

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end' —Marx

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## Buyouts show we're wage slaves



by John Marcotte

A rumor started at work. The rumor was that a big corporation had bought our company, "men and equipment." When I heard it said that way, all of a sudden I'd never felt like such a slave. "Men and equipment?" I had been sold? Whatever our pay and strong contractual rights in unionized freight, at that moment our true condition was clear: we are wage slaves.

That very week, my daughter had to choose a speech for a class, and I had suggested something from Eugene Debs, the great American labor leader and Socialist Party candidate for president, who had gotten one million votes while sitting in jail for opposing World War I. The speech she chose was one Debs gave in New York in 1905 to the Industrial Workers of the World. Now, as I heard this rumor that we had been sold, some words of that speech came back to me: "In capitalist society the working man is not, in fact, a man at all; as a wage worker, he is simply merchandise; he is bought in the open market the same as hair, hides, salt, or any other form of merchandise."

How many of us recognize this? That we are the same as the Mexican day laborer who stands on the corner, waiting to see if a contractor will pick him up for the day? Sure, we have our skill, our union, our higher wage. But do we know what we are to the capitalist system? If we do, we cannot be anti-immigrant. We are all just "hands" to the capitalists, and they benefit by making us compete against each other.

I thought of how over the years the owners would come around and tell us how pleased they were we had a good year, or how we'd have to find ways to do better if

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## Clinton-style Labour Party victory

*Oxford, England*—The electoral downfall, May 1, of Britain's Tory government (in power for 18 years minus two days) is welcome indeed. But the Labour Party swept to power campaigning on the basis of a pro-"business," pro-"free market," capitalist set of ideas. This demands serious thinking, critical analysis and positive alternatives from all who oppose the new government from the left and seek to raise the call for a really fundamental change in society.

Labour's victory—and the Tories' defeat—were certainly decisive. Labour has a parliamentary majority of 179. In Scotland and Wales, the Conservatives were left with not a single seat. Several leading Tory politicians, including leading right-winger Michael Portillo, were ousted by their constituencies. The new parliament will include more women, more people from ethnic minorities, and the first man to be elected having "come out" as gay.

Tony Blair has declared "we campaigned as New Labour and we will govern as New Labour"—that is, as a party which has jettisoned traditional social democratic objectives such as state planning, public ownership and redistributive "tax and spend" policies in favour of the ideology of private business, competition and market forces. While Blair does speak of "democratic socialism" and the importance of values like solidarity, community and responsibility (and this has appealed to people sick of the greed and selfishness of the era of Thatcher and Major), in Blair's thought these values are kept within the sphere of ethics, while in economics the capitalist profit motive is left to rule unchallenged. To have one basis for ethics and an utterly different one for economics is absurd.

We can expect the new government to keep the main substance of Thatcher's and Major's anti-reforms intact, while trimming their more extreme and unpopular features. No increases in income tax or corporation tax; no reversal of Tory privatisations; perhaps even more privatisation to come; an authoritarian tone on law and order. Labour's political ground has shifted so far to the right that the Liberal Democrats are now to the left of Labour on certain issues, like taxation, funding public services and civil liberties.

Blair's brilliant electoral success was achieved because

by Lou Turner

One of the longest running dictatorships of the post-World War II world finally fell on May 17. By noon, with a contingent of 5,000 weary troops of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire (AFDL) taking up positions in the capital city of Kinshasa, President-for-life Marshall Mobutu Sese Seko had been overthrown. In a hectic rush to escape in high-powered speedboats across the Congo River to Brazzaville, in the neighboring Congo Republic, the last remnants of Mobutu's wealthy, parasitic political and military leadership fled the country that more than any other in the anti-colonial period had held out the visionary perspective of African Unity before it was bled dry by 32 years of Mobutu's kleptocracy.

The fall of Kinshasa was over in a day. However, it capped, rather anti-climactically, the breathtaking eight-month military and political campaign of the AFDL that swept across a country the size of the whole of Western Europe. From the Great Lakes region in the east to the strategic port city of Kisangani in the north-east, then swiftly southward to the country's second largest city of Lubumbashi, and finally to Kinshasa, the AFDL routed Zaire's demoralized army (FAZ). It made



Civilians in Kinshasa celebrate fall of Mobutu with rebel soldiers as they march into capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, May 17.

quick work of the white mercenaries from Europe and South Africa that Mobutu bought on the cheap after allies like France and Morocco found it politically inexpedient to answer his plea for military intervention. (It remains a mystery why Mobutu passed up Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi's offer of military air support against the rebels.)

As breathtaking as the lightning military campaign that toppled Mobutu was the political campaign that at one and the same time galvanized pan-African regional support from nearly a dozen African countries, neutralized the threat of Western military intervention, and elicited the deep-running liberatory impulses of the African masses. Indeed, it was the latter which was essential to the former two.

### THE 8-MONTH WAR THAT CHANGED AFRICA

The war had begun in Zaire's two eastern Kivu provinces out of an attempt by local authorities, the FAZ, and the Rwandan Hutu army (FAR) and militias held up in the massive refugee camps in eastern Zaire following the 1994 Rwandan genocide, to ethnically cleanse Zairean Tutsis known as Banyamulenge from the area. To go from a Tutsi "conspiracy" to a liberation movement in the minds of the Zairean masses means that the overthrow of Mobutu was not the result of military strategy alone. Like Mobutu's prostate cancer, the condition of his decaying regime had become terminal. In fact, the West, particularly the U.S., had already had enough of the malodorous corruption of the Mobutu regime by the end of the Cold War. What has the West confounded presently is what attitude to have to the Alliance and its reputed Marxist leader Laurent Kabila.

The first act of Laurent Kabila upon assuming power was to issue an edict from his base in Lubumbashi renaming Zaire the Democratic Republic of Congo. The old flags of the independent Congo of the 1960s were suddenly flown over Kinshasa as those who still remembered the old national anthem "Stand Up Congolese" taught those who had never sang it. These were the flag and anthem of Patrice Lumumba, the Congo's first prime minister.

At the present moment, the organizational challenge before Kabila and the Alliance is how to transform the rebel movement into a multiethnic government without succumbing either to pressures to include old Mobutuists and oppositionist politicians who collaborated with Mobutu into the government, or curtailing civil liberties that have nothing to do with legitimate security concerns, such as the heavy-handed restrictions on what women can wear in public.

Kabila's security concerns are real. A crime wave is currently underway in Kinshasa motivated by remnants of the 5,000-man presidential guard (DSP) that Mobutu left behind. Having slipped out of their uniforms as the rebels took Kinshasa, and retreated into the underground with the weapons caches they had stored away, the DSP represent a serious internal threat.

The low-tech military campaign that started with a

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### Report on French election, p. 12

two quite different sections of the electorate voted Labour. Former Conservative voters, who may have prospered during the Thatcher era but were shaken by job insecurity in the 1990s, and who became disenchanted with the Tories on account of the numerous corruption scandals and the bitter internal struggle over the European Union; Blair's almost but not quite conservative politics meant that such people could switch to Labour without changing their views about society very much. Labour stalwarts who had supported the miners, opposed the poll tax and marched for nuclear disarmament; often very disgruntled with Blair, they nevertheless saw him as someone who could deliver a victory, and were desperate to avoid a fifth Tory term.

While concentrating on winning over middle-class voters, Labour had to offer its working class supporters just enough to stop them from drifting away. So at least we are promised a minimum wage, a 48-hour limit on the time a person can be required to work in a week, and (a new policy) a legal right to union recognition where the majority of workers wish it.

The conflict in Ireland did not feature prominently in the election campaign, except in Northern Ireland itself. Mo Mowlam, Labour's spokeswoman on Northern Ireland, did suggest that Sinn Fein could be included in negotiations. Sinn Fein took two of the 18 seats in Northern Ireland; Gerry Adams was elected in West Belfast and Martin McGuinness in Mid-Ulster. Both candidates stressed their commitment to a negotiated solution; their mandate is based on that.

Labour has promised some reforms to address outstanding grievances of the nationalist community; an independent commission with statutory powers to rule on contentious marches and an independent body to investigate complaints against the police. With a new Labour government in Westminster with a very secure majority, and some degree of democratic mandate for Sinn Fein, there may be an opportunity for a fresh start in the peace process. Whether that opportunity will be grasped with any determination remains to be seen.

—Richard Bunting

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## On the Dialectics of Philosophy and Organization

# Feminism, multilinearism and revolution

by Laurie Cashdan

It has been twenty years since the Combahee River Collective issued its famous Black Feminist Statement, committed to an identity politics which refused to "separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives they are most often experienced simultaneously." The Combahee collective (so named after an 1863 guerrilla action led by Harriet Tubman) argued that "a socialist revolution that is not also feminist and antiracist" would not "guarantee their liberation." Articulating what they saw as their role as Black feminists, they wrote that the "only people who care enough about us to work consistently for our liberation is us."<sup>1</sup>

## Woman as Reason

The link that the 1977 Combahee statement forged between identity politics and the dialectics of liberation resonates with Marx's concept of revolutionary subjects. To Marx, the particular forms of oppression subjects experience do not confine them to victimhood alone. They also intensify their "quest for universality"—in which these subjects could initiate new types of revolution, globally and across time, in western and non-western lands.

The new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's **Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** (WLDR) offers a crucial point of departure for grasping this "multilinearity" in Marx's writings in relation to today. Dunayevskaya's own multilinearism—evident in her exciting discussions of women in such diverse struggles as African liberation, the Portuguese revolution, and the Iranian revolution—centers theoretically on her analysis of Marx's works.

She sharply contrasts Marx's multilinearism with the "unilinearism" evident in Engels' **Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State**—a work erroneously treated by most feminists as representative of Marx's views. She also connects Marx's multilinearism with Hegel's dialectic, locating in this link great potential for today.

What makes her work so urgent today is that the link established between identity politics and dialectics of revolution by the Combahee Collective and many others since, has frequently been broken within feminist theoretical debates on identity, difference and multiculturalism.

Among scholars and activists who attempt a multicul-

1. Combahee River Collective, "Black Feminist Statement," in Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, eds., **But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies** (Feminist Press, 1982).

## Women, work and welfare

**Chicago**—I'm a mother that has worked the majority of my life, like most women on Public Aid. From 1974 till 1983 I was in local 1429 International Longshoremen's Association. I started at a time when women were just getting into this male-dominated work field. Then I drove trucks until 1992. I've been on public aid since 1993 when I had the first of my second set of kids. I'm in GED now.

They're trying to push all the mothers out into a job, sending you harassment letters. I don't mind going to work but I want to work for a living wage. What's the need of me working for \$5.00 an hour? I can't pay rent, child care, utilities, I can't buy clothes and food, or occasionally go out and enjoy myself with my kids. I'd be working just to say I have a job. That is what they want.

Your worker calls you into the office to do a platform on what you're going to do for the future now that public aid is going into another phase. I told her that I had planned to work a non-traditional job and showed her the flyer I saw at the public aid office—which she had never seen—for the Midwest Women in Trades who were talking up to a year of training for these jobs.

She said, "Well, we want you to get into something now that's short term job training, because you need to get out to work." I told her they just wanted us to get any job and she admitted it! She said, "Why yes, we're trying to get the women to work, yeah really, any job."

Under the new welfare law, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), a lot of women are going to be cut off child care. Once you start working they may help you for a year depending on how much you make. The federal government will not increase its child-care budget when the number who need it increases due to the new work requirements. Also people are going to have to pay a big portion of child care out of their own pockets, which means you're going to have to get somebody who's not qualified.

To get licensed day care, the cheapest they charge is \$70.00 per week, per child. I have two children. Where am I going to get that much money from? I don't want some neighbor upstairs, or some nut, anybody you can get to take a couple of dollars to watch my children.

My biggest thing right now is passing the GED. GED wears me out. I don't know how in the world a woman will be able to work 20 hours, go to school and raise kids, which will happen under the new law.

Welfare "reform" is just an attack on poor people and causes deceit and hatred among people. Unless welfare recipients and working people organize, the rich will have poor people killing each other off while driving down wages for everyone.

—Rose

tural feminism based on diversity, some engage socialist-feminist materialist analyses of oppression. Others, who critique socialist-feminism as economic determinism, head in a sharply different direction. They rely on poststructuralist theories of difference that attack identity politics as essentialist and exclusionary. However, feminists for whom identity has been especially important in formulating a politics of liberation, including many women of color, question what kind of politics can be built on the "fractured identities" of postmodernism.

Yet women engaged with ongoing movements continue to press the questions the Combahee collective posed. The authors in **Feminist Nationalism**, a new anthology edited by Lois A. West, show that feminism and democracy are still burning issues within many national liberation movements. Other scholars argue feminist solidarities must recognize the specificity of different struggles, a "politics of location," as Chandra Mohanty puts it, based on the "historical, geographical, cultural, psychic and imaginative boundaries" that give rise to political self-definition.<sup>2</sup>

Dunayevskaya's work on multilinearity is not exhausted by the politics of identity as elaborated by theories of multiculturalism. Instead, the diversity of revolutionary subjects and human development becomes a point of departure for locating new pathways to revolution, globally and historically, including today.

## MARX'S "ABSOLUTE MOVEMENT OF BECOMING"

Dunayevskaya shows us that even before he wrote **Capital**, Marx had already shown his impatience with what he later (1878) called "supra-historical theories."<sup>3</sup> In the 1857-58 **Grundrisse**, in his pre-capitalist economic formations section, Marx showed that his conception of human development was not unilinear. Instead of viewing slavery, feudalism and capitalism as three stages of human development, Marx discusses another era, the "Asiatic mode of production," a communal form that appeared both in the West and the East.

What had attracted Marx's attention in the 1850s was the Taiping Rebellion in China, an uprising he noted directly in **Capital** in 1867, writing that it could "encourage" revolution in the West. Dunayevskaya's point is that far from limiting his view to specific property forms—or even forms of oppression, such as "Oriental despotism"—Marx eyed dialectics of revolution that might occur across borders of culture and geography. In Marx's multilinear idea of history, humanity "does not seek to remain something formed by the past, but is in the absolute movement of becoming."

Dunayevskaya held fast to Marx's concept, making "absolute movement of becoming" the frontisquote to her 1973 **Philosophy and Revolution**. In her revolutionary multilinearism, an "absolute movement of becoming" emerges when liberatory struggles of women—and other forces—are tightly tied to philosophy of revolution itself.

