

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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## Cop atrocity overshadows NYC elections



by John Marcotte

Abner Louima is a Haitian worker in New York who is still in the hospital more than one month after being brutally assaulted and sodomized with a toilet plunger by police officers inside the 70th precinct station house in Brooklyn. In the aftermath of this vicious attack, the race for mayor was suddenly transformed when Black civil rights activist Rev. Al Sharpton received 32% of the vote in the Democratic Party primary, forcing a runoff against Ruth Messinger who got 39% of the vote.

This outcome threw the political establishment into turmoil. White ex-liberal Messinger was supposed to walk away with the nomination. She had the money and the endorsements, including of the Black Democratic establishment: former Mayor David Dinkins, Rep. Charles Rangel, the Rev. Calvin Butts and others. Sharpton was supposed to get nothing, and had no money. What he had, as one Black worker on my job told me, was "a track record of speaking up on police brutality. He talks about issues that politicians don't talk about." Like racism.

One and a half weeks after the primary victory, the political establishment simply recounted the votes and decided they had made a mistake, that Messinger had just a hair over the 40% she needed, and declared her the winner—which means racist Giuliani won because so many Blacks and Latinos are so disgusted, saying Sharpton was robbed, they may not vote at all in the general election next month.

Sharpton's past politics make him an unsavory channel for Black rage—his opportunism, talking to the FBI (he actually wore an FBI wire against his fellow activists), his support of convicted rapist Mike Tyson, his anti-gay and anti-Semitic comments. No, Sharpton ain't the revolution; in fact, he'll be the first one to arrest it.

Yet Sharpton's showing in the primary called forth a flood of emotions. Black workers swore he would beat (Continued on page 3)

## Black World

### Charles Denby in retrospect



by Lou Turner

The 75 years of Charles Denby's life are so full of class struggles, Black revolts, freedom movements that they illuminate not only the present but cast a light even on the future. —Raya Dunayevskaya, October 24, 1983

What does a life filled with so many class struggles like Charles Denby's tell us about our own period of emerging freedom struggles? A brief retrospective look at one moment in the life of Charles Denby may provide some perspective on the historic nature of emerging class struggles today, from the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion to this year's national UPS strike.

Charles Denby led his first wildcat strike in the middle of World War II to get Black women upgraded in the war industries. The strike took place in an environment of fierce racial bigotry in Detroit's industrial workplaces. The Department of Labor reported in 1943, the year of the wildcat strike Denby led, that nearly three million man-hours were lost in "hate strikes" by white workers opposed to upgrading Black workers, or integrating lily-white departments. The report came only a month after the June 1943 Detroit race riot.

Denby's description of the race riot of 1943 in *Indignant Heart* is the most poignant account of the passions, self-organization, and social consciousness of people caught up in urban rebellion to be found in Black social literature.

We are also made to see that urban rebellions do not arise outside of the specific production relations of the capitalist economy. The so-called "Negro Problem," as it was called by Detroit's newspapers, was fundamentally a housing problem. By the middle of the Depression, Detroit papers reported that the ghetto area between Hastings and Beaubien streets had an average Black life expectancy of only 27 years, while white residents in the rest of the city had an average life expectancy of 54 (Continued on page 8)

## UPS strike awakens passions in contingent army of workers

by Bob McGuire

The September strike of transit workers against Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) gained added significance as the first major display of the state of labor after the UPS strike. Workers fought BART not only over wages, but for an end to a permanent two-tier wage system. To do so, the rank and file had earlier tossed out local union officials who had negotiated concessions in the last contract.

