Stalinist editions of Marx's writings were so bowdlerized that they were virtually censored. Marx had become an icon in a movement that sought to bury him even as it professed to honor him.

Anti-authoritarian Marxist scholars like Rubel and Draper took steps to acquaint the educated public with Marx's unvarnished ideas, but the task was far from finished when they died. Hence the importance of contributions like Kevin Anderson's excellent review in the March N&L of the effort to publish Marx's collected works.

**David Smith
Kansas**

I appreciated the article on Mexico by Mitch Weerth because after reporting on the greatness of the Zapatistas, he posed very sharply their problems in linking up with the industrial working class of urban Mexico—and did so creatively, by bringing in Marx's 1880s writings on the relationship of rural Russian revolt to the labor movement in the industrialized West.

**Marxist sociologist
Illinois**

I studied and taught for a while at a South African university in an English department riding a rocky road between a Marxist approach to literature, espoused by many of the teachers, and the traditional approach of the Liberal Humanists. Many a battle was (and still is being) fought. As a student encountering historical materialist theory for the first time, I felt as though a jigsaw puzzle had suddenly been completed. At last I had a means of acquiring some understanding of the forces of oppression, the perpetuation of inequalities.

**New subscriber
New York**

I agree with Marx's concept of proletarians and bourgeoisie, the way he showed how the exploitation occurs. The class division in the Black community is too strong today. Those on top are not going to let those on bottom rise because it would threaten them. It's the same whether it's Black or white.

**Environmental justice activist
Tennessee**

I feel that what N&L is trying to work out in the paper is Marx's conception of history, as Dunayevskaya put it in her "Critique of Althusser's anti-Hegelianism": "History in Marx's sense of people, workers shaping history, resolving contradictions in life and not only in thought, and thereby developing the multi-dimensional in Man." Her analysis was concerned with how crucial is philosophy—Marxian/Hegelian philosophy—to that movement's forward direction. Her column, every issue, helps show that the paper would be nothing special without that philosophy. It is the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism that creates the paper, not the other way around.

**Women's liberationist
Memphis**

Thank you for sending me the Syllabus for the classes on the 150th anniversary of the **Communist Manifesto**. I intend to read along with you all the texts in that reading list. It's too easy to get caught up in day to day matters and take a body of ideas for granted. This is a good time for a fresh encounter with the source writings.

**Richard Bunting
Oxford**

Editor's note: For information on our classes or to receive a copy of the syllabus, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to N&L, 59 E. Van Buren, Chi. IL 60605 or contact the N&L Committee nearest you—see directory, p. 11.



CHINA AFTER DENG

The two articles on China, one by Raya Dunayevskaya and the other by Liu Binyan (April N&L) were extremely timely. Raya reminds us that Maoism has many faces and that it is wrong to act as if Deng broke with Maoism. True, Deng opposed the Cultural Revolution's legacy after it had purged him from power. But, as Raya points out, Mao himself ended the Cultural Revolution by 1969, imprisoning its leaders.

Liu Binyan poses the question of mass upheaval after Deng's death. The U.S. press has stressed the supposed stability created by Deng. It reminds me of how the press wrote the same thing about Yugoslavia after Tito's death in 1980. Liu points to the simmering anger among "peasants, intellectuals and workers" in China today. I think history will bear him out—that Li Peng and Jiang Zemin are far weaker than they appear on the surface. The one to watch is Zhao Zhiyang, a top leader purged by Deng for opposing the crackdown in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

**Professor
Indiana**

Gore toasted the butcher of Tiananmen on Chinese TV, just when Jiang was seeking legitimacy for that crime, deeply inscribed in the Chinese consciousness. Officially the U.S. is "for" human rights, but in reality they declare state disciplined slave labor is here to stay for capital to take advantage of.

**R.B.
Oakland**

Readers' Views

THE BRITISH SCENE

The Socialist Labour Party, set up around Arthur Scargill, the secretary of the Miners Union and leader of the Miners' Strike in 1984/85, is committed to reversing all the concepts thrown out by the Labour Party, but there is no evidence of any thought that these ideas may need re-interpretation or improvement. There is a feeling of a time warp. The anti-European position seems increasingly unrealistic. The fact that the E.U. institutions are undemocratic is readily acknowledged, but the U.K. parliamentary voting system is not a shining example of democracy. So the question is where do we go from here.

Our chances of achieving some kind of socialism seems remote. I understand that in the U.S. there are many socialists but in terms of voting power or organization they are not well represented. Are we to end up with a similar situation here, two very similar political parties and various minuscule parties on the fringe?

**B. Bolshell
England**

BOMBING THE WEAKEST

Societies are not judged by how massive their military budget is, but by how well they care for those most at risk, the very young and the very old. In the name of balancing the budget, Congress and the President have joined in an open conspiracy to fund the military at even higher levels than last year—while cutting the aid needed for all social programs. U.S. military spending is 17 times more than the combined military spending of those nations considered "active enemies of the U.S."—Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Syria. It is why we are calling for a new definition of "national security" that places primary concern with education, housing and medical care. Keeping the U.S. as the Number 1 military power in the world has resulted in third-world conditions for millions of Americans.

**War Resisters League
339 Lafayette St.
New York, NY 10012**

REPEALING WELFARE

I am angry. It is terrible that food stamps for immigrants are being cut. They are working at low-paying jobs and being punished for it. I tell people to go to the market and take their kids, get them bread and meat, then find some salad and juice and a carton of milk, sit down and eat it. When they bring the food out in their stomachs there is nothing that can be done. If they bring it out in their hands they can get arrested for shoplifting.

Do the powers that be know the pain they are causing us? What it feels like to put your children to bed hungry? All they are doing is increasing the crime rate. After you hear the kids cry for so long, you do whatever you have to do to feed them.

**Georgiana
Los Angeles**

At the same time Temporary Assistance for Needy Families has cut many off welfare and created a population of workers without employee rights, it offers generous subsidies to corporations. Workfare jobs need not serve the public good. A state can send TANF workers to private companies, who pay nothing, while workers receive only their welfare grants. In another form of corporate welfare, private companies can acquire contracts to administer public aid, lobbying states for welfare contracts. Are people aware of this? How did we let this happen?

**Outraged
Illinois**

At the demonstration against student cuts one demonstrator from John Jay College told me: "The poor can't afford Harvard and Yale. The privi-

leged get to rule. Most CUNY students have to work and go to school. Many have children. There are a lot of women at this demonstration. We have always been protesting. We're treated as infants, but we're intelligent, strong, and fighters."

**Protest supporter
New York**

Now that Republican governor Mike Foster has terminated Louisiana's commitment to affirmative action, he is trying to pass a bill requiring those who receive welfare to take drug tests. Failure will result in denial of benefits and any children will be put in foster homes. This is exactly what neo-Nazi David Duke wanted to do when he ran for governor.

**D. Tyler
Louisiana**



VIEWS ON WOMEN'S LIBERATION

I found Laurie Cashdan's piece in the April N&L on women and the Black Panther Party very interesting. I was wondering if you believe that somehow the appropriation of Mao's "paper tigers" by Black Panther Party members reflected on Mao or on the retrogression of the political vision of the Panthers? Certain critiques of Fanon are rooted in the narrow appropriation of his politics by readers like the Black Panther Party, etc.

**Black feminist writer
Indiana**

I was impressed with the comments of the women who attended the forum on women and the Black Panther Party which Laurie Cashdan wrote about. Though we must never overlook the sexism of Movement men, we must also factor in society, socialization, internal oppression and ideological apologists like Daniel Moynihan. Please re-read Fran Beale's polemic, "Triple Jeopardy of Black Women" in Toni Cade's **The Black Woman** and my article there on "Black People and the Victorian Ethos," first written in 1967.

**Gwen Patton
Montgomery, Alabama**

Maya Jhansi's essay on "Theorizing Third World feminism" (April N&L) shows some of the positive development in Chandra Mohanty's thinking, where today she is more willing to critique sexism inside Third World societies and cultures. However, Jhansi argues, correctly in my view, that in calling for international feminist solidarity, Mohanty "restricts" her notion of "solidarity to women of color around the world, seemingly jettisoning white women as revolutionary subjects." Such a statement may bother some on the Left, who continue an uncritical Third Worldism carried over from the 1960s.