To be continued next month

2. Chandra Mohanty, "Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience," in Michelle Barrett and Anne Phillips, eds., **Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates** (Stanford, 1992), p. 74.

3. Letter to the Editorial Board of *Otechnevennyye Zapiski*, **Marx-Engels Collected Works**, Vol. 24, p. 201.

## Rape is a hate crime

**Chicago**—In late April RAZOR (Radical Activists Zeroing in on Rape), founded by a Lesbian Avenger activist, held a march and speakout. About 70 of us marched through Chicago's "magnificent mile" of incredibly expensive stores.

At the speakout a white woman who is a women's advocate at University of Illinois-Chicago demanded that rape be recognized as a hate crime against women. She cursed the language society uses—"she got raped"—which makes it seem like the woman's fault. "Universities tolerate rape and blame the woman saying 'she was stupid,' 'she was drunk.' Rape is hatred!"

Beverly, founder of WordSongs, spoke. WordSongs is primarily an African American girls' and women's support group with a multicultural perspective. It has raised over \$260,000 for Girl X, the nine-year-old who was raped and tortured in the Cabrini Green project. She said, "Sexual violence is out of the closet so let's tear it down. When I was eight I was raped and tortured in my neighbor's home. I came face to face with my own life through Girl X. Sexual violence will not go unaddressed in our communities anymore!"

Della Mitchell of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and Committee to Protect Public Housing said, "Women already have to exchange sex for housing. This is true even in many shelters...When we march to save public housing, we have to think about this and the fact that we don't know who's going to be raped next within public housing. We need to organize. If the brothers don't help, we can do it ourselves!"

One of the most moving speakers was a Black woman who had been raped as a college freshman. "I don't know why when something gets stolen from you, it's easy to report that, but that when your spirit, your body is taken from you, you feel like you can't say anything about it...We are mothers, sisters and daughters...I identify with Little Girl X, Jon-Benet Ramsey, the women of Bosnia and the women of Rwanda."

A white woman rape victim advocate who spoke last

# Norma Jean Croy freed

*Editor's note: After years of community organizing on her behalf, Norma Jean Croy, the Native American convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, was finally released from prison in March 1997. Her brother has been out for several years, since the court overturned his conviction for murder of an off-duty FBI agent, ruling it was an accident. At a recent gathering in California, she told her story.*

I was 24 at the time. We were out partying. It was the evening of Feb. 16 or 17 [1979]. We decided to go out hunting. A scuffle broke out in the store. The store clerk accused my brother of short-changing him, which never happened. A chase started, gun-fire. I was the first one shot. My cousin was shot while trying to surrender. We surrendered right away and were down. The shots kept firing. I didn't know where my brother was, or if he was dead.



They eventually accepted our surrender. I was hit with the shotgun butt in the face. I was laying down on the ground in the dark. All I heard was: "Don't move! Get up!" If I moved to get up, I was hit for moving. If I stayed down, I was hit for not getting up. I didn't know if they would shoot me again.

We were in a local jail for a long time. Then we were transferred to another, very red-neck, county. I was 24 then, I am 42 now, living one day at a time.

I can't tell anybody how to do time. It's not a good place to be. You watch your friends die. You don't want to get sick in there. You see an MTA [Medically Trained Assistant] in there and they decide if you are going to see a doctor. If they do, they put you on a doctor's list. It takes three to four weeks before you see a doctor. By then you're well if you were able to get some medication from somebody else. It's illegal, but it gets you well.

In prison they teach you how to be a crook. There is no education, no way to learn a vocation there. They don't care if you live or die. If you die, you only save them money. Prison is just a warehouse for CDC [California Department of Corrections] making money. The more prisons they make, the more money they make. The guards make \$50,000-75,000 per year.

And talking about gangs, CDC is the biggest gang there is. When you join, you get to do what you want. There is all kinds of racism. If you don't like women, go work in one of the women's prisons. You can have fun with it. Because you're the law. You don't do what I say, guess what, you don't get out. It's not right.

It's nice to be out here. Thank you for all your support.

—Sonia Bergonzi

## Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Nearly 150 activists and officials from Germany, Austria and Switzerland met Apr. 18 in Constance, Germany to initiate an anti-discrimination network to stop the disproportionate effect of budget cuts and layoffs on women and to mandate equal pay for equal work. Tens of thousands of women had taken to the streets throughout Germany on International Women's Day demanding the government end its "anti-social, anti-women politics" as they cut social spending. In the 15 European Union states, women earn an average of 20% less than men in the same jobs. Between 20-40% of working women hold jobs at the low end of the income scale.

\* \* \*

A Kuwait University professor was fired in April for saying that homosexuality exists in that Islamic country. Dr. Alia Shoaib is a radical feminist supporting a woman's right to control her own body, pursue her sexual identity and choose her husband. The country's information minister, Sheikh Saoud al-Nassar at Sabah says the professor's comments "defamed the university and its students."

# Vendetta against newspaper strikers

**Detroit**—On May 1, Harry Collins and I, both printers with over 67 years of experience between us, were fired from the Detroit Newspapers because we protested the newspapers' unjust and criminal attempt to break the newspaper unions in Detroit. We were fired for participating in a peaceful demonstration that took place on Aug. 30, 1996, almost a year ago.

At that time, a group of some 50 strikers, led by President John Sweeney and other national leaders of the AFL-CIO and leaders of the Detroit Council of Newspaper Unions, sat down on a public sidewalk in front of the Detroit News building to protest management's lack of desire to reach fair and just contracts with its long-term employees. After a period of time, the union leaders were arrested and the strikers were asked to disperse, which they did. Many strikers were fired at this time, including three printers' union officials.

After an unconditional offer to return to work was made by the Council on Feb. 13 of this year and accepted by the company, the printers, about 80, except for those who were fired, part-timers and those over age 65, were recalled and back in the building by April 28.

We were taken to two rooms at the Detroit Free Press building and were given tests to see if we were competent to operate Macintosh computers. Most of us were operating these computers for many years before the strike. Those of us who passed management's tests were given \$17.30 an hour and those who failed got \$12 a hour. The tests were not fairly given and the criteria for passing were not the same for everyone. Harry and I, both very active in the strike, naturally flunked the tests.

The \$12 per hour printers occupy the "POW camp" on the 2nd floor of the Detroit Free Press building. They need permission to leave the floor or place a call. Keep in mind that the average age of the printers is 59 years old and the average length of service is well over 25 years.

Before they fired me I was asked to do a shift at the main plant on make-up. Working in a roomful of SCABS supervised by people who used to be members of our

union before they sold out was quite an experience. I got through the shift with no problems.

When I reported back to the "POW camp" the next day I was called into the supervisor's office and fired for the Aug. 30, 1996 action. Harry, who was also putting in one shift at the plant the next day, was fired within five minutes after his starting time. We were both asked to identify ourselves from photographs taken at the sit-down action, told to turn in our ID cards and were escorted out of the building by several Vance (strike-breaking) goons.

We were suspended indefinitely "pending investigation," and three days later were fired for committing an "egregious" act of peaceful protest. As a final insult, the company held up the pay they owed us for the several weeks we had worked for over two weeks before mailing it to us. What a wonderful company! —Armand Nevers

## Support women at Mitsubishi

**Memphis, Tenn.**—Women from National Organization for Women, Women's Action Coalition and News & Letters stood on a busy street corner of a Memphis Mitsubishi car dealership to bear witness to the sexual harassment still going on at Mitsubishi. We held posters that read "Honk for Working Women!" and "Shame on Mitsubishi!" Among a cacophony of car horns the manager of the dealership tried to throw us off the sidewalk. We wouldn't budge.

This demonstration, organized by the local NOW chapter, was one of many that National NOW organized across the nation sparked by the events that took place a year ago in the Normal, Ill., plant where over 300 women told of being victims of sexual harassment.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission filed the largest sexual harassment suit in its history against the company. Since then, Mitsubishi has refused to implement promises it made to NOW and the women harassed by them. Spreading the word and protests like these are what will show Mitsubishi that women are not gonna take it anymore! —Marie Tobin



The spirit of Haymarket/1886 was kept alive in the celebration at Haymarket Square in Chicago on May 1. Participants included housing activists, legal aid workers on strike, farm-worker supporters, as well as veterans of past labor struggles including Leon Despres and Frank Lumpkin.

## Legal workers win strike

**Chicago**—The labor movement has organized to demand that individuals have some power over their own lives despite the continual push by employers for dictatorial control over the conditions of work, promotions, and other prerogatives that they have proclaimed as the rights of property. These employer prerogatives logically extend to quasi-public entities like the Legal Assistance Foundation (LAF) whose managers were forced to back down from their demands to do away with seniority rights by a 30-day strike of the United Auto Workers Local 2320—The United Legal Workers.

The Legal Assistance Foundation told the union that it needed the discretion to lay off persons at their whim rather than abide by existing seniority rules, telling the union that they needed to get rid of people who are "brain dead." Obviously, they wanted to maintain people who were not aware of the work rules or who were younger and made less money.

However, because of the organizing efforts of the union and the membership, the workers were not going to fall into the trap of working at the whim of the supervisors. Thus, this attempt by the LAF failed. The management also tried to set up a two-tier leave system between the lawyers and the support staff which also failed because of worker solidarity.

The workers gained added pension benefits from the employer from 2% to 3% and salary increases ranging from 8.7% to over 16% over the span of the three-year contract. They also won the demand of one single bargaining unit for lawyers, paralegals, and staff so that they could not be divided through status manipulation. While new workers do have to wait longer to get vacation benefits, they did strike a blow for human dignity.

During the retrogression that has been taking place in society over the last two decades, unions have been "giving back" their hard won rights with the promise of "saving jobs." In fact, this has often happened because the labor movement has lost sight of its vision of human dignity in favor of ephemeral short-term survival.

—Dennis D.

All out for national mobilization

**MOTOWN! ACTION 97**

**June 20-21 in Detroit**

**Solidarity with locked out newspaper workers**

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http://www.action97.w1.com

## Cambodia forms first union

**Chicago**—Strikes have been going on in Phnom Penh since Dec. 15, 1996—the day that our union, the Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia, was established. It is the first one in Cambodia. The majority of the members are from garment factories.

Most of the workers are women, ages 15 to 25, from rural areas looking for jobs. You have to pay bribes to factory management for a job, maybe \$150 for a woman and \$215 for a man. A young woman may ask her family to sell a plot of land to pay it.

Yet the way they are treated in the factories makes them want to organize. I am the union president, I am 25, and I have been that at my garment factory for three years. The managers are always pushing us for more and more hours, 14 hours a day and more, day after day, 30 days at a time without a day off, and no holidays or vacation. If a worker refuses once or twice to work all the overtime, or even if out too long for a family funeral, they will fire her.

Managers even want to play a game and pretend women workers are stealing clothes, then humiliate them by strip searching them in public. The managers, like the owners who are mostly from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, are foreigners. This is Cambodia, show some respect for the Cambodian people. One capitalist even said that without foreign investment all the women in Cambodia would turn into prostitutes. Is that an appropriate comment?

We are now negotiating to improve working conditions in the factories, 4,000 workers negotiating for higher wages and fewer working hours. The government did not create a minimum wage law, so the lowest paid workers make as little as five cents an hour, working 14 hours a day, seven days a week to make \$20 a month.

I have not received threats directly as union president, but what we do is an obstacle to their profit. On Easter Sunday, March 30, we participated in a demonstration of 250 garment workers. Unidentified men threw grenades into the crowd, killing 19 people and injuring 30.

I am traveling abroad to learn from other labor movements and to get support for our new union in Cambodia.

—Mary Ou

Union president Mary Ou spoke with News & Letters through a translator. Contact Free Trade Union of Workers of the Kingdom of Cambodia at House #27, Street 294, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Phone/fax: (855-23) 428-549.

## Why Sweeney-Kaiser deal?

**Oakland, Cal.**—The picket signs were barely put away from the massive show of solidarity during the California Nurses Association (CNA) 24-hour strike on April 16 in northern California when AFL-CIO President John Sweeney announced a new partnership agreement with Kaiser management. After years of restructuring and deterioration of care at Kaiser, Sweeney agreed to promote Kaiser as a quality care provider in exchange for a voice for the union hierarchy at the table. In this brokered deal the union will organize more union members at Kaiser's unorganized facilities in exchange for Kaiser gaining more HMO members.

Workers are asking, "What are we really organizing for: quality or 'bottom line' issues?" Kaiser was recently found culpable in the deaths of three patients who died in transport from the Richmond emergency room to other facilities due to Kaiser's deliberate elimination of critical care beds. Workers warned about these conditions for years.

Just when pressure from workers, patients, and the government was opening up a challenge to the logic of restructuring, Sweeney gave management an escape hatch. Rank-and-filers are asking "why?" Even local union leaders begged Sweeney to put off the announcement of the agreement if only because it was bad timing. In a tape of a national meeting promoting the agreement, a Local 250 (SEIU) unionist delicately asked how they were going to change their line 180 degrees on the quality of Kaiser as a caregiver.

When both workers and patients are demanding better conditions of work and health care, Kaiser management, with Sweeney's help, sees it as a problem of public relations. When challenged by Ralph Nader to stop adding new members because of its poor care, CEO Lawrence replied that the head of the AFL-CIO says Kaiser provides quality care.

Kaiser is getting resistance to its restructuring from many quarters, and workers know that better marketing with the help of the union is not the answer. We want to figure out how to build on the solidarity and courage expressed by 26,000 rank-and-filers in the April 16 one-day strike.

—Kaiser rank-and-filer

## Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

the company was to survive—a kind of threat against our jobs. Whenever they want something from us, they talk like "we're all in this together." Yeah, right. No one ever bought that line. But yeah, you do the work and it's your work that builds the company, and no one wants the company to go out of business and you'd have to look for work.

Now comes the rumor of the sale and, suddenly, you see all this work was not to save your job, it was to fatten the cow, sweeten the pot, make a more tantalizing morsel out of this company so a big fish could gobble it up—and the owners, who were "in it with us," they get to laugh all the way to the bank. We did all the work, they get all the profit.