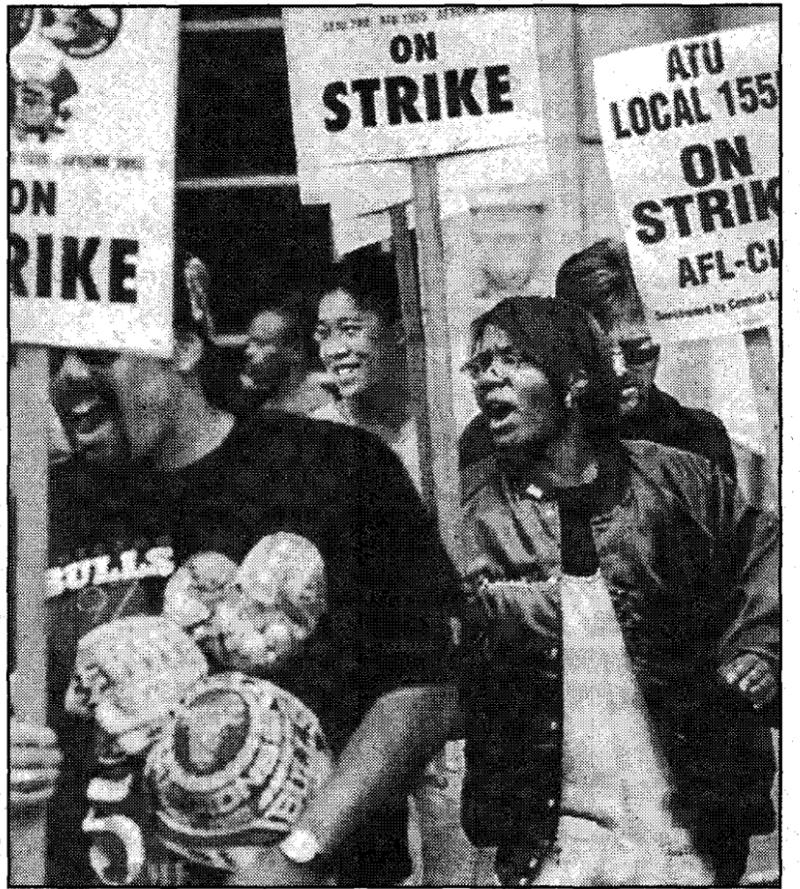
What the strike achieved was considerable: an end to the permanent two-tier system limiting workers hired since 1995 to 90% of the full wage, and only after six years; compression of the timetable for full wages to three years; and 4% annual wage increases.

BART management counted on rider inconvenience and its publicizing what it called bloated union wages to isolate the strikers. But what a BART worker wrote in *News & Letters* during a 1979 strike—"We aren't overpaid, other workers are underpaid"—summed up what struck a chord with the public in 1997. Plenty of commuters, even while enduring hours-long alternate routes into San Francisco, expressed support for the strikers.

### A TURNING POINT FOR LABOR?

What focused our eyes on the BART strike was the question of whether the Teamster victory at UPS has carved out space for labor to operate once again, after two decades of economic restructuring under relentless corporate and government attack.

Labor victories have been scattered since the era of giveback contracts which began with Chrysler and the UAW in 1979, and the growth of non-union trucking left unanswered by the Teamsters after President Jimmy Carter deregulated the trucking industry. Reagan opened



Bay Area Rapid Transit workers in California tossed out bad union leadership, then went on strike to reverse two-tiered wage structure.

the floodgates by crushing and replacing the PATCO air traffic controllers who struck in 1981, and got away with it as Mechanics honored their no-strike clause in union contracts with the airlines. As we learned a whole new (Continued on page 9)

## Editorial Bosnia: between two kinds of partition

The recent announcement by the Clinton administration that it will keep U.S. troops in Bosnia long past the original June 1998 deadline for their withdrawal has intensified debate in Washington over the direction of its Bosnia policy. The narrow confines in which this debate is occurring, however, is preventing many from grasping the real nature of U.S. actions.

On Sept. 23 Sandy Berger, Clinton's national security advisor, announced that an extended presence of U.S. troops is needed in Bosnia in order to prevent a resumption of full-scale warfare between Croats, Muslims and Serbs. If U.S. troops were to withdraw by next June, he asserted, a major catastrophe could occur.