**Kevin A. Barry
Illinois**

It was a bright, sunny afternoon in Memphis last month when 11 womyn decided to fight back at Smith-Barney, the corporation known for harassing and discrimination against womyn. I got in on the action as we stood on one of the busiest streets during rush-hour. Among our signs were a few that read: "Honk if you support working women!" The reaction from drivers was thumbs up, encouraging shouts, and an array of car horns. Every truck driver who went by honked. It was a great reminder that not everyone thinks a woman's place is in the home. Just the corporate men of Smith-Barney.

**Young feminist
Tennessee**

LABOR THINKING AND DOING TODAY

Everything in the article about RPS workers in the April N&L is true. People weren't really fired for stealing. There is too much searching for that. When you leave work they pat you down, then use a metal detector, and then a metal scanner. So there is no way to be stealing.

To me, it's racism that is involved. If you are Black and stand up for yourself, they want to get rid of you. The only workers who stay at RPS a long time are people who have nowhere else to turn. I feel the same as people who wrote the story: RPS should be investigated for civil rights, and it should have a union. But it won't happen until people get together.

RPS worker Chicago

Now that the Clinton New Democrats have stolen much of the Republican program - prison-building, welfare elimination, and immigration restrictions - Big Labor's relations with the Democratic Party look more ridiculous than ever to the rank-and-file. Here comes Sweeney who supposedly looks better than the previous club of bootlickers in charge of the AFL-CIO. But when is he going to tell the Democrats to go to hell? And can the Labor Party's only solid claim be that it's not the Democratic Party? I go with Karl Marx's take: As long as a party stands for abolition of value production, we're for it. If it wavers on worker exploitation, to hell with it.

Red Ninety-Sevener Chicago

There was a Shutdown Motown action connected to the Labor Notes Conference. About 700 people marched from the Westin Hotel in the RenCen to St. Antoine & Monroe where a short rally was held. The crowd rattled noisemakers and vowed "no contract, no peace" until all the locked-out newspaper strikers are back with a just contract. They all vowed to return for the Days of Action, June 20-21.

A young woman from Liverpool who is part of WOW (Women on the Waterfront) spoke in support of her husband, a dockworker on strike there. She talked

of the attacks on the working class in Britain and the sellout of Tony Blair. The Conference had 90 unions and 11 countries represented.

Strike supporter Detroit

The international unions imposed the unconditional offer and many of us disagreed but didn't want to split. I want to thank our supporters. Many of you say you are revolutionaries, and that's great. But the true American revolutionaries are the 2,000 workers who suffered the effects of the strike for 20 months.

Striking photographer Detroit

When I talk with white workers there's no difference from what we Black workers are saying. The companies are mistreating them, they can't make ends meet, they don't have medical benefits. We oppressed people as a whole need to rise up, educate ourselves about philosophy and revolution, show people a different route, try to make our workplaces different.

Sarah Hamer Mississippi

MUZZLED CANADIAN MEDIA

As we become more and more dominated by the U.S. and international corporate/media powers, the Canadian government seems to see its role strictly limited to being the executor of the corporate agenda. They are now out to destroy the Canadian Broadcasting Company, with an eye to getting rid of provocative programs like "The Passionate Eye," "Rough Cuts," and public broadcasting in general. They should know that many Canadians think that unbiased, objective reporting is worth fighting for.

Fighting Mad British Columbia

CHICAGO APARTHEID

The articles on the "Two faces of Chicago apartheid" (April N&L) were right about the pervasiveness of racism. The Chicago Catholic archdiocese—and its conservative-with-a-human-face new Archbishop Francis George—has announced the closing of one of the city's major predominantly-Black high schools, St. Martin de Porres, for declining enrollment (their jargon for "we want more money"). Black students and parents are questioning how this action can be taken as money continues to pour freely into white high schools—like DeLasalle, from which a gang of white students viciously beat 13-year-old Lenard Clark, and Brother Rice, where hundreds of white students openly chanted racist slurs at their Black opponents throughout an entire basketball game. Archbishop George said the only thing de Porres' parents can do to save their school is come up with a three million dollar plan to keep it open! So much for a human face.

Mary Jo Grey Chicago



CAPITAL AND ECOLOGY

What I believe is most relevant to the issues of Environmental Justice is the government and corporations. It is misleading to focus on one without the other because they work closely together. Corporations take power from communities and the government facilitates this process. It is why NAFTA is a hot topic in the EJ movement right now.

Student Oregon

I truly believe the environmental movement is getting more radical and is challenging corporate exploitation. But you don't hear many environmentalists talking about getting rid of capitalism.

Scott Memphis

Clinton's solidarity with the Republicans on "the government can't solve all our problems" is just a cry that capitalism should have no checks on it. The government helps to create the real problems: poverty, racism, sexism, poor health, mass destruction. The attacks on the environment through deregulation are inseparable from the deregulation of workers rights, welfare reform and all the rest.

Sonia Bergonzi Chicago

The ecology movement is a diverse movement and there are many who do not yet question the political and economic system which perpetuates the crisis. For those of us who do recognize state-capitalism as the primary problem, should we not develop alternatives that can be part of our everyday lives? Should we not develop through theory and action new human relationships which reflect our desire for a free and ecologically sustainable society?

Eli Walker Tennessee

SCOTTISH NATIONALISM

Thank you for Peter Hudis' perceptive review of my new book, *The Very Bastards of Creation: Scottish International Radicalism, 1707-1995* (March N&L). I accept his friendly criticism that I ought to have devoted more attention to Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* and will rectify that in dealing with the support of Scott and Engels for the Highland Clearances, in my new book on Walter Scott.

In these reactionary times, my book has been ignored by the English press and despite positive reviews in the Scottish press, most bookshops have not stocked it. I want to appeal to your readers to ask their public and university libraries to order it. (Any reader needs send me only \$18, including postage, at Tarbert Place, Polmont, Falkirk, Stirlingshire, Scotland.)

James D. Young Scotland

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BY CHARLES DENBY

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Black/Red View Clinton's politics of race

by John Alan

Last month the press carried a news story that President Clinton had told his staff to find a way for him to play a prominent role in "improving American race relations," which discovered that the Nation was moving toward two societies, "one Black, one white — separate and unequal."

The White House staff said that Clinton, unlike past presidents, is not forced to grapple with racism: "he is choosing to elevate the issue on his own." This is probably this year's greatest mis-statement to come from a president who has been virtually immersed in the politics of race. How could one fail to recognize that the three dominant political issues in President Clinton's first term in office were the balanced budget, a new crime bill and welfare reform, and that each of these issues involved race and racism.

The previous Reagan and Bush administrations had already cultivated a stereotypical image of African Americans as violent criminals, drug users and welfare cheats to justify their drive to subvert civil rights legislation and dismantle the social programs African Americans had forced from the government during the Civil Rights Revolution.

Four years ago, when Clinton ran for the presidency, he was a "new Democrat" who wanted to change his party's image of "liberalism" and bring it more in conformity with the so-called "white backlash." He knew that the quickest way to make such a transformation was to break dramatically with the perception that there existed an unbreakable Democratic Party-Black alliance. Thus, in his campaign, Clinton barely mentioned the permanent unemployment and the near Third World poverty in the Black communities. He snubbed Jesse Jackson and had a public fracas with Sister Souljah about Black violence. All of which dovetailed with campaign promises to limit welfare benefits to two years and send criminal offenders to prison for life if they are convicted of a third offense.

When welfare and Black crime are converted into contentious political issues, they polarize American politics to the extent that a white candidate can get the upper

hand if he can smear his opponent with the charge of being soft on Black crime. George Bush did this successfully in the 1988 presidential campaign when he used the furloughing of the Black convict Willie Horton to defeat Michael Dukakis.

Bill Clinton has used Black crime in a more decisive and insidious way. Whereas Bush used Willie Horton as a symbol of "Black crime," Clinton used the social ills in the Black community as the proof of widespread amorality there. He did this when he went to Memphis in 1993 to speak before a Black congregation from the same pulpit Martin Luther King Jr. spoke the night before his assassination.