This is not exactly a surprise. No one expects this company to be around forever. At this point, trucking is full of guys who've had two or three companies shut their doors on them. While there is no illusion, there is also not yet any indignation that this is the way it is. I think we still take for granted that's just the way life is, that our company should be disposed of, our labor disposed of, by a couple of men who don't do the work. To quote from that same speech by Debs:

"You do not need the capitalist. He could not exist an instant without you. You would just begin to live without him. You do everything and he has everything; and some of you imagine that if it were not for him you would have no work. As a matter of fact, he does not employ you at all; you employ him to take from you what you produce, and he faithfully sticks to his task. If you can stand it, he can; and if you don't change this relation, I am sure he won't. You make the automobile, he rides in it. If it were not for you, he would walk; and if it were not for him, you would ride."

After all the labor battles and defeats of the 1980s and '90s it's high time to see matters as clear as Debs laid them out.

**"A paper that is not just 'for' workers but by the workers, that aims to be a weapon in the class struggle...not only as readers, but writers, editors, distributors, financiers. It must be their weapon, and their total outlook in opposition to that of the capitalists, the labor bureaucrats, the planners, the leaders, totally theirs and interested in everything."**

—RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA  
News and Letters Committees founding conference, 1955

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# Will new Congo be born after the fall of Mobutu?

(Continued from page 1)

small disciplined force of 2,000 grew into a multiethnic army of 40,000 men and women as it swept across Zaire. After months of fighting skirmishes with FAZ and FAR troops in the Kivu provinces bordering Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda so as to stay close to their supply lines with those countries, the Alliance forces moved swiftly southward after capturing Kisangani to take control of the cobalt, diamond, and copper-rich Kasai and Shaba provinces. The quickened pace of the rebel march southward was a result of their "requisitioning" trains of the mining industry that connect the mineral-rich provinces. This interrupted the lucrative revenue flow to Mobutu from the multinational mining industry, leading a number of companies, especially American and Canadian, to sign contracts with the Alliance.

## TSHISEKEDI GROPES FOR POWER

From the Shaba capital of Lubumbashi, with two-thirds of the country under its control, the Alliance opened up negotiations with the severely weakened Mobutu regime. Negotiations with opposition groups in Kinshasa had gotten underway some months earlier. Despite this new glaring political reality, as well as the Alliance's openings to the political opposition in Kinshasa, opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi for a third time sought the opportunistic path to power by allowing Mobutu to coopt him into his crumbling regime. He shamelessly accepted the premiership, only to have Mobutu once again strip him of the post and impose martial law.

Despite the West's disinformation about his being a "democrat," Tshisekedi can only with the greatest stretch of the imagination fit that description. He is first of all the justice ministry official who in 1961 signed the arrest warrant for martyred independence leader Patrice Lumumba. In order to take on a short-lived tenure as prime minister under Mobutu, he quickly abandoned his own party's, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS), campaign to pressure Mobutu into holding elections in the early 1990s. Ousted once by Mobutu, Tshisekedi again jumped at Mobutu's invitation to fill the un-elected post of prime minister, resulting in further dividing and demoralizing the anti-Mobutu opposition. Tshisekedi has assumed the same divisive role in post-Mobutu Congo, showing his supreme arrogance by demanding that Kabila and the Alliance leadership come to his house to ask him to accept the post of prime minister.

For their championing of Mr. Tshisekedi, Kabila has charged the West with engaging in "machinations and intrigues" that aim to keep Mobutuism in power without Mobutu. In response to U.S. attempts to impose conditions on his government, Kabila told Pacifica Radio in an interview May 12: "For those who would like to see this country become again a democratic one—where freedom will enable these people to rebuild their country—I think what they can do is just to ask those big powers, the government of the United States of America and other Western countries, to give a chance to the people of the Democratic Congo to settle their disputes themselves."

## NEW PAN-AFRICANISM OUTFLANKS WEST

The Alliance won its initial political victory over Western powers, who were moving dangerously close to intervening, by successfully separating the genocidal Hutu army and militias from the mass of Hutu refugees in the camps in eastern Zaire. This satisfied Western public opinion that an "African solution" could be found for Africa's greatest humanitarian crisis. As one U.S. State Department analyst noted: "For the first time since the end of colonialism, outsiders have been left completely on the sidelines in a major African conflict."

The West nevertheless considers Kabila a puppet of the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front in Kigali and its military leader Paul Kagame, and furthermore believes that Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, with Kagame, will keep a tight rein on Kabila. With the defeat of the French-backed mercenary counter-offensive in January outside Kisangani, the Alliance gained new commitments not only from Uganda and Rwanda, but most importantly from Angola, as everyone in the region recognized that Mobutu's days were numbered. Yet all along the line, the West, led by the U.S., misread the political and military situation. "We always thought he [Kabila] would be forced to pause in his offensive and that his foreign backers—especially Museveni and Kagame—and the need to consolidate his gains would force him to the table," admits another State Department official. "We were wrong every time."

Even now, where none of the analysts and pundits are looking is in the direction of Angola. More than either of the ruling circles in Uganda or Rwanda, the left ideological profile of Kabila's intellectual inner circle mirrors that of Angolan President Dos Santos' left ruling government. Moreover, Angola has been the exile home of the separatists from Shaba province (Laurent Kabila's provincial home), who joined the rebel fighters in driving Mobutu out of power and cutting off the supply route for the counter-revolutionary forces of Jonas Savimbi.

Whatever may be made of the pan-African alliance of regional states that aided Kabila's rebel Alliance, one glance at the cabal of imperialist interlopers who propped up Mobutu over the years should dispel that withering piece of provocation. The U.S. provided Mobutu with military and CIA logistical support, along with armaments; Israel trained his presidential guard; France trained Zaire's airborne brigade; Italy shored up Mobutu's air force; the Belgians ran his military academy; China supplied arms; and the U.S., France, Belgium, Morocco, Egypt, and Serbia have over the years provided merce-

naries to prevent Mobutu from being toppled.

## NEW BEGINNINGS AND CONTRADICTIONS

Whatever support Kabila's rebels got from neighboring countries, however, the significant part of their strength came from the Congolese masses who joined the insurrection, and increased with the mass enthusi-



Triumphant Laurent Kabila and rebel troops.

asm that greeted the overthrow of the Mobutu dictatorship. Most Alliance members are not ethnic Tutsis but come from the Congo's eastern and southern regions. As one commander in the Alliance from the southern Shaba region, who had also spent time in exile in Angola, stated: "We are an alliance. We have all kinds of people among us. The important thing is that we are Africans and we are Congolese." And as another soldier responded when asked why the Alliance troops did nothing to stop the looting of the wealthy: "We did not liberate this country to see people behave like thieves. But when it comes to Mobutu and his property, whatever the people can take back, they deserve."

However, the most serious pitfall in which the Alliance can get caught up is Kinshasa's political labyrinth, particularly the political parties that have more in common with Western political elites than with the poor Congolese masses at whose expense the elite enriched themselves. Since March 23, Kabila had indicated that while no political parties except the Alliance would be tolerated in liberated areas, he encouraged all organizations to join the multiethnic Alliance. The war regionalized the Alliance as it picked up ground throughout the southern and eastern provinces, and drew large numbers of recruits into its ranks. Nevertheless, the AFDL remains vulnerable in the very areas that are responsible for its victories. It hasn't had time to build up political support and structures on the ground in the rural areas and towns where people rose up against the Mobutu regime.

So while the West makes a fetish of holding bourgeois elections for political elites who are looking for jobs, in fact grassroots elections have already been held in liberated areas during the war. "After Kisangani was secured," reports *The East African* (April 7-13, 1997), "cadres were flown in from rebel headquarters in Goma and worked around the clock to put a local administration in place. While they made preparations for local council elections, they also lectured the people of Kisangani on the importance of electing only 'good' leaders."

Being overly concerned that remnants of the regime that Mobutu left behind are covert agents out to destabilize the program of reconstruction that Kabila unveiled in his inauguration speech on May 29, the Alliance runs the risk of responding with heavy-handed repressive measures, such as severe restraints on basic civil liberties. However, more significant than these are

the persistent charges in the media about human rights abuses by Alliance soldiers in eastern Congo.

The 100,000 refugees estimated missing by independent sources may have been the victims of either the FAR and FAZ, or Alliance troops. Despite the common but mistaken opinion that the Banyamulenge Tutsi rebels may be responsible for the human rights abuses against

Rwandan Hutu refugees, international aid agencies consistently characterize the Banyamulenge as the most disciplined and professional soldiers in the Alliance, and claim that subsequent contingents of young volunteer soldiers from the regions were more inexperienced and ill-disciplined. Internal conflicts within the rebel army may have also led to tragic human rights abuses against refugees. Complicating matters further is the situation in eastern Congo where fighting continues between the Banyamulenge Tutsi and the Hutu militias.

Given the chaos and corruption of 32 years of Mobutuist despotism that drove the Congo to utter ruin, we will have to see if Kabila's attempt to reform Congolese society will become a Deng Xiaoping-brand

of one-party authoritarian rule organized around a liberal state-capitalist economy, or a transition to a truly African socialist alternative.

## THE ROAD AHEAD

Promising a constitution by December, a referendum on it by December 1998, and elections by April 1999 in his May 27 inaugural address, Kabila answered his chorus of critics. For the Congolese masses, creating jobs, reforming the education and healthcare systems, and rebuilding roads and railways are more important than scheduling bourgeois elections that in any case wrest power from local grassroots organizations. "We have been liberated from 32 years of dictatorship," exclaimed one unemployed Kinshasan on the day of Kabila's inauguration. "We've been without education, without transportation, without food. Kabila has brought us hope."

That sentiment and excitement characterizes the Congolese masses of workers and peasants who see more clearly than our tired left pundits who look on the world-historic events in the Congo with an all too knowing glance and draw no encouragement for our own struggles. The historic promise and excitement of the Democratic Republic of Congo is the African future it portends, one, to paraphrase Yoweri Museveni, in which Africa's internecine conflicts of tribe versus tribe become instead conflicts of peasants without blankets versus despots with palaces.

There is no way to know, of course, what lies ahead in the Congo in the coming period. However, one thing is certain, and that is Raya Dunayevskaya's prognosis for the African revolution in her 1973 *Philosophy and Revolution*: "Far from rigor mortis having set in among 'the poor Africans,' they are continuing the discussion of the relationship of philosophy to revolution, and not only among themselves but internationally. The whole point seems to be to hold on to the principle of creativity, and the contradictory process by which creativity develops" (p. 246).

Kabila and his Alliance government will surely succumb to the contradictory process that lies ahead for the Congo if they separate its realities from the most serious discussion of the dialectical relationship of philosophy to revolution to organization. That task though is not one that is left to the Congolese to work out alone, but an international task that history has assigned the whole of the revolutionary movement.

## Elections in Iran: a new opening?

There is a widespread mood of jubilation in Iran these days with the election of Mohammad Khatami as the new president. Nearly 20 million people—70% of those who voted, including many women and youth—voted not only for Khatami but against his main rival, the speaker of the parliament, Ali Akbar Nategh-Nouri.

Despite the large turnout the election can hardly be called democratic. Khatami and all other presidential candidates were selected by the Council of Guardians, a body of mullahs that oversees the government and has full veto power over it. Khatami's popularity is mostly due to his ouster from the government five years ago as the minister of culture and Islamic guidance. He was accused of being "too permissive" by the more orthodox faction headed by Nategh-Nouri.

Despite his large popular backing, Khatami has already been warned by the conservative faction that he must strictly enforce "Islamic" laws or face the consequences. Another important factor in the vote for Khatami and what won him the presidency was the full backing he received for his campaign rallies from incumbent president Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Khatami's selection reflects the fact that even many supporters of the regime want to move away from its more odious repressive practices. With his election the regime's goon squads and "moral" police will have less room to operate with impunity. The annual campaigns of harassing women on the streets or strict separation of the sexes will have less high level backing. The press will have some room to allow criticism of such practices by the government. During the late '80s and early '90s, Khatami's ministry was influential in granting dozens

of publishing permits to non-Islamic journals. Several of those publications were later banned or had their offices burned down by fanatics.

The election doesn't mean that such fanatics have lost their power and prestige inside the government. His administration can easily be sidestepped by other government entities. Earlier this year a German court indicted key members of Iran's Council of Guardians—including Rafsanjani and Khamenei—on charges of ordering the assassination of a Kurdish opposition leader and several other left activists.

Prosecutors were able to show that a phone call was made from the Iranian consulate to the assassins on the same day as the killings occurred. The most important witness in that trial was Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, a much more democratically elected former president of Iran who was deposed by Ayatollah Khomeini and his goon squads in 1981. Bani-Sadr testified that the assassination order could have only come from the highest authorities in the Iranian government.

Iran's rulers today have maintained the continuity with the order established by Ayatollah Khomeini. Their power is rooted in a horrendous counter-revolution lodged in the heart of a genuine revolutionary movement against the Shah. They are adept at suppressing any sign of a revival of that revolutionary spirit. The new president Khatami was put in charge of the media in 1982 at the height of the period of counter-revolutionary terror. The elections have shown that Iranians, given the chance, wish to move toward a more liberatory atmosphere.

—Cyrus Noveen

## special section

## On the Dialectics of Philosophy and Organization

This month marks the tenth anniversary of one of the most important writings in the archives of Marxist-Humanism—Raya Dunayevskaya's "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" of June 1, 1987, written shortly before her death eight days later. As part of our effort to live up to its call to break down the separation between philosophy and organization, we are compiling a collection of her writings on dialectical philosophy and encourage you to participate in a discussion of this work-in-

progress. Toward that end, this section includes: 1) Excerpts of Dunayevskaya's 1976 speech, "Hegel, Marx, Lenin, Fanon and the Dialectics of Liberation Today," which will appear in the collection; 2) an essay by Peter Hudis on the Presentation of June 1, 1987 in light of today; 3) a provisional table of contents for the new collection; and 4) an appeal from the Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund. Your response to the ideas contained in this special section would be especially appreciated.

## The Dialectics of Liberation Today

by Raya Dunayevskaya

[The] new forces and new passions for revolution make us return to Hegel's Absolute Idea as new beginnings. Even though we aren't now as active as we were, say, in the 1960s, what is so great in our age is that we have reached a stage where we are trying to work out a new relationship of theory and practice, a new relationship of philosophy and revolution.

What are the new beginnings? They are on two levels—the actual forces of revolution, workers, Blacks, youth, and women; and then, only when you have forces of revolution, can you speak of them on the second level, not only as force but as Reason.

But now, as against stressing a human force as Reason, we want to stress Reason as a force for revolution. You cannot subdivide, or divide in any way, the theory and the practice, and say it's only in the practice; there has to be a new unity of the two. So the new beginning means, what has happened in our lifetime? We want to take up, therefore, what happened in the last two decades, and see at which stage I was, so to speak, forced to rethink.