Arguing against this are such standard-bearers of the Republican Party as Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson of Texas, who favors an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. Hutchinson, who openly supports the partition of Bosnia between Serbs, Croats and Muslims, revealed the basis of her position when she said "our peacekeepers have been assigned missions that are inherently not peaceful, like forcing refugees back into mixed neighborhoods." Aside from the fact that the U.S. and NATO forces have done no such thing, it is clear that nothing irks this Texas Republican more than the thought of encouraging different ethnicities to live together. Such racist attitudes motivate the Republican Party's entire attitude on Bosnia.

### PLAVSIC—MINION OF CLINTON POLICY

Though the Clinton administration claims to be governed by more enlightened motives, its policies in Bosnia are likewise furthering an apartheid-like separation of Muslims, Croats and Serbs. This is most of all seen in its support of Biljana Plavsic, President of the renegade Serb "Republika Srpska," established through the ethnic cleansing of thousands of Bosnian Muslims.

Clinton proclaimed her an ally of U.S. interests after she broke with Radovan Karadzic, the notorious war criminal who once headed the neo-fascist Serb enclave, after he cut her out of the take from various illicit trade

and extortion schemes. But she has never distanced herself from Karadzic's narrow nationalism. She was a fervent advocate of the war against Bosnia who often referred to Muslims as an "inferior civilization" which should be annihilated. Yet despite her continued refusal to criticize any Serbian actions during the genocidal war against Bosnia, the U.S. has now embraced her as a "moderate"!

By supporting figures like Plavsic, while refraining from any serious effort to arrest war criminals like Karadzic, the U.S. is ensuring the lines of ethnic apartheid in Bosnia will be permanent.

### NATO PREVENTS A CLEAN FIGHT

So why is Clinton anxious to maintain a long-term military presence there when his policies are leading to the kind of outright partition advocated openly by his Republican Party critics? His claim that U.S. troops are needed in order to "avoid bloodshed" is hardly believable, given that the U.S. sat back and watched as tens of thousands of Bosnians were massacred during the war. Something different is at stake—U.S. concern over the future of NATO should renewed fighting in Bosnia take matters beyond the perimeters it has envisioned for it.

Berger stated this plainly on Sept. 23 when he said a resumption of military hostilities after a U.S. departure "would undermine NATO's credibility at a critical moment when the alliance is preparing for new members and new missions. This would throw into question America's leadership in Europe."

The U.S. fears that in the advent of any renewal of

(Continued on page 5)

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# New welfare laws assault reproductive rights

by Laurie Cashdan

Nothing more proves the "two-worldness" in the U.S. than the one-year anniversary of Clinton's signing the most drastic revision of national welfare policy since its inception. Clinton trumpeted its unqualified success, hailing as proof the 1.4-million-person drop in welfare rolls.

In contrast, the Welfare and Human Rights Monitoring Project, is documenting how new welfare policies violate basic guarantees of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Women report these top five problems: punishing single mothers for refusing to identify their children's fathers; pushing battered women back into dependency on abusers; forcing teens back into parental homes; denying education; failing to inform women about benefits and rights. [See Claire Cummings, "Welfare (D)reform: A Call to Arms," *Sojourner*, Aug. 1997.]

Far from encouraging women's departure from dependency, welfare "reform" unleashes an insidious opposition to women's self-determination. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the intersection between welfare "reform" and reproductive freedom.

## Woman as Reason

The overlap of the first anniversary of the 1996 welfare "reform" with the 20th anniversary of the 1977 Hyde Amendment which ended Medicaid support for abortions, begs for a serious consideration of this intersection. We urgently need to ask whether the anemic response today of feminist organizations to the reproductive rights dimensions of welfare "reform" echoes the way many side-stepped the first major challenge to the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

Is it because it seems to "only" affect the poor—especially Black—women demonized in every discussion of public assistance from 1977 to now?

Or has the Right so influenced social thought that we hesitate to press for reproductive freedom—whether abortion rights or childbearing rights—for all women?

Let's look at how recent federal and state welfare "reforms" attack reproductive rights through family caps, restrictions on teen mothers, an illegitimacy decrease bonus, and the overall demonization of single mothers—especially when they are teen-aged and Black. All rest on blaming welfare mothers for a supposed national illegitimacy crisis.