Clinton went on to emphasize that violence and crime in the African-American communities were endangering the "fabric of our society," but he said nothing about the nature of that "fabric" and why Blacks are separated from that social "fabric."

Both capitalist parties have avoided this historic contradiction in American civilization and have attempted to conceal it by demonizing a generation of African American youth. Newt Gingrich declared endlessly that it was "impossible to maintain a civilization with 12-year-olds having babies, 15-year-olds killing each other, 17-year-olds dying of AIDS and 18-year-olds ending up with diplomas they can barely read." White middle-class voters knew instantly that Gingrich's image of youth threatening American civilization were poor Black youth.

The legacy Clinton leaves has already been revealed. As Tom Wicker wrote: "Bill Clinton ... has become the 'me too' party, with neither the power nor the vision, nor perhaps the political courage, to advance the interest of poor African Americans and poor whites."

However, when pointing out Clinton's personal political limits, one must be aware that his liberal centrism reflects the limits of bourgeois democracy. Going beyond that limit is precisely where a new struggle for African American freedom has to begin today in action and in thought.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

the shores of Lake Tanganyika, Kabila met Che Guevara who had come with a hundred Cuban guerrillas to help generate a continent-wide revolution. (See "Black World," Jan.-Feb. 1997.)

The defeat of the Simba insurrection and the collapse of the Congolese National Liberation Council from its internal conflicts, following Che's disillusioned departure, did not end Kabila's political career. In 1967, in the Fizi and Baraka mountains near Lake Tanganyika, he founded the People's Revolution Party (PRP), one of the four main organizations in the ADFL (Robert Bugera's People's Democratic Alliance, not the PRP, being the main military force in the Alliance). The PRP's armed wing, the People's Armed Forces, held out in the mountains against Mobutu's military, forgotten

Peace trial in Angola

Another peace trial is on the agenda in Angola after almost 20 years of civil war. The UNITA bandits, with the help of the UN and South Africa (SA), have been able to come to a peace settlement with the MPLA government, which will give UNITA responsibility in the government as ministers. Jonas Savimbi, who had problems defining what role he wished to play as a civilian in Angola, would now be the official head of the opposition party. Savimbi is known to use peace talks to regroup his forces and prepare new offensives, but the fact that situations have changed on the ground could force him to a final peace settlement. The fall of Mobutu in Zaire is a big moral defeat for Savimbi.

We could ask how Savimbi has survived so long. Is it because of the support he had from the CIA or because the revolution never got grounded with the masses who fought and died for it against Portugal and the other imperialist forces? When the MPLA came to power the leadership was more concerned with its relationship to the Soviet imperial power and the masses became distant and isolated. With the intensity of Savimbi's offensive it became more a question of consolidating power than deepening the revolution.

Now, after 20 years of civil war and half a million dead, it will only be a question of time before the Angolan people begin to make their demands. The leadership of the MPLA is trying to distance themselves from Marx, but the fact is they have not been so near as they thought. The fact that South Africa played a vital role in bringing the MPLA and UNITA to the discussion table must be seen as the new role that SA has defined for itself, not only in the region but on the whole continent. SA aims at being the most effective economic force which depends on security and stability in the region. SA's involvement in Zaire must also be seen in the light of regional political and economic goals. Whether the peace will last in Angola must be a concern for us all, but the fact that Savimbi is in no position to direct a protracted war in that region is a sign of optimism.

—Ba Karang

Who is Laurent Kabila?

by the world until they surfaced again in 1974. They drew attention when they kidnapped four American students of the famous zoologist Jane Goodall, and ransomed them for 30 imprisoned members of the PRP.

Sometime around 1977, the PRP retreated into the mountain areas occupied by Zairean ethnic Tutsis, the Banyamulenge, to "set up a socialist mini-state with collective fields, schools and primary health care services. The group sustained itself economically by agriculture and gold production" (*New African*, Feb. 1997). This was three years after the Sixth Pan-African Congress, held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Dar had, since the 1960s, been the center of the African left, and was where the leaders of many of today's liberation movements gathered and first became acquainted with Marxism. Kabila and other Lumumbist radicals were among the earliest cadre in these circles.

By the mid-1980s Kabila had disappeared, and was presumed dead. In fact, he had traveled to the Soviet bloc for training. At the end of last year he emerged once again, this time at the head of a guerrilla movement that now seems on the verge of toppling the longest running dictatorship in Africa. It is no accident that this long forgotten liberation movement should suddenly emerge. Mobutu's Zaire has been in an ongoing state of low-intensity warfare with old Lumumbist militants and secessionist forces like the Katangese militias who sought refuge in neighboring Angola after two failed attempts to break away in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Pan-African character of the regional powers now aligned against Mobutu will no doubt limit the political agendas of each of the parties. However, the fact that Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Angola have provided aid and support to Kabila's Alliance represents a new kind of African politics, or a return to a brand of Pan-Africanism that has not been evident since the liberation days of the 1960s.

Nevertheless, the very real limitation at this moment is the lack of a comprehensive philosophy of revolution upon which Pan-African unity can be grounded. Absent such a philosophy, neither the Pan-African unity that has been the political ground for challenging Mobutu's corrupt dictatorship, nor the reconstruction of Zairean society after Mobutu, is fully realizable. Kabila is certainly right when he refers to the movement's need for intellectuals "whose feet are on the ground, among the people, to build on their understanding and work with them for a new reality."

But it is just as important to understand that when he refers to the struggle as a "national democratic revolution to liberate Congo-Zaire," and claims that "For us, the military and political fronts are not separate," his terms of reference and his rhetoric are taken from the Third World revolutions of the 1960s and 70s. The difference today, however, is that after the failure of so many of those revolutions, such rhetoric has to be more than terms of reference. Theory has to be developed, deepened, and concretized in the highly charged and fractious environment of a collapsing despotism which may well be the key to the African revolution to come.

Anti-racism in Chicago

Editor's note: On March 28 in Chicago several hundred Blacks along with a handful of white supporters marched into the white south side enclave, Bridgeport, to protest the brutal beating of 13-year-old Lenard Clark. Lenard was left in a coma and may suffer permanent brain damage. Three white youth charged with the crime were released on bond, despite having bragged to friends that the beating would keep Blacks out of the neighborhood. News & Letters attended the march and recorded the following statements from marchers.

Chicago—I am out here to show support for Lenard Clark, and for all Black children. Any Black child has the right to go anywhere they want to considering the fact that this city, this country was built on our backs.

The people of Bridgeport don't want to take responsibility for anything that they do. They want to justify racism. Why don't they show support for the cause, since they didn't have anything to do with the beating, according to them?

They want to say, "Why are we being targeted?" Why was this little Black boy targeted? He was targeted because he is Black. It is simple as that.

—Black woman marcher

•••

If it was a Black people who jumped on a white boy and put him in a coma like that, they would have never seen the light. There's no justice. He's in a coma; they don't know if he's going to die or not. They should have waited—no bond. You can't put a price on life.

It is a racist neighborhood, tremendously. I have only been in this community five years. There's Armour Park over here. I only take my kids there now because it is such a beautiful place, but when you go they look at you like you don't belong there. We went swimming, and it was like everyone wanted to get out of the pool because the water was tainted.

It is a shame how the bridge separates the cultures.

—Woman marching with two daughters

Justice for Joe Gould



Protesters in Chicago demand justice for Joseph Gould, the homeless Black man murdered by off-duty policeman Gregory Becker. A jury took just hours on April 19 to return with a conviction.

'Rosewood' reviewed

I didn't sleep very well the night I saw *Rosewood*, the movie about the Black town in Florida that was burned down by a mob of white racists in 1923. This film places the viewer right in the throes of the worst possible kind of racial hatred and violence. It is based on a true story that was hidden from history for over 70 years.

Director John Singleton took a few liberties with the story, most notably in creating a fictional character, Mr. Mann, who performs many of the heroic rescues actually carried out by the female schoolteacher, "Scrapie" Carrier. Still, the film is closely based on testimonies given in 1993 during a suit brought by two survivors and their families against the state of Florida. That it took 70 years before any survivor felt safe enough to speak of the event publicly is a testimony in itself.