## THE NEWNESS OF OUR AGE

We have taken up Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* and the *Science of Logic*; now we're going to go into his *Philosophy of Mind*. But I want to first say one concrete thing as to how I happened to go to those abstractions.

[When] Lenin finished his work on the *Science of Logic*, he was very happy that in the first half of its last paragraph, Hegel had said we now go to Nature. Lenin says: Nature is practice, and hoorah! Hegel is stretching a hand to historical materialism; he was a precursor of historical materialism.

Now, that is true, but we have to look at where Lenin stopped; in other words, what was in the last half paragraph?

In [May] 1953 I was rereading this for different purposes. 1953 was a lovely time for me because Stalin died! What could make me happier than that? So I'm in heaven, and thinking: Well, that must be a new stage of something; what will the masses do now? I came to where Lenin stopped, where he says the last half paragraph after Hegel stretches his hand to Nature, is unimportant. I read the last half paragraph, and wrote a letter about it. This is what I said [in my letter of May 12, 1953]:

"But my dear Vladimir Illyitch, it is not true; the end of that page is important. We of 1953, we who have lived three decades after you and tried to absorb all you have left us, we can tell you that. Listen to the very next sentence from Hegel: 'But this determination is not a perfected becoming or a transition...'

"Remember how transition was everything to you in the days of Monopoly, the eve of socialism. Well, Hegel has passed beyond transition; he says this last determination, 'the pure Idea, in which the determinateness or reality of the Notion is itself raised to the level of Notion, is an absolute liberation, having no further immediate determination which is not equally posited and equally Notion. Consequently there is no transition in this freedom....The transition here therefore must rather be taken to mean that the Idea freely releases itself in absolute self-security.'"

Where Lenin stressed the objectivity, we add the emphasis, "personal and free." Where Lenin had emphasized materialism, we stress the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality. And where Lenin stopped a paragraph short of the end of the *Logic*, we proceed to show that Hegel's anticipation of Volumes 2 and 3 of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* was similar to Marx's anticipation of the general law of capitalist accumulation in Volume 1 of *Capital*.

(In chapter 32 of *Capital*, on the general law of capitalist accumulation, Marx gives you very nearly everything in Volumes 2 and 3, because he ventures to show that these new passions and new forces for the reconstruction of a new society will be human power as its own end. [In Hegel], after the *Science of Logic*, he had the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, [its three parts being] the *Smaller Logic*, then the *Philosophy of Nature*, then the *Philosophy of Mind*.)

## HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

We concluded that what Hegel is showing in the movement from Logic to Nature to Mind was this: The movement is from the logical principle or theory, to Nature, or practice, and from practice not alone to

theory, but to the new society which is its essence."<sup>1</sup> I then said I must go to the *Philosophy of Mind*.

Now in the last year of his life, Hegel decided that something wasn't kosher [in] ending [the *Philosophy of Mind*] with ¶574.<sup>2</sup> He said: we have three syllogisms—Logic-Nature-Mind is the first. That sounds



Raya Dunayevskaya

like he's merely repeating the titles of his book—the *Logic*, the *Philosophy of Nature*, and the *Philosophy of Mind*. But what is more important, and shows the new here, is that Nature is the mediation, the middle term; it's therefore not Logic that's the most important, it's Nature, because mediation, dialectically, is both objective and subjective. Nature turns to Mind, and it looks back at Logic, but disregards it, because it's now turning to something else.

I read this and say: Well! Hegel is not only stretching a hand to Nature, which is practice (I'm willing to accept that from Lenin and think it's great), but this syllogism shows that there is a movement from

1. This phrase is from the Letter of May 20, 1953.

2. The first, 1817 edition of the *Philosophy of Mind* did not contain ¶575-577, in which Hegel takes up the syllogisms of Logic-Nature-Mind. These were added in the form we now know them in the 1830 edition.

practice that is itself a form of theory. What is it that the East Germans, the Hungarians—the whole of East Europe—had been showing? They not only took Marx's Humanism from the archives and put that on the historic stage, but they made something new with workers' councils and decentralization of the state. So this syllogism is showing that so far as Hegel was concerned, Nature is the central thing, and there is a movement from practice which is itself a form of theory.

But it simply isn't true that Hegel stops at this point, as we see immediately when we get to the second syllogism. The second syllogism is Nature-Mind-Logic. Mind becomes the central thing, the mediation. (That shows he's not just mentioning his books, because now he's turning around their order.) What is important about [doing] it that way?

Now I'll tell you something fantastic. None of the Marxists had bothered with these three [syllogisms] in the *Philosophy of Mind* because we already had a new continent of thought, Marxism. There didn't seem to be any use to go back to an abstraction, when Marx was so great in explaining exactly what the abstractions mean. But there is one advantage to an abstraction—if you meet a new epoch and a new crisis, a new transformation into opposite, if it's too concrete it just doesn't hold anymore....the abstraction makes it easier to try and see what is new in your age.

The scholars also didn't pay any attention to these three syllogisms. I was quite shocked to find out that it was only in the mid-1960s that one of the finest, [Reinhart Klemens] Maurer, took these up. Here's what he's trying to do with that second syllogism.<sup>3</sup> He says: it shows that this is the syllogism for the *Phenomenology of Mind*. After all, the *Phenomenology* isn't just phenomena, but a whole philosophy of history; it takes in 2,500 years of history.

Now, there's only one trouble in trying to appropriate this second syllogism for the *Phenomenology of Mind*—why did Hegel make this great work of his so inconsequential by the time he wrote the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*? He only gives it one single section, and under psychology, of all places! Hegel would have failed anyone who dared to say that that second syllogism was really the *Phenomenology of Mind*.

But let's look at what Hegel did before this. The [chapters on the Three Attitudes of Thought Toward Objectivity] were not in the 1817 edition of the *Science of Logic*.<sup>4</sup> The first attitude to objectivity is Faith—everything that was pre-Kantian or pre-empirical. Then the second attitude to objectivity is when you reach the Industrial Revolution in England, and the revolutionary philosophy of Kant, his introduction of dialectics. If you were believing only in synthesis,

(Continued on page 6)

3. Reinhart Klemens Maurer, *Hegel und das Ende der Geschichte: Interpretationen zur 'Phänomenologie des Geistes'* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1965)

4. The text of the transcript here reads, "The Introduction was not in the 1817 edition," but this appears to be a verbal slip.

## An appeal from the Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund

The body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism was worked out by Raya Dunayevskaya during a lifetime of active engagement in movements for freedom. That those ideas have never been more timely can be seen in the hunger for ways of thought that can stand against the new forms of repression that have arisen everywhere, from the industrially developed West, to the former-Communist nations of Eastern Europe, to the Third World.

That search is attested to by the new doors that have recently been opened to the study and discussion of Dunayevskaya's works for the first time ever in such countries as China and Russia. At the same time, the rethinking of Marx's Marxism has brought about exceptional interest in new translations of her works in West and East Europe.

In the 10 years since it was founded, the Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund has made significant strides toward its goal to keep the works of the founder of Marxist-Humanism in print and make them available in new editions, at the same time that it continues the collection, organization and donation of her documents

to the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs. Yet the crucial work underway to translate and publish her work in various countries is greatly straining the ability of the Fund to continue its expanding work.

We have witnessed for several decades the devastating impact on the minds of humanity when access to the richness of Marx's thought has been expunged. Never was it more important to explore the fullness of Marx's Marxism, freed from the distortions of post-Marx Marxism, than now when we are witnessing in life exactly what Marx worked out as the logic of capital. Because the widest possible discussion of the ideas of freedom is needed for the philosophic foundations of new movement, the Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund is asking the support of all those concerned that the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism should receive wide exposure and discussion.

All contributions to the Memorial Fund toward that end should be sent to: The Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 705, Chicago IL 60605.

## Dialectics of Philosophy and Organization

(Continued from page 5)

the third attitude should be the dialectic, right? No. The third attitude to objectivity is the retrogression, once you have met a new crisis within that great big new beautiful civilized world of the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution and the Kantian dialectic.

So you see, Hegel is not wanting to give to Mind—as great as it is, and as the mediation—what Maurer now is saying. In other words, Hegel is now saying that as great as Mind is, and it certainly is great, by itself it's like ordering somebody suddenly to walk on his head. What is the use of trying to tell you to walk on your head? It isn't going to help, unless it is united with something. And what is it going to be united with? If [Hegel] was going to follow through by constantly turning the three categories around, then [with ¶577] Logic would now become the mediation.

He spent all that time on the **Science of Logic**, but now he wants to throw Logic out altogether! That was just, so to speak, the excuse for you to know the categories which would help you explain reality; now you really have to do something. So he throws all of it out, and he says [in the final ¶577]: well, it's really the "Self-Thinking Idea," "the self-determination of the Idea, in which it alone is, is to hear itself speak."

If we listen to what the Idea is, and we know that there is no difference between Idea and freedom, then it will be equally the nature of the fact and the nature of cognition itself. That is one of the forms of getting to the transformation of reality—what Marx called the realization of freedom. That's why Marx stuck so much to the dialectic. We're not going to throw philosophy out, we have to realize it; that is, instead of an idea of freedom, it has to become the reality. And this reality means that when the Self-Thinking Idea and the self-movement of masses unite, then and only then will we have a new way to transform reality, a new philosophy, a new society.

### POST-MARX MARXISTS AND THE DIALECTIC

We must begin, however, with Absolute Idea as new beginnings, and I want to end with that. [Take] these three little words, "as new beginnings." Let's go through all these Marxists and see why they didn't get there.

Lukacs tried to say: Well, since we don't believe in Absolutes, let's see what Hegel meant; he meant the unity of theory and practice, so then the key is **totality**.

Totality is very much superior to empiricism, it's very much superior to taking only one single question; totality means you look at the relationship between the Third World and the First World and the Second World—you look at the relationship of various ideas. But, it isn't good enough. It's just totality as the opposite of single ideas, single actions—you know, a strike instead of a revolution. That's great, but it isn't going

to give you any new ideas. We're living in a world that has seen the counter-revolution within the revolution, has seen the transformation of the first workers' state into its opposite—a state-capitalist society, has seen the new that was brought with Mao [which] became its opposite. Abstract idealism (as just the Chairman's Thought, and so forth), like abstract materialism, is vulgar, and can only help the bourgeoisie; it cannot possibly help the revolution or a new society. So [the key] is not totality.

What did Sartre say? "Totalization"—he wants to make everything totalization. What did it bring him to, this totalization? It meant you are just a serial, just a number, like waiting for a bus at a bus station; you're 1 and you're 10 and so forth, and you will get nowhere because there's no difference between the two. So someone has to come in from the outside, the Party, to order you about, and the Party is better than the State, or something. So it isn't totalization.

What did Adorno say? Adorno was the greatest of the dialecticians, so to speak "pure dialectics." And he made a real mess of it. I was never looking forward to anything so greatly as his **Negative Dialectics**. I was dumb enough to think that that meant dialectics of negativity. Hegel says there are two negations, and the second negation is the really positive, and Marx says that that's the new society. I thought that's what Adorno would talk about. No. He is talking about negative dialectics because the fetishism is not just the commodity; he makes it now the fetishism of the concept. Conceptual fetishism: you've got to throw it out. What are you going to do next?

I talked to the Hegel Society of America, and there were quite a few Adorno-ites and Frankfurt School people who were trying to prove some of the better parts of Adorno. So I said, I'll quote you the good parts of Adorno (from **Aspects of the Hegelian Dialectic**): "Subject-object cannot be dismissed as mere extrava-

gance of logical absolutism...in seeing through the latter as mere subjectivity, we have already passed beyond the speculative idealism...cognition, if it is genuine, and more than simple duplication of the sub-



## The Challenge of Dia

by Peter Hudis

Our focus on Raya Dunayevskaya's "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" of June 1, 1987, is not just for the sake of commemorating the tenth anniversary of its composition. It is instead compelled by the need to overcome the central problem facing the revolutionary movement—the separation of organization from philosophy.

That separation has been around for a long time. But it has become especially acute in light of the events that have transpired since the June 1, 1987 presentation was written.

Since 1987 we have witnessed the collapse of Communism in Russia and East Europe, the decline of Western Social-Democracy, and the collapse of many Third World radical movements, from Nicaragua to South Africa. At the same time, new revolts have emerged, as in the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992 and the Chiapas revolt in Mexico.

It is not surprising that an array of state powers and movements which narrowed "socialism" to mean nationalized property and statist domination have by now fallen into a profound morass. Yet it is somewhat surprising that those who opposed such tendencies from the left have failed to respond to this situation by projecting an alternative. In 1997, we barely hear even any discussion of the goal of a socialist society that transcends "free market" capitalism and state-capitalism that called itself Communism, despite the continued emergence of new revolts.

**What is lacking is organizational responsibility for a philosophy that not only exposes the limits of existing capitalism, but also projects a vision of a new society that can become a pole of attraction for masses of people.**

Dunayevskaya's Presentation of June 1, 1987 speaks to this, in taking up the "untrodden path" in post-Marx Marxism—the inseparability of dialectics and organization. She there explored how the "philosophic moments" of both Marx and Marxist-Humanism contain a concept of organization which we need to return to and concretize today.

The "philosophic moment" of Marx was his **Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts** of 1844; the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism was the "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" of 1953. Though both were discussed innumerable times in Dunayevskaya's writings, her June 1, 1987 Presentation broke new ground in exploring them in terms of the dialectics of organization.

So crucial is this, that after Dunayevskaya's death on June 9, 1987, we concluded that the future of Marxist-Humanism hinges on having this culminating point in her work become our new beginning. This has motivated us to collect, as an **organizational** endeavor, Dunayevskaya's writings on the Hegelian dialectic. In making our process of work on this book available to our readers, we are asking you to join us in this effort of working out the inseparability of philosophy and organization.

### I. MARX'S CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATION

One of the central, though rarely discussed, dimen-

sions of the June 1, 1987 Presentation is its view that Marx's 1844 Manuscripts marked the birth of his concept of organization. To explore this, we need to begin with the year 1841, when Marx was still a "Prometheus Bound" in academia.