Florida was part and parcel of a trend of frenzied violence against Blacks in the early 1920s. In 1920, the Klan attacked the Black community of Ocoee when two local Black citizens attempted to vote. At least six Black residents and two whites were killed in the violence, and 25 Black homes, two churches, and a lodge were destroyed. Two years later in Perry, several Black men were killed, and a church, a masonic lodge, an amusement hall, several homes and a Black school were torched. In less than a month the prosperous Black community of Rosewood would be destroyed by a white mob, and at least eight of its citizens lynched. At the time, the jury called to review the massacre found "insufficient evidence to prosecute."

I was attracted to the film at first because the promotions depicted a story where Black people fight back against white racists. There are some pretty satisfying scenes in this regard, but it wouldn't have been true to the tale if the Black residents of Rosewood had successfully fought back. But now with the release of this film, those residents are, in a sense, fighting back.

For more information, look on the Internet at the following address: <http://www.freenet.scri.fsu.edu/doc/rosewood.txt>

—Julia Jones

'Welfare reform' exposes depth of today's capitalist crisis

(Continued from page 1)

to be a clever cheat, or dumb and lazy, or both) as the enemy of employed people, has been so successful, that today when welfare activists speak publicly about the new law, they are invariably told by someone in the audience that "you don't look like a welfare recipient" (because you are white or slender or young or articulate). The fact that most welfare recipients are white has done nothing to lessen the racism inherent in the ideological justification for cutting welfare.

The dominant ideology in this country has moved so far to the right, that its spokespeople no longer even feel the need to claim financial reasons for destroying welfare. Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation, a right-wing think tank, was quoted in *The Nation* of May 5 as saying that any welfare "rewards permissiveness," and that it is a "liberal myth" that "poverty is bad for kids. Poverty is not bad for kids. Almost everybody in this room had grandparents who were poor."

In meeting after meeting in New York to discuss and protest the new law since it was signed by Clinton last August, welfare recipients and their supporters agree that its real purpose is to force down all people's wages, giving workers—including women with small children—no alternative but to take jobs at whatever wages and under whatever conditions they can be found.

In demonizing the poor, the capitalist class attempts to split workers into those who have jobs currently (almost all welfare recipients already go in and out of the labor market), and those who do not. If the latter are on workfare, or in the underground economy like many immigrants, they do not even have the pretense of labor law protections, further splitting them from "real" workers. Those now working, knowing there is no "safety net" for them either, and feeling the competition for jobs from new people entering the labor market, are supposed to be afraid to organize, to fight for decent wages and working conditions, or to fight to retain their legal rights when those are attacked. So by cutting off welfare, capitalism will lower everyone's standard of living while it increases profits and imposes its discipline in the workplace.

The capitalists' plan to gut welfare is nothing new; it has been going on full force since the Reagan years. In 1985, Raya Dunayevskaya (in the yearly *News and Letters Draft Perspectives* Thesis printed in the August-September 1985 *N&L*) described the plan in the context of the deteriorating economy and of the quadrupling of the national debt in just three years:

"...Reagan has deliberately created deficits in order to get the Democrats, too, to agree to dismantle what has been achieved since the *New Deal*, over a whole half century—whether that be welfare programs, or labor rights legislation, or creating institutions like the *National Labor Relations Board*...."

"And in the *New York Times* of July 21, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan develops in full 'Reagan's Inflation-the-Deficit Game,' revealing a discussion with David Stockman, the Budget Director (who was his former student), on the question of using the budget process to eliminate programs: 'The driving motive has

Mass support for strawberry pickers

Watsonville, Cal.—The United Farm Workers (UFW) rally and march to support strawberry pickers, April 13, had a bigger turnout than the organizers had expected. There were about 25,000 who came. By the time the head of the march was getting back to the field where the rally was, the tail hadn't yet left!

The most impressive thing about it was how many came from afar. There were endless contingents of students from universities throughout California, and from Arizona, Texas and other states. Most were Chicano students, many of them with MEChA groups, and the strawberry pickers themselves were far outnumbered by workers in many different trades from places as far away as Minnesota.

The speeches at the rally were dominated by union leaders, the march led by Jesse Jackson. But the questions that we hear from workers, especially those picking that "devil's crop" (the strawberry) are about where this campaign to organize the fields is going. "They say we're going to organize the whole industry at once, so a grower here or there can't plow under his fields, but how is that going to happen?"

Some growers pay a little more, the conditions in their fields are a bit better, so the workers at these places fear losing what they've got. Then there are many landowners who lease their land to workers who acquire credit, so if the crop fails the rent is still due; huge amounts of debt have accrued this way.

How do you organize in this situation, when the growers have been doing it precisely to shield themselves from the dual risks of militant workers and a crop that is easily destroyed by rain, pests, availability of labor at the key moment, etc.

How a Sunday march will get translated into direct pressure on growers, and how all the other questions get answered, is what we and many others walked away with.

—Participants

been to dismantle fifty years of social legislation."

All of this has come to pass, including the Republican-led hysteria over the budget deficit they themselves ran up by cutting taxes while spending on the military, bailing out the banks, etc. Now, "suddenly" the budget must be balanced on the backs of the poor and the working class. The Democrats are becoming identical to conservative Republicans, and together they have demolished not only welfare, but also federally aided housing and many other social welfare programs. Even Social Security for the elderly and the right to unionize are under attack.

If demonizing the poor and saving some tax money were all that there was behind the drive to eliminate welfare, the capitalist class might be smarter not to do it, and instead to respond to the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992 by providing more social services rather than less, as it did in response to the mass movements and rebellions of the 1930s and 1960s. But the fact is that



after 20 years of a "sluggish economy," the crisis in capitalism is too deep and intractable for it to afford any such approach. Capitalism's drive for more and more profits, and for a higher rate of profit, has not been satisfied by the decrease in real wages over the past 24 years, the growing use of prisoners' labor and the superexploitation of undocumented immigrants and others in the underground economy. Capitalism must dismantle the welfare state to survive, not to save a few billion dollars in benefits, but to lower wages and intimidate all workers.

GLOBAL RESTRUCTURING, LOCAL RESISTANCE

The elimination of the "welfare state" parallels the "restructuring" imposed on Third World countries over the past 15 years, and is a deliberate plan of capitalism in the technologically developed countries as well. Witness the mass poverty and new millionaires brought forth by the "restructured" economies of Russia, China, Mexico, and much of the less-industrialized world. In contrast, the huge labor demonstrations in Western Europe, Korea and Latin America against cuts in social services and hikes in the cost of consumer goods have taken place.

In the U.S., resistance to the destruction of welfare is also growing. New groups have started to help recipients exercise their rights and to try to preserve wel-

fare, while older groups like Survivors, Inc. in Mass., publisher of *Survival News*, continue to organize. In California, thousands marched through downtown Oakland, March 1, protesting the welfare cuts already in effect. Californians for Justice, the group that fought the new state law prohibiting affirmative action, has reconstituted itself to oppose welfare cutbacks, and is organizing at a grass-roots level at welfare offices and grocery stores to oppose the plans of Governor Wilson, an anti-welfare leader.

In New York, welfare rights groups are organizing in neighborhoods, at colleges and at WEP job sites. WEP jobs are mostly cleaning parks, streets, and public buildings, and clerical work, jobs that used to be performed by unionized municipal employees. Meanwhile, 22,000 New York City government workers have been eliminated. WEP Workers Together! is "fighting to end WEP and for the creation of a real public jobs program and the development of workplace protections for workfare participants."

Now that workfare workers have begun to organize themselves, the AFL-CIO, which couldn't decide if it should organize them or merely exclude them from the work place, has decided to organize them. The first successful effort at unionization took place by AFSCME in Alaska. In New York, where WEP workers do not have the legal right to unionize, AFSCME now says they will aid them in other ways. Holly H. of WEP Workers Together! tells how the group organized itself and calls the AFL's recent efforts to help "baby steps," adding, "Are WEP workers looking for a deliverer? Yes we are—ourselves!"

Of welfare reform's assault on the poor, she says: "We are seeing the nature of capitalism in how it treats people who need help and students trying to get an education. Why not instead have a system of 'from each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her need?'" This quote from Karl Marx gives an inkling of a totally different basis for organizing work and resources, once we get rid of capitalism, and allow workers' cooperation and creativity to take over.