In 1841 Marx grappled with a key problem—"how to begin anew" upon the ground of a total philosophy without reproducing the division of philosophy from reality which always seems to arise after the passing of an epochal thinker. The specific thinker Marx had in mind was Hegel. Though no one strove for a more comprehensive unity of reality with the Idea of freedom than Hegel, the young Marx perceived a division between Hegel's philosophy and the world of lived existence. In light of the dismal efforts of Hegel's followers to surmount this division, Marx asked whether Hegel's philosophy was really the unity of reason and reality that it claimed to be.

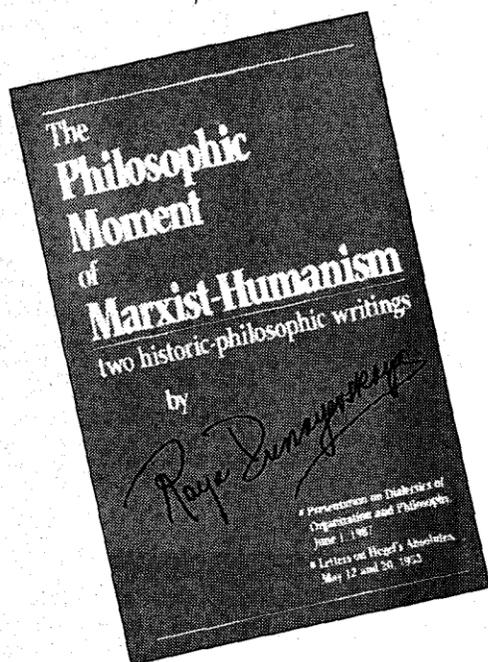
Marx's search for "how to begin anew" in light of this division led him, in his doctoral dissertation of 1841, to hit out against those who treated Hegel's philosophy as a "spiritual monad, sated in itself, ideally formed in all aspects of itself, [which] is not allowed to recognize any reality which has come into being without it." As against those who uphold philosophy by ignoring any realities not anticipated by it, Marx said philosophy must "become worldly," by "turning to a practical relationship towards reality."

This did not mean that Marx abandoned Hegel's philosophy. For Marx saw that the move from philosophy to reality can "make real progress" only if the Idea has an explicit theoretic existence, that is, only if the Idea persists as a determination not totally submerged in its externalized reality. He wrote, "The practice of philosophy is itself theoretical. It is the critique that measures the individual existence by the essence, the particular reality by the Idea."

Marx was showing that in order to work out a new beginning for post-Hegel Hegelianism, it is necessary to reconstitute the Idea of freedom in a "new element" internal to reality, in such a way that philosophy is not left behind, but is realized. In 1841 Marx had not yet found this "new element." Yet in posing the problem in this way he opened a path to his breakthrough of 1844.

This was seen from Marx's turn to "material matters" in 1842. His writings on freedom of the press in this period were no mere political exercise without relevance to the problem of "how to begin anew." He wrote, "From the standpoint of the Idea, it is self-evident that freedom of the press is an embodiment of the Idea, an embodiment of freedom, whereas censorship is an embodiment of unfreedom." Marx has brought the Hegelian Idea to bear upon reality, and as a result found reality to be afflicted with an array of power relations which must be transformed.

By 1843 Marx moved toward a full break with capitalism. In doing so he became increasingly dissatisfied with Hegel's political accommodation with existing reality. He spelled this out in his 1843 critique of Hegel's **Philosophy of Right**. Marx here emphasized the **limitations** of measuring reality by an Idea. Instead of drawing the Idea from the nature of political and social life, Marx argues, Hegel deduces them from an **a priori**



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# LIBERATION TODAY

## Dialectics of Philosophy and Organization

jective, must be the subject's objectivity."<sup>5</sup>

In other words, you have to believe, because you're living in this world and you want to transform it, that your subjectivity is really a reflection of the objectivity you want to overcome and destroy [in] the other world. You don't think the other world is something opposite, except opposite to you in the sense of that's what you have to transform...

[It was] good that he said that. Why then, I ask, the vulgar reduction of absolute negativity? "Therein is the real tragedy of Adorno (and the Frankfurt School)—the inescapable one-dimensionality of thought once you 'give up' subject, once you do not listen to the voices from below—and they certainly were loud and clear and demanding in that decade of the mid-1950s to mid-1960s—once you return to the ivory tower and reduce your purpose to 'discussing key concepts of philosophic disciplines and centrally intervening in those disciplines.'" What does that mean? You're going to just see that you decategorize all of these categories, and instead of having philosophy separate, and sociology separate, and economics separate, you'll make them all into one. That's supposed to be great? Irresistibly came the next step, the substitution of a permanent critique not alone for "absolute negativity," but for what is a lot more important, absolute "permanent revolution."

Therefore, whether it's the totality as Lukacs saw it, the totalization as Sartre explained it, the conceptual fetishism that Adorno developed—we really have to begin the Absolute not only as a totality, but as a new beginning on the basis of what comes from the movement from below, as well as from the Idea, and it's that unity which will finally realize the Idea of Freedom as its reality.

5. Adorno, "Aspects of Hegel's Philosophy" (original German edition 1957), in *Hegel: Three Studies*, trans. Sheirry Weber Nicholson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), pp. 5-6.

### Selected Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya on Dialectical Philosophy

News and Letters Committees is in the process of compiling for publication a collection of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings on the Hegelian dialectic which are not contained in her three major books, her "trilogy of revolution." We encourage you to participate with us in our ongoing discussions on this still-to-be-entitled book. For copies of the texts being considered for it, as well as for information on meetings where they are being discussed, contact us through the directory on p. 11.

Provisional table of contents includes:

#### Part I: The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism

Contains "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" of June 1, 1987 and the 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."

#### Part II: Studies on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx, 1956-63

Contains summaries of Hegel's 'Phenomenology of Mind,' 'Science of Logic,' and 'Smaller Logic,' as well as letters to Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Charles Denby, and Jonathan Spence.

#### Part III: Theory and Practice at a Turning Point, 1964-69

Contains speeches and presentations on Hegel's major works, as well as reflections on Marxist-Humanism's historic-philosophic contributions.

#### Part IV: Hegel's Absolutes and Marx's Humanism, 1969-81

Contains presentations to student youth, Black activists, workers, and Hegel scholars on dialectical philosophy, as well as critical reflections on Georg Lukacs, Jean-Paul Sartre and Theodor Adorno, and explorations of the link between Hegel's dialectic and Marx's Humanism.

#### Part V: The Changed World and the Need for Philosophic New Beginnings, 1982-87

Contains essays, letters and commentaries on Marxist-Humanism in today's battle of ideas, the relation of forces of revolt such as women's liberation to philosophy, and a reexamination of the dialectic in light of the problem of dialectics of organization.

Appendix: Excerpts from 1949-51 Philosophic Correspondence with C.L.R. James and Grace Lee

# tics of Organization

philosophic construction. Since the state is viewed as an "emanation" of the Idea, Hegel adopts a totally uncritical attitude towards it; Hegel simply tries to show how "real" entities like the state are "rational." By proceeding from an abstract, disembodied Idea, rather than from real material relations, Hegel ends up adopting an uncritical attitude toward existing society.

Marx's break with this approach led to his discovery of the materialist conception of history. He now saw that uprooting the oppressive relations of society requires not just political but human emancipation—a task that

sible to resolve the class and property inequities of capitalism.

So focused was Marx on transforming human relations that he said the man/woman relation is the "most fundamental" in society and must be transformed. His call for a total uprooting of all conditions in which "the human essence materializes itself in an inhuman manner" led him to oppose, not just capitalism, but also its negation, "vulgar Communism," on the grounds that simply abolishing private property is insufficient.

**What proved decisive in this projection of a total uprooting was Marx's critical appropriation of Hegel's concept of absolute negativity in his 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic."**

Marx was critical of Hegel's concept, since for Hegel the subject of the dialectic is not live men and women, but an abstraction, self-consciousness. This defect informs all of Hegel's system, which is structured upon the three-part movement from Logic to Nature to Mind. Since the subject for Hegel is consciousness, the externalization (or alienation) of its activity can only be a product of consciousness. Hegel therefore defined otherness, thinghood, or Nature, as externalized self-consciousness. To Marx, Hegel failed to comprehend the actual sensuousness of Nature and

posits the fullness of its subjectivity. The great leap here, is that Marx has brought Hegel's Idea of absolute negativity down from the heavens and situated it in the struggles of live men and women.

You might think, therefore, that Marx would stop here, by posing the presence of the Idea in subjects of revolt. Yet he does not. For he then projected the need for a new philosophy rooted in absolute negativity, calling it "a thoroughgoing Naturalism or Humanism that distinguishes itself from both idealism and materialism, and is the truth uniting them both."

Marx's demystifying of Hegel's dialectic in 1844 did not mean that he submerged the Idea into its externalized reality. It rather meant that instead of "fearing" the Idea as some abstract entity devoid of reality, it now became possible to project it as a philosophic principle for action and organization. In projecting this responsibility for the self-determination of the Idea, a new concept of organization was born, which he spent the rest of his life concretizing.

Its concretization can be seen from Marx's 1847 *Communist Manifesto*, which issued both a devastating critique of capitalism and critiqued radicals who fail to project a vision of the future. He wrote, "The communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims of the working class, but in the movement of the present they also represent the future of the movement."

Nevertheless, as Dunayevskaya notes in her Presentation of June 1, 1987, Marx did not "fully concretize" his concept of organization until his 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Program*. In this document, in which Marx sharply critiqued his own followers for treating organizational unity as of greater importance than following Marxian "principles," he projected his fullest statement of what the new society would be like.

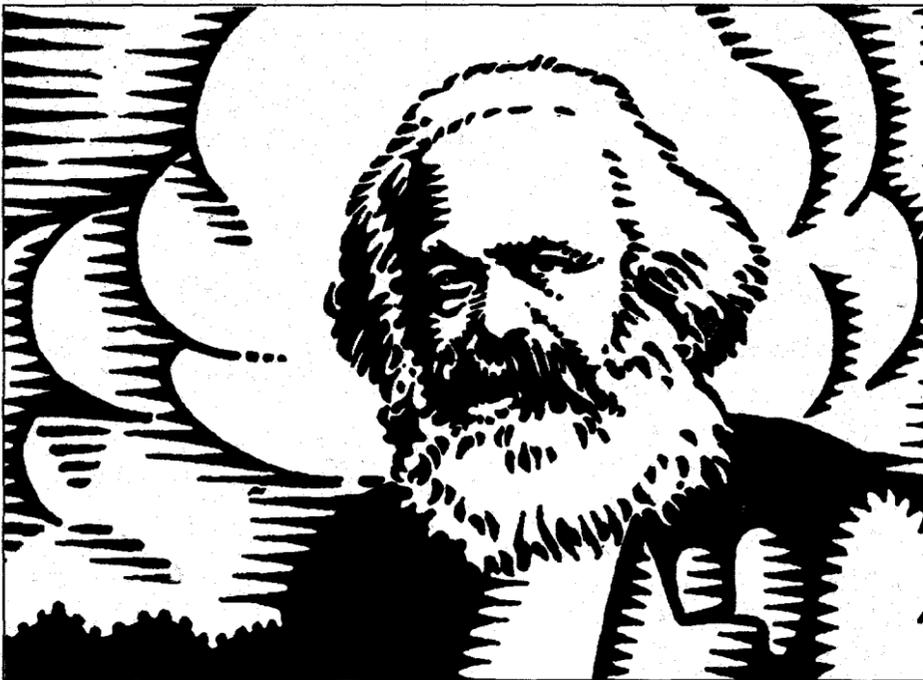
**So why did it take all the way until the end of his life, 1875, to "fully concretize" the concept of organization born in 1844?**

The reason, it appears, is that by 1875 Marx had created a body of ideas. Important as was his 1844 projection of responsibility for the Idea, it had to remain, of necessity, abstract; after all, Marx was first beginning to develop his body of thought. It was very different 30 years later, when he wrote the *Critique of the Gotha Program*. By then Marx had experienced philosophy. With the development of his body of ideas, the self-determination of the Idea which we call Marxism was as immanent in the historic process as the self-activity of the masses. Only then did it become possible to fully project organizational responsibility for the Idea.

Unfortunately, Marx's 1875 *Critique* did not become the ground for post-Marx Marxists on the question of organization. They instead held to the elitist concept of the "vanguard party to lead," paying little heed to the way Marx posed the need to unite Marxian "principles" and organization. The problem was likewise not resolved, however, by those who broke from the elitist party in favor of the spontaneous self-activity of the masses, since they too kept their distance from working out the connection between philosophy and organization.

It isn't that Marx can "answer" all of today's problems. But Marx does illuminate much about the philo-

(Continued on page 8)



can be achieved only by a class whose liberation demands the dissolution of all institutions of modern society: the proletariat. He had now found, at the end of 1843, the "new element" from which to reconstitute the Idea of freedom.

This leads us to ask: Did Marx's break with Hegel's effort to apply the Idea to reality in an external fashion, and his discovery of the proletariat as revolutionary subject, mean that he gave up his 1841 view that "The practice of philosophy is itself theoretical. It is the critique which measures...the particular reality by the Idea"? Is there no place in Marxism for the self-determination of the Idea once we pinpoint the deficiency of holding to an abstract principle by which reality ought to abide?

Virtually all Marxists answer "yes." Most think Marx's 1841 statement about "measuring reality by the Idea" meant he was still trapped in the confines of an idealist outlook.

Yet a different view emerges from Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts*. Marx here revealed the basis of the class inequities of capitalism, by showing that the separation of the products of labor from the worker is a consequence of the alienated character of laboring activity. Without abolishing alienated labor, he held, it is impos-

of human nature working upon Nature.

Hegel's reduction of the subject to mere consciousness likewise affected his concept of the transcendence of alienation. Since the subject's externalization is a mere product of thought, the transcendence of externalization or alienation turns out to be "the return of thought to itself," i.e., Absolute Mind. Hegel's move from Nature to Mind, Marx contends, loses sight of "the full, living, sensuous concrete activity" of humanity.

And yet, precisely at this moment of most intense critique, Marx praised Hegel's concept of absolute negativity, on the ground that it expresses "the actual movement of history."

Marx said this because he saw that once we overturn the central defect of Hegel's dialectic, its dehumanization of the Idea, and make live humanity, and not consciousness, the subject, then everything changes. Externalization or alienation now becomes the process by which humanity posits its capacities in the objective world through the process of labor. Once viewed this way, the movement from Logic to Nature expresses the movement of the dialectic of negativity from the realm of thought to that of the subjectivity of live human beings. "Nature" to Marx is not "exterior" to humanity, nor is it "practice"; it is the realm in which humanity

# The Challenge of Dialectics of Organization

(Continued from page 7)

sophic moment of Marxist-Humanism—its 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."