Mississippi to S. Central

(Continued from page 2)

A group of mothers, sisters and grandmothers have banded together to make sure that every time a Latino or a Black young man goes to court, the courtroom is filled with Latina and Black mothers. We will continue to fight for justice in the courtroom and in the community.

We monitor the justice system, keep a video camera and a 35 millimeter camera with us, and as soon as we see the police, we start filming. We pack the courtrooms. We meet with lawyers. We protest. We write letters. We jam phone lines and FAX lines. We make ourselves known!

A great inspiration to me was Charles Denby's *Indignant Heart*, by a Black man from Alabama whose roots were similar to mine. I read his book and I laughed and I cried. What happened to Black people in the 1920s happened to me in the 1950s and 1960s—and is still happening in the 1990s!

Essay Article

(Continued from page 5)

Engels who says "we went through it together once more before it went to press."² Readers familiar with the German may judge which is the most "accurate" translation, though it is worth bearing in mind that Moore and Aveling's translation of *Capital*, Vol. I is now regarded as lacking the original "Hegelian" terminology employed by Marx.

A RARE BIRD

In the wake of the 1848 Revolutions, Harney's Fraternal Democrats, along with Marx and Engels, and the Blanquists, attempted to unite the international Left into a "World League of Revolutionary Socialists," based on the concepts of permanent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. When the League fell apart as the counterrevolution triumphed in Europe, Harney availed himself of another regroupment effort by a faction led by Carl Schapper, which had broken from Marx's Communist League because, according to Marx, they "demanded, if not real conspiracies, at least the appearance of conspiracies..."³

Marx, who was studying the economic situation in Europe closely, knew that the capitalist crisis had ended in 1847 and allowed the ruling classes to reimpose stability. He found that Harney's willingness to give anti-socialists like Mazzini and other "petits grand hommes" considerable space in his paper was not matched by any wish to promote critical analysis of their politics. Marx was frustrated by Harney's refusal to recognize that there were real differences of principle at stake, and gave him the nickname, "Mr. Hippipharra."

Given these developments, Harney's relationship with

Helen Macfarlane

Marx and Engels was, by the end of 1850, becoming strained, to say the least, and differences over tactics and principles were emerging within the Fraternal Democrats. In a letter to Engels, Marx tells us how Harney's "stupid and cowardly" behavior caused him to break with "the only collaborator on his spouting rag who had original ideas—a rare bird."

The "rare bird" was of course Helen Macfarlane, who from the moment of her break with Harney at a "revolutionary banquet" on New Year's Eve 1850 virtually vanishes from history. We have no information on what became of her after April 1851, when the *Friends of the People* carried a tiny mention of "Howard Morton's fundraising efforts for the Polish and Hungarian refugees in Liverpool threatened with deportation."

Macfarlane's legacy needs to be recaptured for today, for she showed that theory should be more than just a parade of theories—as in a shopping parade, offering the "ism" that "suits you best." Macfarlane demanded organizational responsibility from theoreticians: that they make themselves useful "without distracting the attention of the people" from the practical issues, and provide, as Marx put it in the *Manifesto*, "critical insight into the conditions, the course, the general results of real social movement."

It is a century and a half since Helen Macfarlane jammed together such issues as the crisis in religion and morality, the Hegelian dialectic, the principles of the *Communist Manifesto*, and questions of international solidarity and working class organization. Our own time calls out for a new jamming together of organizing principles, philosophy, and objective analysis—in continuity with the past as something we can learn from and, in reaching for the future, in discontinuity with post-Marx Marxism's refusal to learn from its own history.

2. Preface to the 1890 German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels Collected Works, Vol. 27, p.58.
3. Marx, *Herr Vogt* (London: New Park, 1975), p. 28.

Editorial

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appears to have been given a new political lease on life since state prosecutors chose not to indict him for a major corruption scandal. The scandal erupted after it became known that Netanyahu appointed an Attorney General in exchange for dropping corruption charges against one of Netanyahu's closest political allies. Although Netanyahu's reputation took a beating over this, the decision not to indict him indicates that Israeli ruling circles have decided he still has a role to play in defending their interests.

The reason for this lies in the audacity and skill with which Netanyahu has managed to reconfigure the so-called "peace process" with the Palestinians, to the point where its very existence is in jeopardy. The sharpest expression of this is his decision to build new housing for Israel's ultra-orthodox Jewish community on a section of Arab land in East Jerusalem known as Har Homa (Palestinians call it Jebel Abu Ghneim). Netanyahu arrogantly defended this attack on the very idea of Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem by insisting, "all of Jerusalem will forever remain in our hands."

As if this were not bad enough, he added insult to injury by agreeing for now to only a 2% withdrawal of Israeli positions on the West Bank. (Israel currently remains in full control of 70% of the West Bank.) These moves infuriated the Palestinians, and have forced Yasir Arafat to break off further talks with the Israelis.

The extreme nature of Netanyahu's actions have taken some by surprise. Many assumed that his agreement with Arafat to relinquish Israeli control over most of the West Bank town of Hebron two months ago

meant he had signed onto the Oslo accords and abandoned his long-held opposition to Palestinian control of the West Bank. Yet it now appears that the Hebron Agreement was something of a Trojan Horse.

First, the Hebron Agreement conceded less to the Palestinians than it appeared at the time, since it did not specify exactly which areas need to be vacated by the Israelis. Netanyahu has used this to insist that Israel alone will define which territory it will or will not withdraw from. This sets a dangerous precedent, since according to the Oslo accords, by August 1998 Israel must withdraw from all parts of the West Bank except for settlements and "specified military locations." If Israel is allowed sole authority to define a settlement and a "specified military location," it can end up holding on to over half of the West Bank.

Second, by signing onto the Hebron Agreement, Netanyahu was able to present himself as a "changed man" who had now "entered upon the path of peace" while at the same time taking actions, such as with the construction at Har Homa, which dramatically undercut the negotiating position of the Palestinians. In other words, instead of undermining the peace process by attacking it from the outside (which remains the approach of his far-right critics in the Likud Party), he is undermining it from within by narrowing the overall perimeters of any eventual settlement. Whether or not Netanyahu remains in power over the long haul matters less than the way his actions have helped redefine the parameters of the "peace" process as a whole.

One reflection of this is the opposition Labor Party's do-nothing attitude over the Har Homa construction. Their present passivity is hardly accidental, for the

Labor Party has long tried to secure total control over Jerusalem and large portions of the West Bank.

Har Homa was not even considered a part of Jerusalem until after 1967, when various Labor Party governments, including Jerusalem's long-time "liberal" Mayor, Teddy Kollek, expanded the boundaries of Jerusalem in all directions. They then proclaimed these areas to be part of an "indivisible" Jerusalem under Israeli control, and used all sorts of emotionally charged religious imagery about "next year in Jerusalem" to fixate this prejudice into popular consciousness. This has worked so well that even such groups as Peace Now have not made a point of mobilizing opposition to the Har Homa construction—thereby unwittingly allowing Netanyahu to get away with his effort to narrow the peace process. Throughout this whole period the only significant demonstrations of Palestinian-Israeli solidarity have been the small but important protests led primarily by Women in Black.

Although Arafat's forces in the Palestinian Authority have, for now, managed to maintain enough control to prevent any open clashes on the streets, the deep anger and frustration among the Palestinian masses can explode at any moment. The Israeli rulers should recall that no force more successfully breeds rebellion than broken promises.

The open question, however, is whether the fruits of any eventual rebellion will fall to such retrograde tendencies as the Islamic militants in Hamas, or whether it will be met by a revolutionary coalescence of Palestinians and Jews hewing out a path to a new, human society. The road to the latter begins by breaking from all illusions about the rulers.

Thousands march in Chiapas against army repression

Mexico City—On April 13, 20,000 Indigenous people and Ladinos walked near Tila, Chiapas to stop the war and open a road for peace. Two kilometers of marchers followed by eight kilometers of cars, trucks, and buses moved for five hours on the road between Tila and Yajalon. The marchers carried flags with the colors of the Mexican flag, but with the Virgin of Guadalupe instead of the coat of arms.

Marchers were from 42 parishes and eight pastoral zones of the Diocesan government of Samuel Ruiz, who is also president of the National Commission of Mediation which has been the intermediary between the Zapatistas and the Mexican government.

Their demands included: a stop to the low-intensity war being conducted by the Mexican government; the elimination of the paramilitary group "Paz and Justicia," responsible for a reign of terror in northern Chiapas; the return of expelled foreign priests; peace with justice and dignity.

Northern Chiapas has been the site of escalating violence. An Indigenous catechist was raped by members of "Paz and Justicia." No charges have been filed. The



portico of the Catholic Church of Limar is occupied by more than 200 members of the Mexican Army, with no order to cease their occupation. Over 1000 Choles have been forced to seek shelter in surrounding municipalities.

Close to 100 Indigenous people, most of them sympathizers of the Zapatistas and militants of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), have been murdered during the last two years in four main municipalities of the area.

Half a dozen communities, home to some 3000 Indigenous people in opposition to "Paz and Justicia," most of whose members are the ruling party (PRI) militants, live besieged, their residents unable to freely walk the roads. Worst of all, community members are unable to sow seed on their lands,

Meanwhile a new announcement comes that the army is establishing four new camps in Chiapas with the goal of containing radical Indigenous groups. The battle of Chiapas continues.

—Correspondent

Abolish the nuclear industry !

Nowhere on U.S. Highway 95 in Nevada is there any sign describing the nuclear test or dump site, just an exit sign MERCURY. The Nevada test site is in reality on Western Shoshone land—Newe Sogobia—by the 1868 Treaty of Ruby Valley, once a living desert habitat, the most bombed nation on earth (1000 nuclear tests). It is operated by the Department of Energy and the Bechtel Corporation.

Throughout the last week of March and the first week of April, 1997, hundreds of indigenous and non-indigenous people from the U.S. and the world gathered at the peace camp in Las Vegas to shut the test and dump site down, to end the madness of nuclear proliferation that capital promotes, even to the destruction of all life support systems of Mother Earth.

As Western Shoshone spiritual elder Corbin Harney stressed, the nuclear chain "is a concern of all the people of the earth, because nuclear radiation and contamination effects us all, for we have only one earth, and it is in the water we drink, it is in the air we breathe, it is in the food we eat."

There is presently a movement by the power structure to expand NATO (which possesses many tactical nuclear weapons) to include former Soviet East European countries. This expanded militarism, even with the collapse of the Soviet Empire, would be aimed at Russia or anyone else—it doesn't matter.

In NASA's Cassini Mission to Saturn next October, the spacecraft will include three generators which will provide electric power from radioactive material (plutonium). The Satellites would be launched by Titan IV

rockets from Cape Canaveral. The environmental impact statement states that only in event of an accident would there be substantial impact on the human environment. The Titan has a history of launch pad malfunctions. So why hasn't the mission been cancelled? The Senate in mid-April passed a bill which allows for transporting tons of high level nuclear waste throughout the country. The target site is Yucca Mountain in Nwe Sogobia.

The last five years of activities at the test site have become predictable routines, with workshops, marches, demonstrations and diverse progressive religious or prayer ceremonies. On April 4, in the pre-dawn hours, Highway 95 was blocked in both directions for five hours by a chain of activists, locked onto concrete filled steel barrels and an immobile automobile. The activists could not be separated without major physical harm to them.

At one point when the police were getting very rough in their frustrated attempt to dismantle the blockade, the demonstrators, with TV cameras rolling, started chanting: "The whole world is watching." An independent reporter had his camera smashed and was arrested along with the demonstrators.

An earlier attempt at a blockade (March 31) using different tactics, did not last as long, but the protesters' enthusiasm was just as high. On April 1, 200 people marched, danced, and held two press conferences in downtown Las Vegas in a very festive and energized demonstration that lasted five hours.

—Anti-nuclear activist

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 4)

has had to discover a new work that hadn't been known before, whether that be the 1844 Humanist Essays, or the 1857 *Grundrisse*, or the full 1872 French edition of *Capital* that all reveal Marx's return to Hegel. But what do we find Marx doing in 1882-83? He is returning to what he had done from the very beginning—when he said that even if you forget the class struggle you still would have to see what a miserable society we have when man can treat woman, the one he loves, so miserably. Something is so wrong we have to get rid of it not only by overthrowing it but by transforming it into totally new human relations.

It is that new moment, that return to the questions he raised in 1844, that return also to what is the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation, where we pick up Marx's Marxism and show that it wasn't only the betrayers who deviated. That's easy to expose. But it was also those who weren't betraying, but who were separating the philosophy of revolution from the actual revolution.

Let's conclude today, therefore, with where the book ends—with "A 1980s View." And that has to start with where I started today—with Poland. It is actually East Europe in the 1950s where a new movement from practice was born that was itself a form of theory and therefore demanded very different answers—not only for how to attain a new unity of theory and practice, but a new relationship in that unity. The East Europeans in the 1950s were asking about what Marx meant by a "new Humanism." They said that can't be an abstraction; it has to be very concrete. And the concrete is that the Communism which claims to be Marxism is the exact oppressor; and you have to fight against that which exists. That's the very first thing Marx began with when he called for the "ruthless critique" of that which is...

The absolute challenge to our age is precisely the 1880s trail Marx left for us to realize. But we have to work very hard to realize it. What we have developed out of what we saw in the 1950s with new forms of workers' revolts, and in the 1970s with the new types of revolutions, is what we have documented in the Marxist-Humanist Archives.² By now, 1981, the Archives of Marxist-Humanism in the United States number 7,000 pages alongside the basic theoretical works of *Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution*, and the work on *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

The challenge is to catch the continuous link to Marx's revolution in permanence. As I put it in the new book: "Every moment of Marx's development, as well as the totality of his works, spells out the need for 'revolution in permanence.' This is the absolute challenge to our age."

2. I turned over my entire collection of documents from 1941 to the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in 1969. A new donation expanded the collection back to 1937 and forward to 1981 as this new work was being completed. (Since 1981 Dunayevskaya arranged and donated two more volumes, plus two supplemental volumes have been donated to The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: *Marxist-Humanism—A Half-Century of Its World Development*.—Ed.)

Youth

by Kevin Michaels

The opening of the News and Letters Committees class series "Marx's Philosophy of 'Revolution-in-Permanence': Its Meaning for Today" prompted me to go beyond the assigned readings and look at the work of one of the most trenchant critics of Marx's Hegelian roots, the French philosopher Louis Althusser. Althusser's work influenced enormously the activists and youth of the generation of the late sixties and seventies. Antonio Negri, Regis Debray, Jacques Derrida and countless others have internalized Althusser's work and used it as a lens to look at Marx and the world.

The first class's focus on the young Marx seemed to provide an excellent opportunity to look at the collection of Althusser's early essays published in 1965 as *For Marx*.

After reading Marx speaking in the "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" of a "thorough-going Naturalism, or Humanism," it is startling to come across Althusser's contention that Marx's work must be characterized as a "theoretical anti-humanism." This stems, of course, from his positing of an "epistemological break" which took place in 1845. Althusser argues that Marx's previous work was ideology, penetrated with a Feuerbachian anthropology, and only after 1845 did his work become science. Humanism "in practice...could pile up a monu-

Humanism and 'theoretical anti-humanism'

ment of pre-Marxist ideology that would weigh down on real history and threaten to lead it into blind alleys."

It is worth considering the time and place Althusser was writing in. After all, the author himself describes the essays in *For Marx* as "interventions in a definite conjuncture." In doing so, we find that the humanism Althusser is attacking is not that understood by Marxist-Humanism.

The "conjuncture" Althusser refers to is the process of destalinization in Russia and the effect it had on the world. The dictatorship of the proletariat had been proclaimed as "superseded" in Russia; communism had been achieved and the slogan "everything for man" guided the workings of the "State of the Whole People." Althusser is concerned that the humanism Communist intellectuals such as John Lewis in Britain, Roger Garaudy in France and Adam Schaff in Poland, were, in the aftermath of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin's crimes, rushing to embrace, risked a derailment of the "science" Marx, Engels and Lenin had achieved.