## II. MARXIST-HUMANISM'S PHILOSOPHIC MOMENT

In her letter of May 12, 1953, Dunayevskaya explored the final chapter of Hegel's *Logic*, the Absolute Idea, with the question of organization very much in mind. She noted at the start of the letter that she is exploring how the chapter speaks to the role of a "group like us," i.e., an organization which rejects the vanguard party but recognizes that it has a role to play in providing theoretic direction for revolution.

A crucial moment was reached at the end of the letter, when she saw a parallel between Hegel's *Logic* and Marx's *Capital*. In tracing out the "absolute contradiction" between theory and practice, the final chapter of Hegel's *Logic* ends with Hegel intimating a realm which follows the *Logic*, wherein these antitheses are resolved. Hegel says he can only intimate this here, as it will be taken up in his final work, the *Philosophy of Mind*. Dunayevskaya notes that Marx did something similar at the end of *Capital*, in tracing out the "absolute contradiction" between the accumulation of capital and the "new passions and new forces." Marx here intimated a realm that will follow the logic of capital—the new society. She said, "Marx, however, dealing with the dialectic of capitalist society did not make the negation of the negation any more concrete"; it is only intimated.

To Dunayevskaya, this parallel indicated that Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* expresses, in abstract form, a concept of a new society that points us beyond the logic of capital. Indeed, in that work Hegel most fully projected his concept of second or absolute negativity—that is, not merely the negation of the old, but the creation of the new through the overcoming of the internal as well as external barriers to self-liberation.

In light of the need for the freedom struggles of our age to grapple with a concept of liberation that points us beyond the logic of capital, Dunayevskaya decided to plunge into Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, with her letter of May 20, 1953. In it she again explored Hegel's dialectic of negativity with the question of organization very much in mind. The letter ended with her saying, "we have entered the new society."

This indicates that the question of organization cannot be answered simply on the basis of the forms of organization which rise and fall with the struggle against the dialectic of capital. It is necessary to go further, by delving into the realm which Marx intimates at

the end of *Capital*, and which Hegel intimates at the end of his *Logic*—that of Mind, or the vision of the new society. Whereas Marx enables us to envision the possibility of a future different from the present, the realities of our age compel us to begin with where Marx left off, by having revolutionary theory and practice proceed from "the negation of the negation."

Dunayevskaya's return to these 1953 Letters in her Presentation of June 1, 1987 indicates that the role of a "group like us" can be answered only by assuming responsibility for the fullness of the dialectic of philosophy, especially as found in the concept of absolute negativity. As against those like C.L.R. James, who tried to answer the question of organization on the basis of the forms of organization which arise from the struggles against the dialectic of capital (such as unions, strike committees, mass parties), Dunayevskaya held that the role of a "group like us" first comes into focus when we confront responsibility for Mind, or the "free release" of the Idea.

As she wrote in June 1, 1987, to work out the dialectics of organization, "It is not a question only of meeting the challenge from practice, but of being able to meet the challenge from the self-determination of the Idea..."

What makes this concept of organization so needed today is the crisis in articulating the goal of a truly liberating socialist society. How are we to begin anew, unless there is an explicit articulation of what it means to be rooted in the second negation? Are we simply to once again say: Let's focus our attention on the first negation, the mere opposition to what is, and hope that somewhere down the line the second negation, the concept of a liberating future, comes to the fore? Who will listen to that after all the aborted revolutions humanity has suffered through?

If the idea as well as practice of revolution is to be reconstituted, the concept of a total uprooting must be with us from the start by measuring everything, whether in practice or in theory, against the Idea of absolute negativity. The responsibility for this cannot be shifted onto the masses. This is not alone because historic events move too fast for practice to find its direction without a philosophic articulation. It is because while the dialectic of negativity is present in workers, women, youth, and the Black dimension, no force contains the Idea in the fullness of its expression. Without an explicit, philosophic projection of the concept of second negativity, there is no assurance that any force of revolt will rid itself of "the muck of the ages" and rebuild society anew. Herein lies the today-ness of the young Marx's declaration of the need to

"measure reality by the Idea."

Yet while there is a parallel between what Marx faced in the early 1840s and what we face today, there is also a profound difference. Reason and reality confronted each other with hostility in the 1840s because Hegel dehumanized the Idea. That is not our problem today. Neither Marx nor Marxist-Humanism dehumanized the Idea. Reason and reality now confront each other with hostility, not because the reality of human subjects stands in contrast to a philosophy which fails to recognize them, but because of the gap between philosophy and its organizational expression.

That gap has remained unfilled since Marx's time. One reason for this is that even those who did recognize the integrality of the dialectic with the subjects of revolt, such as ourselves, have not assumed organizational responsibility for second negativity. The "philosophic moment" of 1953 was a huge leap in situating the Idea in the reality of "actual corporeal humanity." But that did not exhaust its newness. The truly new was that in doing so it freed up ideas, philosophy, thought to become a force of revolt. While the creativity of the subject is seen by us, this dimension of the 1953 breakthrough remains to be organizationally concretized.

Dunayevskaya's Presentation of June 1, 1987 and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" makes it clear that the "new element" in which the Idea must be reconstituted is organization, the dialectics of organization and philosophy. This is the open door through which to achieve continuity with Marx's concept of organization—a task that will be with us far into the future.

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**WELFARE REFORM =  
WORKER EXPLOITATION**

Your Lead on "Welfare reform" and how it exposes the crisis in capitalism today (May N&L) was absolutely right. You can see the way they are forcing welfare women here to go into a factory where the fumes or heat is unbearable, but, especially if they have children to support, they have to stay or get cut off. It is slave labor. The government pretends it is saving the taxpayers money, but it is really just paying the companies who get half the welfare workers' wages, instead of paying the women.

**Outraged Black working woman  
Mississippi**

\*\*\*

You're right—WEP, the so-called Workers Experience Program, really stands for Workers Exploitation Program. All I could add to your article on "Welfare reform" is this: Don't give up the struggle. We have to keep fighting because the battle has just begun.

**Former WEP worker  
New York City**

\*\*\*

Welfare "reform" seems like a plot to get all poor people into a war with each other. It is a system made to fail. Is it because the U.S. isn't ready to start a war with any other country that they want us to kill each other off?

**Welfare mother  
Chicago**

\*\*\*

You say the poor are being "demonized." But do the capitalists really want to make "devils" of the poor or are they trying to make them lose their humanity so that "others" don't care what happens to them, forgetting there is no real line between "them" and "us." Demonizing seems to give it a religious connotation.

**Correspondent  
East Europe**

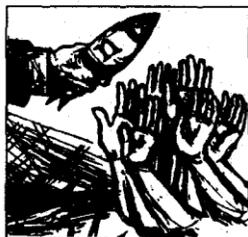
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The picture you printed with my article on welfare was misidentified. It is of a recent demonstration of welfare mothers and City workers together, demanding union jobs for all. The unions' new interest in organizing welfare workers instead of just trying to exclude them from the work place is very important. The outcry against pitting paid and unpaid workers against each other just forced Clinton to declare that federal minimum wage laws cover workfare.

In New York, we had a bigger legal victory when a court ruled that workfare must pay "comparable wages" to those prevailing in the industry. If not reversed, the decision will mean decent salaries for some people on welfare. What a novel idea: get people off welfare by giving them decent-paying jobs!

**Anne Jaclard  
New York**

**FIGHTING  
MILITARISM  
IN JAPAN**



We are a group of workers, students and citizens who are fighting against the strengthening of the Japan-U.S. security alliance and who aim to remove the U.S. military bases. The Hashimoto administration has forced the revision of the Special Land Lease Act that would enable use of private land in Okinawa for U.S. military bases even after leases expire. 90% of the members of the Japanese Diet have agreed to this barbarous act, trampling on the will of the anti-war landowners who do not want their land used for a war of aggression. In spite of the anger in Japan against the U.S. military troops, the Clinton administration has declared that the U.S. will maintain a military presence of as many as 100,000 soldiers in Asia,

**Readers' Views**

**READING MARX IN THE 1990S**

In a documentary I saw on Frantz Fanon historians spoke of Fanon's view of revolution changing man. Screwed up people in screwed up circumstances changed themselves as they tried to liberate their nation. I saw it as a corollary to Marx's idea of liberatory struggle itself freeing us of the "muck of the ages."

**Student  
Bay Area**

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My new favorite passage from Marx is the one from his "18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" where he goes through all the mantras of retrogression that the bourgeoisie came up with during the suppression of the proletariat in June of 1848. How often do we hear the cry for "property, family, religion, order!" recited nowadays! Every little reform is castigat-ed as an attack on society—such as Ellen's coming out on Prime Time TV. Look at each term: property means material relations; family means social relations; order means the way to silence whatever is new. Religion, of course, is the substitute for philosophy.

**Jennifer Pen  
California**

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I suggest that Marx's cry at the end of the 1848 revolutions—"Never again with the bourgeoisie"—means a lot more than learning to recognize your class interests. It was a call to this century, and now to the next, for revolution that takes the plunge to freedom which Raya described in her 1953 Letters on the **Philosophy of Mind**, where the revolutionary dialectic is so unfettered that nothing more can stop the development of ideas of freedom. She said that to get on this road, our concept of revolution must be total from the start.

**A.J.  
New York**

including 47,000 in Japan. We plan to hold a big assembly in Tokyo on June 8. We send greetings of solidarity to all comrades fighting against all the wars of today, the nuclear weapons, and the military alliances.

**Rentai-shukai Jimukyoku  
Tokyo**

**EXPOSING FASCISM IN PERU**

I was amazed at how well the short article in the May N&L explained what the Peruvian government's killing of the MRTA members was really about, and who the MRTA were. Calling them "courageous fighters" shows respect for what they were trying to do, even though we know they could not succeed by those means.

I believe the killings marked a turning point in the conscience of Latin American people. Everyone in Ecuador was crying and condemning the Peruvian government because of the blatant cruelty exposed on TV. People were shocked by Fujimori having himself photographed with the dead bodies, like the Nazis did. It exposed what fascism is really like.

**Freedom fighter  
Ecuador**

**ANTI-KLAN VICTORY**

The victory in Chicago for the Anti-Klan Three on May 8 was a resounding affirmation by the jury of the right to protest which was under attack by the Chicago Police Department and the State's Attorney's office. One juror, describing how their decision had been reached said, "We argued that this case

David Black's essay (May N&L) on the translator of the **Communist Manifesto**, Helen Macfarlane, made me proud to be part of an organization in which such creative work is done. Not only did he unearth a remarkable figure who had been lost to history, he revealed her significance as one whose life and thought brought together revolution, feminism, Hegel's dialectic, the **Communist Manifesto**, and questions of organization. It was no small point to relate George Harney's personal break with her to his "refusal to recognize that there were real differences of principle at stake" in the revolutionary Left's organizational splits.

**Franklin Dmitryev  
Memphis**

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The analysis of the development and unfolding of class society in the **Communist Manifesto** accurately describes the increasingly global domination of political and economic structures by multinational corporations. In the time of NAFTA, GATT, and the structural adjustment programs of the World Bank, the term "New World Order" is illuminated by the spotlight of a **Manifesto** that said, "the need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere."

**Eli Walker  
Tennessee**

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When I started reading the **Communist Manifesto** I thought at first that it must have been rewritten, because 150 years ago no one could have so perfectly described some of the conditions we face today.

**Maggie Soleil  
Hawaii**

was much bigger than what happened at the Klan rally. Every day, people in this country are having their civil liberties cut back."

While we're celebrating this victory, we need to remember that a death sentence still hangs over Mumia Abu-Jamal.

**Partisan Defense Committee  
Chicago**

**ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN  
SOLIDARITY**

Your editorial (May N&L) likening Netanyahu's attempt to undermine the peace process from within as a "Trojan Horse" was excellent. Just two corrections: Peace Now did try to do some organizing around the Har Homa issue but found it very hard to get people out in the streets. And the solidarity work you referred to is the combined effort of Bat Shalom and Women in Black, not just the latter.

The women's peace movement is now planning a huge event for June 17-21, bringing together Palestinians and Israelis under the banner, "Sharing Jerusalem: Two Capitals for Two States." We are planning to march for the first time in both sides of our own city, East and West, to say we can share it.

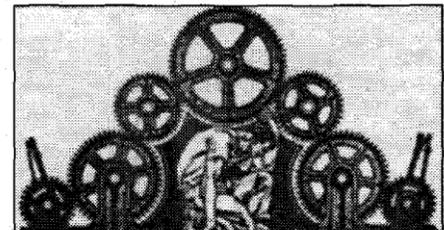
**Gila Svirsky  
Jerusalem**

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I have written you many letters but before I can even send them things change so fast they are no longer valid. What unfortunately will not change quickly is our prime minister, who was elected under the new rule of separate elections for prime minister and for parliament. It was Rabin's idea to give himself as the PM more power and independence, not knowing he'd be murdered. So we are stuck with Netanyahu. He and

his friends behave as if Israel is an oligarchy more than a democracy. So much damage has already been done in 10 months that we fear what will happen next. It seems certain Netanyahu wants a war and is doing everything possible to make it happen.

**Correspondent  
Israel**



**WORKERS AND UNIONS**

The Republicans have put some legislation they are after on the fast track. Right now if something is made in Mexico or any foreign country, that has to be included on the label. The Republicans want to change that so even if 25% is made in a foreign country, and only 75% here the label can claim, "Made in the U.S." We've got to try to stop that from going through.

**Willie Rudd  
President Local 282  
Nashville**

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Just when what is needed is solidarity with the poor and unemployed, the European Trade Unions (an umbrella organization for the EU countries) has called for all its member unions to disassociate themselves from the European unemployed march now in progress. They say the unemployed interests are different from those of trade unionists!

**Angry  
Prague**

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The Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, Local 100, has been escalating its efforts, through boycotts, demonstrations and sit-ins, to win a new contract for over 15 restaurants under the aegis of Riese Corporation. In the last four years, 25 union shops have been closed with a loss of 450 jobs. Issues of job security and health insurance are primary.

Twenty of us occupied tables in pairs of twos and threes at rush hour at The Java Shop on May 3, and sat there with glasses of water for half an hour. The union gave us all \$3 for waiter/waitress tips. At a given signal we held aloft signs reading "Justice for Union Workers" and walked out to join a vociferously chanting picket line.

**Participant  
New York**

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The GM assembly plant strike went on so long because the company was willing to settle only about 50 of the 500 grievances we have over dangerous work practices and inhuman overtime demands that have caused many injuries to workers. We lost 600 jobs when automation came in, and that work was spread out among those of us left.

**GM worker  
Oklahoma City**

**THE  
STATE  
AS KILLER**



The state of Texas has begun stepping up its executions again, after a lull in state murders in 1996. Five prisoners were already put to death by April. At this rate, I would not be surprised if over 30 were not killed by the state this year. Protesters against the death penalty have assembled outside the Huntsville, Texas, prison walls on each execution. They chant "Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Huntsville!"

**Prisoner  
Texas**

## Editorial

# Urban redevelopment unhouses the poor

The drive to dismantle the welfare state by rolling back a century's worth of social programs continues to deepen with the latest assault on public housing laws. The extent to which this drive represents an all-out assault on democracy itself is also becoming ever more starkly clear. This was seen in Chicago, at the Cabrini-Green housing projects, when a farcical "community meeting" which Mayor Daley was holding for the media there was crashed by actual residents of the projects.

The spirited participation by the poor in their own destinies which took place there was an affront and embarrassment to the City's plans for them. Within days the police shot a local community activist, Fernanda Royal, the president of the local residents' council. She luckily survived, but a climate of growing resistance was quickly turned to one of oppression and fear by this naked act of state terror.

### CONGRESS' NEW DE-HOUSING BILL

The legislation before Congress now, the Housing Opportunity and Responsibility Act, would effectively repeal the Housing Act of 1937 and have a tremendous impact on the lives of many of our poorest people. The bill would cover about 1.4 million families who actually live in public housing developments, as well as another 2.7 million families receiving Federal rent assistance.

Of the 75% of public housing tenants considered to be extremely poor, the plan is to get half of them out of public housing altogether. There would be a new priority placed on higher income tenants, and for those poorer tenants who remain there would be new requirements to work hours of unpaid labor in return for the privilege. This has rightly been termed a new form of slave labor.

Many of those most affected by the new law will be Black women and children, who are bearing the brunt of the attacks on every other aspect of the welfare system. In Chicago, which in some respects has been a model for the nation in its public housing policies, there is a bitter irony in this. The large projects here very early became a pillar of the City's apartheid system through zoning rules which catered to racism, and this helps to explain why Chicago has remained the most segregated of the nation's large cities.

The current "ethnic cleansing" aimed at Cabrini-Green was prefigured through the last few decades in the way the projects would drop in and out of the City's development plans. Now all of the projects that ring the central city are under pressure of a combined Federal and local government attack. Many residents of ABLA (Jane Addams, Brooks, Loomis Court and Abbott buildings) are living without heat or hot water. They were recently told they would be relocated to high rise units, though no one is sure whether these have heat and hot water either. At Henry Horner homes, people who were moved out of their homes for "renovation" are not being allowed back in. And at the Robert Taylor homes demo-

lition has begun on the first of twelve high rises slated to come down in the next few years. This pattern is being repeated around the country.

### RACIST POLICY-MAKING

Whatever else they have been, public housing projects have been visible as large concentrations of poor Black people. And as sheer racist insanity has come to dominate American politics, they have been less objects of rational policy-making than they have been of demonology. This is why figures and statistics are not really the issue in the public housing debate, anymore than they can explain the complementary burgeoning of the prison system.

The "welfare queen" and "welfare Cadillac" are stereotypes at the heart of current American politics, designed to fuel resentment and promote the careers of racist politicians. There is nothing new about any of that. But something that is new has entered into the latest round of attacks on the poor. It can be seen in a place like Milwaukee, Wisc., where welfare "reform" was introduced early.

This new feature of U.S. political debate is the disappearance of former welfare recipients altogether, off the "radar screen," as *The New York Times* recently put it. Paradoxically, this is now what is being asked of the poor, especially the Black and immigrant poor—that they simply disappear altogether. Capitalism in the 1990s has entirely lost the ability to preserve itself through concessions to the population as it did in the past.

As opposed to the democratic impulses contained in the past political struggles of the poor, the system now must offer no choices but the chance to "succeed" on its narrow terms or the certainty of falling back into a private hell, whether of homelessness or the sweatshop or something else, but always condemned to silence. This is meant to intimidate and silence all workers and others into accepting what they are given and not ask for more. This is what they mean by calling for "personal

responsibility." It's why the prison system will be not merely the only public housing for the poor, but the only public sphere of American politics.

The fact that capitalism must resort to such dire measures to save itself explains why a protest at Cabrini-Green would be met with such excessive force. There is an attempt underway to reduce the scope of the social imagination to the limits of a degenerating capitalism, and to efface the very idea of human solidarity. This is why the forces of revolution have now to be heard, and to make themselves be heard, and why the attack on residents of public housing is an attack on every one of us.

## Redirected AIDS Walk

**Chicago**—The People of Color (POC) AIDS Walk Coalition has been involved in a nine-month campaign to redirect the financial resources raised by AIDS Walk Chicago to communities of color. At a recent meeting between the POC AIDS Walk Coalition and the executive board of "the Walk," progress was made towards redirecting the resources to communities of color, according to representatives from Chicago Black Lesbians and Gays, one of the POC Coalition's members.

AIDS Walk Chicago, a successful community-wide event, has raised significant dollars for AIDS services in Chicago. Additionally, the community acceptance of the fundraising event has gone a long way toward decreasing the stigma of the disease. In recent years there has been significant corporate participation.

In Chicago, like in other urban centers, the impact of AIDS has been increasingly felt in communities of color. The disease, once wrongly perceived to affect only white gay men, has impacted new communities that are already resource-poor. Women and residents of urban communities who do not identify with the white-dominated gay community but do have sex with men are among the populations of people who have borne the brunt of the epidemic as its impact has moved beyond urban gay enclaves.

Members of the POC Coalition have been pressuring the Chicago AIDS service organizations who benefit from the AIDS Walk to share the resources raised from the entire community. The majority of the agencies that currently benefit from the Walk are physically located on Chicago's north side, away from the large Black and Latino communities. The POC Coalition has been working with HIV and health community organizations to identify indigenous organizations that lack resources but do great work in addressing the AIDS pandemic.

At present, members of the POC Coalition are not urging a boycott of the Walk. However, the POC Coalition is doing community education around the issue so that communities of color become better informed and more engaged in the health care decisions for their communities.

—POC Coalition member

### Call to action

June 19, 1997

## Protest Public Housing Policies

and proposed public housing legislation and other policies that "ill-effect" the poorest of the poor in Chicago and nationally

Rally • 12:30 p.m.

Grant Park (Chicago Loop)

Call 312/280-2298 or 312/226-4314

## Black/Red View

by John Alan

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., the head of the W.E.B. DuBois Institute at Harvard University, has brought to Harvard what many consider to be a "dream team" of stellar African-American intellectuals. Gates plans to build nothing less than a cadre of Black intellectuals, a new "Talented Tenth" to lead the African-American masses in the next century.

Harvard has spent \$35 million on a new building for the DuBois Institute and given generous financial support toward maintaining it, using its prestige to attract Black intellectuals from secure positions at other universities.

But I shudder at this attempt to create a monopoly of African-American intellectuals for the purpose of solving America's historic problem of racism. What

## Henry Louis Gates' new 'Talented Tenth'

reason does Harvard—a venerable institution of Anglo Saxon culture and a bastion of U.S. capitalism—have to train a cadre of Black intellectuals?

While Harvard has remained mum about this, Gates and his colleagues are determined to publicize their reason for being there. They believe it is high time for them, that generation of African-American middle class intellectuals who took advantage of desegregated education, to "assume a renewed leadership role in and for the Black community." For Gates this is a continuation of DuBois's notion that the "Talented Tenth" has the responsibility of solving the problem of the brothers and sisters living in the ghettos.

Since Gates has cast himself and his colleagues in the role of DuBois's "Talented Tenth," one would expect that he would be as militant and uncompromising as DuBois in fighting for Black civil rights. Instead,

Gates in his book *Future of the Race* defines the origin and the persistence of Black "poverty and squalor" as both "structural" and "behavioral," that is, it is caused both by high technology and the subjectivity of the African-American poor, their lack of motivation to find a new way to meet the "structural" changes in capitalist production.

Couched in this dual concept of Black poverty is the ideology which says: Yes, you're unemployed because of the introduction of new technology, but you can become employed by acquiring new skills. This ideological concept is not the logic of capitalist production which constantly moves toward the development of ever newer technology which diminishes the employment of human labor in ratio to its own development.

Gates goes on to list in *The Future Of The Race*, a book he co-authored with Cornel West, a number of social programs needed to solve the race problem, such as a Marshall plan for the inner cities to get people off of welfare by training them for "occupations relevant to high technology of the twenty-first century." He also proposes that capitalism should generate new investments in the inner cities and move Black workers to areas where there are jobs.

Finally, at the very center of Gates' proposed social programs to end racism and Black poverty is the concept that "Our [Black] entrepreneurs would be in the middle of all that action. We need investment banks to assure access to capital for these enterprises. That is why the idea of an investment trust that the Leaders Summit is developing is intriguing." Here, Gates is referring to a speech delivered by Hugh Price at the National Leadership Summit in 1995.

Seriously, is Gates embracing a variant of Black capitalism as the way to solve the now permanent problem of poverty in the inner cities areas, like South Central Los Angeles? If so, he is projecting an economic illusion because in truth it is the practice of capitalism which has created those enclaves of poverty. The question is not whether those Black intellectuals at Harvard are the heirs of any specific person, but can they, the beneficiaries of the civil rights revolution, develop a philosophy of revolution for a kind of society that does not create poverty and racism.

## Los Angeles, 1992...and 1997

An act of nature, an act of God, a mass consciousness in action...that's not a riot! That's a rebellion. It could not have been predicted then (1992) or now (1997). When will the sword of vengeance strike again? Do you hear me...round and round we go, where we stop nobody knows.

1997 L.A.—it's an explosion waiting to happen! There is an explosion happening on a small scale every day in my neighborhood. People have died (Big Milkhead, Little Suge, High Tower, Boonie) and many more will die in 1997 Watts. But the rebellion helped to cool the hate among ourselves.

Don't act like it was a surprise, like you did in 1992, April 29, when it blew up in your faces. Look around you, don't you see a deeper crises than five years ago? Props. 209 and 187, the cutbacks in social assistance. The stars and stripes of the American flag could be the stars and bars of the Confederate flag waving in the deep South of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia...the stars you see when the police beat you down (like Rodney King), the bars you see when they lock you down...like Geronimo Pratt for 25 years. Three

strikes, you're out. The Rebellion laid the ground for more retrogression to set in.

No, I was for the Rebellion. The only problem I have was that it was incomplete, not that we did not destroy enough, but yes that we did not create enough...The gang truce at Watts from 103rd to Imperial Highway was effective in part, but did not change the economic and psychological conditions that create the gang bang. No, I am not anti-gang, just hungry for a stronger dose of that Watts love.

The seed is planted for the world to see that peace through power is possible. The 1992 Rebellion was the power. Once that Rebellion ended, the state came in to destroy any "extension" of a city-wide power base for the "gangs." The L.A.P.D. mopped up, but the notion/the seed has been planted of what can happen and that's real. The people have had a taste of power and will not forget 1992.

—Gene Ford

Gene Ford's commentary on the fifth anniversary of the Los Angeles rebellion aired on KPFK radio on April 29.

# Gains for queers coupled with backlash

The current state of affairs for queers in this country can be seen in the contradictory news that came from Hawaii's state legislature on April 30.

In what was called a "compromise" by the lawmakers and a "sell-out" by queer activists, same-sex couples were granted certain rights and benefits currently enjoyed by married couples, including inheritance rights, the right to sue for wrongful death, and spousal benefits for insurance and state pensions.

At the same time, however, the legislature placed a constitutional amendment on next year's general election ballot that would give it the power to reserve legalized marriage to heterosexual couples. Gone are the hopes held by many queer couples that the Hawaii Supreme Court's 1993 ruling would finally lead to a lift on the ban to same-sex marriage in that state. Few queer marriage activists, if any, are viewing any of the concessions given queer couples as a victory.

Two weeks later in Maine, 20 years of lobbying efforts and a signature by Governor King made Maine the tenth U.S. state to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. But the fight isn't quite over there yet either. The Christian Civil League of Maine has already set to work on a ballot initiative to repeal the law, and the Christian Coalition and Concerned Maine Families, the group which sponsored a previous unsuccessful statewide referendum against gay and lesbian civil rights measures, have indicated their intentions to continue their battle against queer rights. As all eyes turn toward Governor Jeanne Shaheen who is expected to make New Hampshire the 11th U.S. state to ban sexual orientation discrimination, these fanatical conservatives are expected to rear their ugly heads there as well.

And these are the places where things are looking up for queers. Contrast Hawaii, Maine and New Hampshire to Cincinnati, Ohio, where the Human Rights Ordinance that originally protected queer Cincinnatians was recently repealed to remove "sexual orientation" from protected status. Soon after, Oregon and Indiana both approved bills banning recognition of same sex marriages, bringing the number of states passing such bills to 24, with Colorado, Florida, Minnesota and Wisconsin likely to follow.

This sad trend toward restricting marriage rights to heterosexuals was carried into Europe with Poland tak-

ing a preemptive move in their new constitution by banning gay marriage. There, queer activists hadn't even fought for gay marriage yet, but lawmakers were inspired to make this move because of pro-gay sentiment spreading throughout Europe.

Still, queer activists are continuing their battles on all fronts, from demonstrations in San Francisco against United Airlines for refusing to offer their employees domestic partner's benefits, to the ongoing struggle against the military's "don't ask, don't tell" anti-gay rules, to battles within the Protestant church over recognition of queer congregation members, to the new gay and lesbian advocacy group, The Rainbow Project, formed in Namibia in reaction to homophobic remarks made by their president Nujoma. No amount of let downs and sell outs seem to defeat those fighting to make the world safe for queers.