This "humanism" though, is one quite distinct from the one Raya Dunayevskaya singled out as a "movement from practice that was itself a form of theory." Dunayevskaya saw the explosions of the masses in the wake of Stalin's death—the 1953 East German revolution, the revolt of the forced laborers in the Vorkuta

camp—as signaling a new chance for freedom. Eastern Europe was also the site of a movement from theory—Hungarian students and teachers in the Petofi Circle discussed Marx's 1844 essays as a theoretic preparation for the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. Dunayevskaya also recognized the energies coming from the Afro-Asian revolutions; in Frantz Fanon's words, a nationalism striving to become "enriched and deepened...into a consciousness of social and political needs, in other words into humanism."

These movements, because they took place outside of the realm of the vanguard party or occurred in direct opposition to it, held little meaning for Althusser. His critique of the prevailing philosophy in the Communist Party did not mean that he thought any advance could be made outside of it—for there could be no science without the party and without its science, ideology could threaten to mislead.

The important question to ask is what constitutes the humanism Althusser is against? He calls it a "personal humanism" which developed as a reaction to the excesses of the "period of the cult of personality." The humanism Marxist-Humanism singled out was the sophistication of workers and oppressed people—a maturity which led striking West Virginia coal miners to ask their own leaders "what kind of labor should we perform?" and the vision of theoreticians moving towards a philosophy of revolution.

Raya Dunayevskaya recognized the gulf between these two attitudes to the concept of humanism in her 1968 "Critique of Althusser's anti Hegelianism" (republished in the Oct. 1996 N&L). Althusser misses the human in history, that is, she wrote, "workers shaping history, resolving contradictions in life and not only in thought, and thereby developing the multi-dimensional in Man."

Althusser's attempt to chart a philosophical course for post-Stalin Communism failed because of this refusal to "confront the living strata below." The influence of his work is still very much with us, challenging us to defend what Marx recognized in his 1844 writings as a new unity of thinking and being and what it means for us today.

Racial Justice Day

New York—Racial Justice Day, on April 7 at City Hall Park, featured 30 sponsoring groups and organizations—primarily Black and Latino—with an overall crowd of some 1,300. *The New York Times* cited 300 and did not mention the two-hour-plus and two-and-a-half mile march through downtown Manhattan, Chinatown and the Eastside to Washington Square Park. Briefly citing the demonstration as protesting "other police shootings," the *Times* simply detailed the July 6 shooting of a Washington Heights teenager.

In actuality the protest featured approximately eight family members of deceased victims, all shot in the back. Holding aloft enlarged photos and paintings of their loved ones, they simply and dramatically detailed their personal tragedies, grief and rage. In addition to the stories of Blacks and Latinos was that of one woman, an Irish man and a young Asian man.

"Giuliani's got to go" was the repetitive theme. Speakers referred to the cops' excuses for murder and brutality as labeling the victims as "knife wielding maniacs." The Mayor was charged with wanting to get rid of Blacks and Latinos. There was a pinpointing of "no difference in the apartheid of New York and South Africa."

—Sheila G.

School as discipline

The problems of any education based on discipline, such as the one enforced at any public school, are too widespread for me to express in words. Public education (or, public indoctrination, as it has been called) is too ingrained in the system to be separated from it. Thus, by dissociating yourself from the educational system, you effectively dissociate yourself from the system of corporate exploitation and oppression.

I ask you, why not separate yourself from such an institution? Public schooling does not educate you—it disciplines you.

Education cannot be confined to 35 hours a week in a government-owned building. Education is a constant, unbroken process that lasts from birth to death. The public schools do not educate. Harvard does not educate. Life educates. The world educates. You educate. The only true education will occur because you want to learn—not because you are forced to learn.

In the White Station High School report card, produced presumably by Memphis City Schools, the high school discipline plan is discussed, and they give evidence of their "effective" disciplinary plan:

"The White Station High School discipline plan and philosophy is designed with the desire to promote respect, citizenship, and safety... Two hundred forty six board suspensions were issued in 1995-96."

Why is White Station proud of this? Why would any school be proud of this?

—Black high school student

—Memphis high school student

Solidarity builds a school for Iqbal

Our campaign began on Dec. 2, 1994 when we got the privilege to meet a young Pakistani human rights hero, Iqbal Masih. On that day Iqbal spent a day at our school, Broad Meadows Middle School in Quincy, Mass.

It was a day that we learned what was really happening in developing countries. In order to make themselves money, adults were exploiting children in factories and America is allowing this by buying the products that are made by these exploited children like Iqbal.

Iqbal told us of being sold at age four, being beaten, being tortured, sometimes being chained to a carpet loom and always being starved until his escape at age ten. He told us that very young children are bought by carpet manufacturers because tiny fingers can make the tiny knots needed for producing expensive oriental rugs. He also told us of the dream he held onto during his years of servitude, a dream of freedom and education for all children.

On April 16, 1995 we were on our spring vacation when we heard the news that Iqbal had been shot and killed while riding his bike near his grandmothers' house in Pakistan. About 40 students gravitated to our

closed school. Somehow we got the school open and crowded into a classroom to grieve.

Eventually we figured out how we would respond—we would build a school in Iqbal's memory in Pakistan. We began e-mailing information about Iqbal, about

child bonded labor and about our plan to build a school for Iqbal. We asked classes online to donate a symbolic \$12, the amount Iqbal was sold for at the age of four. Tens of thousands have donated.

As a result, our and Iqbal's dream is finally a reality. On April 16, 1996 the first anniversary of Iqbal's death, we formed a partnership with Sudhaar, a non-governmental organization in Pakistan to use \$100,000 of our money to build a school for Iqbal.

We have proved that children can make a difference if adults only believe in us and help us a little along the way. Iqbal was silenced, but his message wasn't. It's being carried on.

—Amanda L. and Amy P.

Amanda's and Amy's story is adapted from their presentation, related to the "Meeting the Challenge V" labor conference, at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn. in early February. The campaign's Web site, "A Bullet Can't Kill a Dream," is at www.digitalrag.com/mirror/Iqbal.html



Students at the newly opened school in Kasur, Pakistan.

Cop home invasion violates rights

Chicago—I had an experience where the police came into my friend's house without a search warrant, but they had a warrant for the arrest of the lease owner. They searched the house anyway. They destroyed the furniture and poured out all the food.

In the process the police started harassing a white guy who was living with the lease owner. They said to

him, "What are you doing here with these guys? What, do you think you're like them? So we're going to treat you like them."

They took my white friend, handcuffed him and said, "I don't like you." They began beating on him and the lease owner's brother. They had forced us to stand facing the wall, and every time I tried to look out the corner of my eyes to see what was happening they told me to turn around, and I did. Finally they stopped beating the guys and began asking my sister and me do we know how to dance. We replied, "No." The police then grabbed my sister, turned the music up as loud as it went, and began dancing with her.

The police stopped dancing with my sister, came over to me, and asked, "Do you know how to dance?" I said, "No!" Then they began threatening that if I didn't dance with them that they would take me to jail along with the lease owner, his brother and the white boy.

I feel the police committed an act of sexual harassment, racism and violated our rights. When the police told my white friend, if you hang around with them, then we will treat you like them, they overlooked the Constitutional rights of Blacks as well as whites. Arresting the white guy for being in the house with Blacks violated our right to peaceably assemble.

The government is not "of the people, for the people and by the people." If, for example, someone in the lower class needs a place to live and has to go through the government to find one, what the government does is assign them to an apartment in the projects where there is violence, drug dealing and gang banging. Then the government gets its power from police, armies and prisons.

—Black high school student

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MEETINGS

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DETROIT

P.O. Box 27205
Detroit MI 48227
MEETINGS
Thursdays, 6 p.m.
Central Methodist Church
Woodward and Adams

LOS ANGELES

P.O. Box 29194
Los Angeles, CA 90229
213 960 5607

MEETINGS

Sundays, 5:30 p.m.
Echo Park United
Methodist Church
1226 N. Alvarado
(North of Sunset, side door)

NEW YORK

P.O. Box 196
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
212 663 3631

MEETINGS

Sundays, 6:30 p.m.
Washington Square Church
133 W. 4th St. (Parish House
parlor), Manhattan

OAKLAND

P.O. Box 3345
Oakland, CA 94609
510 658 1448
MEETINGS
Sundays, 6:30 p.m.
2015 Center St. (at Milvia)
Berkeley

MEMPHIS

1725B Madison Ave, #59
Memphis, TN 38104

FLINT, MI

P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502

ENGLAND

BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In March and April, Belgian workers were joined by French and Spanish workers in an unprecedented series of cross-border solidarity actions. On March 7, tens of thousands of auto workers in Belgium, France and Spain went on strike for one hour to protest Renault's plans to shut down its plant in Vilvorde, Belgium. This would throw several thousand workers onto the street by this summer. In Belgium, workers from other auto companies massively joined the strike. At Renault plants in France and Spain, up to 20% of the workers went out in support of their Belgian sisters and brothers. For their part, Vilvorde workers occupied the plant.

The crisis over Vilvorde led European unions to move up the date of a planned labor march on Brussels to March 16. On that day, up to 100,000 workers turned out to protest Vilvorde, austerity and unemployment. While most were from Belgium, several thousand

Military raid in Lima

The violent April 22 military raid on the Japanese ambassador's mansion in Peru, which was occupied by members of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) on Dec. 17, left 17 people dead—all 14 MRTA members, one hostage and two soldiers. Those very disproportionate figures reveal two facts not mentioned in the initial media coverage. 1) It is clear that some of the MRTA members were summarily executed by the Peruvian military after surrendering. 2) The MRTA did not seriously attempt to harm the hostages, as it had threatened to do if the military attacked.

Opposition to these outrages was quickly heard around the world. On April 25—a day celebrated in Italy as the anniversary of the country's liberation from fascism—7,000 demonstrators in Rome from the autonomous and revolutionary left held up banners denouncing the raid, declaring, "We are All Tupac Amaru!" The same day, hundreds demonstrated in front of the Peruvian embassy in Santiago, Chile, proclaiming, "We absolutely reject these acts of such cruelty, which should never happen again."

MRTA's occupation was launched in response to the horrific conditions bordering on torture, in which hundreds of their members and sympathizers are held in Peruvian prisons: solitary confinement, virtually no medical care, no heat even in winter, lack of food and few sanitary facilities. MRTA also raised demands on behalf of Peru's working people. The country continues to suffer both from an economic crisis and from the military-based regime of President Alberto Fujimori, which denies basic democratic and trade union rights.

Among the dead on April 22 was top MRTA leader Nestor Cerpa. He began as a trade union activist, but turned to revolutionary action when a workers' occupation of a factory in which he was involved was crushed by the military, who murdered some of the workers.

MRTA, which bases itself on the ideas of Che Guevara, needs to be distinguished from the Maoists of Shining Path, who have murdered thousands of peasants, urban workers and left activists who disagree with them. Nothing has discredited the very idea of revolution in contemporary Peru more than the brutality of Shining Path.

While MRTA's Guevarist perspectives, which encourage "armed struggle" even in the absence of serious links to a mass movement, are definitely not the road forward in Peru or elsewhere, at the same time, we acknowledge these fallen comrades, and those rotting in Fujimori's jails, as courageous fighters for a world free of imperialist and class oppression.

French workers journeyed across the border to take part, as did smaller groups from Britain and Spain. In the following weeks, Vilvorde workers took their struggle into France, demonstrating at Renault factories and even occupying a company office. The occupation at Vilvorde itself lasted until mid-April.

During these same months, tens of thousands of German coal miners also protested against layoffs, briefly occupying government buildings in Bonn, while in Italy up to 400,000 workers demonstrated against unemployment, March 22.

In France, the anti-racist movement has developed dramatically in recent months in response to the growing strength of the neo-fascist National Front. On Feb. 22, in one of the largest anti-racist demonstrations in years, tens of thousands came out across France to protest racist immigration laws. These laws would have restricted even the rights of French citizens to invite international guests into their homes! Spearheaded by



Renault auto workers join March 16 march in Brussels.

filmmakers, actors, artists and writers, French intellectuals debated racism and resistance with a new sharpness and clarity.

To take just one example, in an article calling for civil disobedience to racist laws entitled "Democratic State of Emergency," Marxist philosopher Etienne Balibar went all the way back to ancient Greece, referring to Sophocles' *Antigone*. He cited Antigone's statement of defiance against her ruler, King Creon, to the effect that there are unwritten laws which are "higher" than those of any state. Balibar added: "We know, since the founding of democracies, that power is legitimate only to the extent that it does not enter into contradiction with certain higher laws of humanity" (*Le Monde*, Feb. 19, 1997).

Some on the Left, including Socialists, Communists and the Trotskyists of the *Lutte Ouvriere* (Workers Struggle) group such as Arlette Laguiller, are so hemmed in by an abstract workerism that they have whispered or stated openly that anti-racist mobilizations such as Feb. 22 are ineffectual because, led by elitist intellectuals, they do not connect to the "real" causes of racism such as unemployment.

To their credit, the Mandeliste Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), such as Alain Krivine and Daniel Bensaid, along with anarchists, have strongly backed and helped to organize these demonstrations. The LCR has helped to form Ras l'Front (Slice Off the Front), today the country's most dynamic and mili-

tant anti-racist group.

Another major anti-racist demonstration took place in Strasbourg on March 29. Tens of thousands also turned out, this time to protest a convention of the National Front. Once again, artists and writers took a prominent role, with films and other cultural events from around the world offering an alternative to the fascists' attacks on "foreigners." Among the writers whose statements were read out was that of Salman Rushdie, still under a death sentence from the Iranian mullahs. In this and the other anti-racist demonstrations, many have remarked upon the large number of university and even high school and junior high school age youth in attendance.

El Salvador elections

In only the second election in El Salvador since the civil war ended in 1992, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) made stunning gains. They won the office of mayor in the capital, San Salvador, as well as the next largest city, Santa Ana, and the working class industrial belt around San Salvador.

The FMLN nearly split evenly (28 to 27) in the Legislative Assembly against the governing right wing Arena party. Founded by the prominent head of the most infamous and bloody death squad, Arena has won elections easily in the past and was shaken by the results.

The FMLN ran on a platform which included a general call for free market economics and a strong state with the ability to intervene on social and infrastructure issues. The voter absentee rate among Arena supporters may have contributed to FMLN gains. But the overall absentee rate, around 50%, indicates less than an enthusiastic endorsement of any of the established parties and their solutions to El Salvador's problems.

Lavalas split in Haiti

The split in the Lavalas (Flood) movement, originally formed by ex-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, continues to deepen. On one side is Aristide and his new movement, the left-oriented Lavalas Family. They called a successful nationwide general strike in January to protest government austerity and privatization plans. Their second attempt at a general strike in March was less successful, but Lavalas Family forces did succeed in paralyzing Cap-Haitien, the second largest city. They accuse the government of ignoring the suffering of the masses in order to curry favor with the U.S. and the international bankers. This suffering now includes famine affecting 350,000 people in the northeast, while international agencies withhold aid in order to pressure the government to enact market-oriented economic policies.

On the other side is the government and its supporters in the Lavalas Political Organization (OPL). These include President Rene Preval, the widely hated Finance Minister Rosny Smarth, as well as major figures usually associated with the Left such as peasant leader Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, Port-au-Prince Mayor Manno Charlemagne and OPL Secretary General (and former Communist Party leader) Gerard Pierre-Charles.

Pierre-Charles says what is needed is "a modernization of the state" along liberal democratic lines. OPL wants to push through an austerity program to gain more international economic aid. It accuses Aristide of dictatorial ambitions. So far, many of the OPL's austerity plans have been stalemated by opposition from the Lavalas Family, which continues to enjoy far greater support at the grassroots level.

Meanwhile, the well armed and financed forces of the old Duvalier regime lurk in the shadows, waiting for an opportunity.

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that since its birth has stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and its state property form, as it has historically appeared in state-capitalist regimes calling themselves Communist as in Russia and 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.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-1987), 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.

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels. In light of the crises of our nuclearly armed world, it becomes imperative not only to reject

what is, but to reveal and further develop the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The new visions of the future which Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her discovery 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. This 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*.

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 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, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." 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.