—Julia Jones

# Save Ward Valley

**Los Angeles**—In the largest Ward Valley spring gathering yet, I was one of hundreds of people who came from all over the U.S., from April 25-27, as part of the ongoing resistance to stop the (so-called "low-level") nuclear dump site from opening. Located in the Southern California desert, 18 miles from the Colorado River and 20 miles from Needles, Cal., Ward Valley is targeted by Gov. Pete Wilson and the nuclear industry to be the dump site for the nation's unwanted radioactive wastes. There is a strong possibility that wastes from foreign reactors will also be dumped there.

Studies have shown that the waste would likely leach into the aquifer below and find its way to the Colorado River, the drinking water source for over 20 million Arizonans, Southern Californians and Northern Mexicans, and an irrigation source for many farms.

Opening Ward Valley Dump would be one more example of environmental racism against Native Americans who have been living in this area for thousands of years. Ward Valley is sacred Native American land.

Dumping in the desert also affects non-Indian people as well as the life-filled desert ecosystem. Ward Valley is the home of the ancient desert tortoise which is in danger of extinction. The symbiotic relationship of all forms of desert life would be destroyed with the opening of the dump, including the golden eagle and other animal and plant life along with the water and soil.

The general public and the waste-for-profit industry perceives the desert as a dead wasteland. Southern California deserts are the latest target, not only for radioactive waste, but other hazardous dumps, sewer sludge and tons of daily garbage, produced by the production and consumption of capitalistic commodities and their throw-away waste products.

For three days, people came together from various walks of life—workers, farmworkers, students, activists, scientists, Native Americans, whites and others, city people, small town people, local people—and experienced various activities such as indigenous morning circle prayers, dancing, storytelling, spirit runs, eating together, working together, music making and information and strategy workshops, as we voiced our differences, sometimes in anger, but worked through these differences.

One of the issues was tritium testing. Tritium is a byproduct of hydrogen bomb explosion. Prior testing at Ward Valley has shown tritium (from the Nevada test site) to have leached 100 feet down and further testing was recommended. We reached an almost unanimous decision—except for one dissenter—against further testing because of the establishment's propensity to manipulate the test procedure and/or results towards opening the dump. Even science, under capitalism, is controlled to represent, not what's good for humanity, but what's most profitable for corporate industry.

Nuclear waste disposal is a last stage in the productive process of electricity from nuclear reactors. The process entails mining uranium, concentration of the ore, enrichment of nuclear fuel, loading and burning of fuel in reactors with threat of fuel meltdown as in Chernobyl, storage of spent fuel, reprocessing of spent fuel (producing plutonium for more weapons) and producing an inventory of waste like that at La Hague, France, release of which could make Western Europe uninhabitable, and transportation of waste.

From the whole productive process of nuclear reactors along with nuclear weapons arose the enormous amount of waste heat, further warming the atmosphere—global warming. Even with this threat to life, the system still promotes more production. The utilities have benefitted from the subsidy of \$200 billion from taxpayers, as profits of this deadly industry go to private capitalist corporations and their stock investors, in this nuclear age.

—Activist

## Youth in Revolt

by Kevin Michaels

Haitian public school students are supporting their striking teachers' demands that the government honor a February agreement for increased funding and salaries. The strike began in early May and students are concerned that the government's failure to comply will prevent them from taking their year-end Baccalaureate exams. The police have cracked down brutally on demonstrations, resulting in at least seven student deaths.

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Young Indonesian opposition activists Dita Sari and Budiman Sudjatmiko were sentenced to 6 and 13 years in prison, respectively, for what the government claims was their role in last summer's political unrest.

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Protests against university administration policies toward minority students and faculty took place on several U.S. campuses before the close of the semester, including a hunger strike at the New School in New York and a sit-in at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass.

# Tenants fight to protect rent control

**New York City**—Thousands of New York City and suburban tenants have taken to the streets in a fight to save rent control from the Republican politicians who chose this year to end it. The state legislature will decide by mid-June whether to keep, kill, or—most likely—drastically weaken the rent and eviction controls which protect nearly one million households from "free market" rents few can afford. New Yorkers already pay on average a third of their incomes for rent, and many pay as much as 50%, due to the severe housing shortage.

The naked class struggle between people and real estate interests came to a head this year with the confluence of right-wing assaults on the poor and on government regulation and the blatant buying of votes. Recent political and legal assaults on environmental regulations and the like have revived the pre-New Deal concept that "too much" regulation is an unconstitutional "taking" of property. The capitalists will use this anachronism to chip away at all government controls of business.

Another factor in the Republican effort is cynicism about the rich buying politicians, from Clinton on down. Since we have rent control only in the New York City area, big real estate interests simply gave lots of

money to upstate politicians to get them to end laws which do not affect their constituents. Only tenant organizations seem to have noticed this defect in democracy and raised the issue of home rule.

Governor Pataki, a dear friend of business, has proposed a "compromise" plan of vacancy decontrol, meaning that whenever an apartment becomes vacant, it leaves rent control. Just as two-tier wage scales split workers apart, this would split renters into the old and the new, and weaken everyone. Observers of the current wars between tenants and the landlords who want to evict them predict levels of harassment never seen before if vacancy decontrol is initiated. When it was tried in the early 1970s, there was so much chaos that controls had to be revived. The recent end of rent control in Boston has proved disastrous for the poor there.

The state legislature is also threatening to change other tenant protection laws that would reverse legal gains won in the 1960s, when massive rent strikes and demonstrations, an outgrowth of the Civil Rights Movement, shook New York to its core and forced reforms.

—Supporter

# What is next for Albania?

Whatever the media might say, there is no civil war in Albania. While the army and police succeeded at the beginning in dispersing the crowds of protesters, the president, Sali Berisha, was not successful in his attempts to find a broader social basis. The limited layer that is connected with the present regime prefers so far to stay quiet and wait for better times.

The "committees of self-defense," made up of citizens as well as deserting army officers and soldiers, were in existence independently from each other for a short time; later they formed in eight southern cities a National Committee of Public Salvation. Five cities joined them soon after. Some of the local leaders succumbed to the pressures of Western ambassadors, yet the rebels refused to give up their arms before the regime, including the president, was overthrown.

In mid-March some further self-defense committees were also founded in some cities in the north so that there were two Albanias: the capital of Tirana patrolled by the secret police (which was said to have opened the arms warehouses) and the rest of the country controlled by the rebels.

The insurgent movement distanced itself from the traditional opposition parties. There is a deep gap between the radical demands of the armed citizens and the moderate proposals of most of the opposition parties. The rebels demand among other things Berisha's resignation and his trial, the dissolution of the secret police, the punishment of those responsible for the "pyramid games" and restitution of the lost money. The opposition fears the autonomous mass movement. The politicians were caught unawares. Their social basis

crumbled and went over to the rebels.

While Berisha was still speaking of "red terrorists" backed by foreign countries, the Socialist Party was ready to enter a government of "National Unity." The socialist leader Bashkim Fino became prime minister when the real leader, opposition socialist, Fatos Nano, imprisoned by Berisha in 1994, was still behind bars. He was not released until mid-March.

Fino met with the rebels in Gjirokaster and was forced to recognize "the essential role of the armed people." Other socialist politicians, however, were speaking about the high cost of "anarchy" and demanded a return to "the orderly situation as before the uprising." The National Committee saw all opposition parties objectively acting in Berisha's interest so there was only one conclusion for it to draw: it declared itself independent from all parties and demanded to be involved in all negotiations as a "third party."

What was missing since the beginning was a conscious political leadership. Thus the rebel movement was torn between the spontaneous dynamics which had overthrown the old order and the remains of sympathies for the opposition. Some insurgent leaders continued to demand the president's resignation without pressing forward against those oppositionists who united with him.

The West with all its aid and military intervention and the initiative of European Union politicians seems to be holding up the old order. Should the rebels prove unable to develop a united political leadership either chaos or a return to the old may follow.

—Stephen Steiger

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(North of Sunset, side door)

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New York, NY 10163  
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**MEETINGS**  
Sundays, 6:30 p.m.  
Washington Square Church  
133 W. 4th St. (Parish House  
parlor), Manhattan

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### INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS

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## Our Life and Times

# Voters oust conservatives in France

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The stunning upset victory by the Left in the May 25/June 1 parliamentary elections came in the wake of nearly two years of mass labor, student, and anti-racist movements, most notably in the November/December 1995 nationwide strikes. The two establishment Left parties are the Socialists and the far smaller Communists, but ecologists and Trotskyists also gathered significant votes in the first round.

Socialists and Communists campaigned on a platform which included cutting the work week from 39 to 35 hours with no reduction in pay, stopping the mas-

## Growing crisis in Brazil

With President Fernando Enrique Cardoso caught buying votes in the Senate, and with videotapes of a police thug nicknamed "Rambo" torturing people stopped for traffic violations broadcast on national television, the time may be ripe for a resurgence of opposition to Cardoso's "free market" economic policies.

One sign of such a resurgence came this past April when, after a two month "long march," 1,500 members of the Movement of the Landless arrived in Brasilia, greeted by 20,000 supporters who included high officials of the Catholic Church. This event was also shown on national television.

The long march involved three groups, coming from the far northern, western, and southern corners of the country. It reached the capital on the first anniversary of the 1996 murder by the military police of 19 members of the Movement of the Landless. In the past six years, over 250 peasant activists have been killed, in a country which has one of the world's most unequal systems of land ownership.

Also this spring, the government was stung when, in an official statement, the Brazilian Catholic Church declared that "the chronic exclusion and misery in which millions of Brazilians, especially children, attempt to survive, is today the consequence of the neoliberal economic order which privileges profit and capital to the detriment of the human being" (*Le Monde*, May 10, 1997).

So deep is the crisis in Brazil, that such theology of liberation sentiments continue to pervade the Catholic Church, including the hierarchy, despite over a decade of attempts by Pope John Paul II to eradicate them. Cardoso even traveled to Rome earlier this year to complain personally to the Pope about Church opposition.

## Russian labor opposition to Yeltsin

On May 1, International Labor Day, Russian workers once again turned out by the hundreds of thousands to protest the corruption, misrule, and austerity policies of the Yeltsin government. Hardly noticed, let alone analyzed by the international media, the persistent labor opposition to Yeltsin, as well as the deep contradictions within that opposition, bears more scrutiny.

The events of March 27 when, in the largest mass outpouring since the collapse of Communism in 1991, over one million workers participated in a one-day nationwide general strike, offer a window into these questions. The issues on March 27 and since included non-payment of wages and pensions, as well as the precipitous decline in the living standards of the working people.

The turnout did not, however, live up to some predictions that over 10 million workers would join in. Many observers also noted that the strikers seemed discouraged, with few seeming to believe that their actions could actually change things. The major factor demobi-

sive cuts in social welfare programs proposed by the Right, and higher taxes on capital to finance job creation programs by the state to alleviate the country's 12.6% unemployment rate. The outgoing parliament, elected in 1993, was the most conservative one this century, with 487 rightist deputies, 67 Socialists, and 23 Communists.

Socialist Lionel Jospin was named Prime Minister. Once in power, the Left is sure to be more conservative than its platform. One issue to watch is how the new government deals with the racist anti-immigrant laws enacted since 1993. Anticipating continuing racist policies from the state no matter who won the elections, a group of filmmakers, who had been prominent in the massive Feb. 22 anti-racist demonstrations, called a week before the election for the legalization of all immigrants living in France. Radical intellectuals and labor activists also announced before the election that they would continue their struggles even if the parliamentary Left won on June 1.

A major and disturbing development was the 15% showing in the first round, the strongest ever, for the

neo-fascist National Front. Second, there is the fact that conservative President Jacques Chirac's term does not end until the next century. Third, it is likely that the established Left in power will work to demobilize and coopt the grassroots protest and popular movements. But it is the steady growth of the National Front that is the most disturbing. In no other Western European country does an openly racist party of Holocaust deniers play so important a role in political life.

## Suharto win in Indonesia

The May 29 national elections in Indonesia have delivered an expected victory to the ruling Golkar party headed by President Suharto who came to power following the 1965 anti-left military bloodbath which overthrew then-President Sukarno. Suharto's most popular opponent, Megawati Sukarnoputri—head of the Indonesian Democratic Party and daughter of Sukarno—was effectively defeated last July when she

## China: dissent at top?

Recently a letter purportedly written by Zhao Zhiyang surfaced in Hong Kong. Zhao, a top Communist Party leader, was demoted and placed under house arrest for opposing the 1989 crackdown against pro-democracy demonstrators. The letter offered Zhao's "services" to the post-Deng leaders, Jiang Zemin and Li Peng, particularly with regard to "political reform." It also attacked, as a "Stalinist cult of personality," Deng's formulation that the small group of successors he had installed before his death constituted a "nucleus" of a third generation of leaders, after Mao and himself.

Whether or not this letter is genuine, there is also the matter of Qiao Shi, today the number three leader and the President of China's usually rubber-stamp parliament. Qiao, who was for many years a police official, abstained in 1989 during the vote on demoting Zhao. Recently, Qiao has been asserting publicly his "constitutional" right to have a say in military matters, supposedly the exclusive province of Jiang Zemin, and always the key to power in modern China. Qiao has also failed on several occasions to mention Deng's concept of a "nucleus." The 15th Communist Party Congress, scheduled to be held this fall, will be one place to watch for any important changes at the top.



Supporters of Megawati Sukarnoputri and the opposition Indonesian Democratic Party urged an election boycott.

was deposed by a rival, government-backed faction resulting in the most violent street clashes in three decades. The other main opposition party, United Development Party, was also crushed in the Golkar pre-ordained results.

Suharto has maintained power primarily by military force and crushing dissent. But this approach has not contained the growing unrest in Indonesia fueled by its hothouse capitalist development. It erupted in the ethnic violence which swept through parts of Java, Irian Jaya, East Timor and elsewhere last year, often targeted against the Chinese minority (most of Indonesia's small private businessmen) and non-Muslims. In the industrial zones, workers have also protested the condition of the economic "miracle" which has left them in the dust.

In April alone, thousands of workers went on strike in textile, garment, shoe and wood processing plants to demand enforcement of the new minimum wage. These strikes were organized after Suharto had launched a campaign against labor, using the excuse of last July's violent battles to arrest and sentence independent trade union activists. The Golkar election victory guarantees Suharto being designated president later in 1998, but it is increasingly questionable whether his repressive rule will contain the unrest.

**Editor's note: As we go to press, the crisis in Sierra Leone continues to intensify. An analysis will appear in the next issue of News & Letters.**

## 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 to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works, *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today* (1958), *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973), and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa.

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.