\* Although a family cap provision is not explicitly addressed in the federal law, 21 states mandate family caps which refuse increased assistance to or otherwise penalize women who become pregnant while on welfare. Based on the absurd premise that women have children to increase the pittance they receive on welfare, the family cap ignores the fact that the birthrate fell an average of 6% among U.S. women from 1991-1995.

\* The federal law requires teen mothers to live with their parents or guardian unless a waiver is rewarded. This measure torpedoed the modicum of independence many teens seek in parenthood and/or leaving home, especially when they come from abusive families. Despite their demonization, teen-aged women's pregnancy rate fell 8% in the early 1990s and only a tiny percentage under 18 (1.2% in 1993) get welfare.

\* A "Bonus to Reward Decrease in Illegitimacy" rewards substantial bonuses to the five states which most reduce both out-of-wedlock births and abortions. The logic of this policy, which cuts off access to abortion in states that probably also punish women for childbearing while on welfare, is hard to fathom unless we remember that women's freedom is at stake.

Several feminist attorneys have protested these policies, which they characterize as steeped in language that may seem non-racist but actually makes unnecessary explicit language of race and gender. That is, "welfare

## Single moms need daycare

*Chicago*—The system of so-called welfare reform will make it economically impossible for single mothers to work. For women with pre-school age children there are limited choices. Many daycare centers have no available space, and few licensed home day care providers will accept welfare.

Welfare will pay \$18 per day for a child up to age two and a half. Two and a half and above, \$13.30 per day. (Five hours and over equals a day.) Many home providers will only care for these children five hours per day. They argue that \$13.30 is not enough money to care for a child eight to ten hours.

These same home providers are told by their bosses that they must charge \$100 per child per week and more to "cash-paying" parents depending upon the area the provider is located in. If working people, many of them low-income workers, are forced to pay \$100 per week and up per child, why is the welfare system allowed to pay less than half this amount?

With the TANF clock ticking many women need full-time education and training that may take more than five hours a day. Many must get part-time jobs. What are we supposed to do with our children who are not yet old enough to enter school all day?

The system claims it wants women to become independent. If this is true we need training to be nurses, doctors and teachers. We need a four-year degree to earn a livable wage to support ourselves and our children. I need to earn enough for food, clothing, shelter and daycare, (since welfare may pay for childcare for one year when I secure a job).

—Rose

mother" has been so well-rehearsed that it stands in for "teen-aged Black woman".

They insist that because poverty is not caused by women's childbearing but by structural economic crises, policies like the family cap would only intensify poverty. Such measures also violate Fourteenth Amendment due process and equal rights guarantees by imposing restrictions on basic human rights of a specific group.

Given that these policies directly attack women's reproductive freedom—a subject long considered central to feminism—why has there not been more outright protest? Nanine Taub, Director of the Women's Rights Litigation Clinic at Rutgers University, in an article titled "Welfare 'Reform': An Attack on us All" (*Berkeley Women's Law Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1) warns against partitioning off reproductive rights from welfare "reform."

To show the consequences of such thinking, she tracks the path of the anti-abortion storm. The same argument used to justify ending Medicaid payments for abortion in 1977—that it did not place an "undue burden" on the right to abortion, only its financing—was later used to impose one restriction after another.

Taub worries that if poverty has been separated from reproductive freedom by the courts, we surely cannot afford to repeat the grave error of allowing this separation to color our own thinking. Are these distinctions "likely to undermine another important part of the struggle for, to use an old fashioned term, women's liberation?" she asks (p. 265).

The 1977 Hyde Amendment was not greeted with an impassioned outcry from all women's liberationists. Instead, NOW pulled many to its ERA campaign, deepening the rift between their adherents and other feminists, especially women of color and working-class women. This disarray in vision opened just the crack Reaganism needed.

The problem reaches beyond analyzing the intersection of race and class with gender, as crucial as that is. Such consequences await any freedom movement when barriers in thought—in philosophy—obstruct its self-development and solidarity.

## Special Forum: Women in jails and prisons

*Chicago*—At Cook County Jail, before we go to court they cuff you to another inmate and make everyone sit in the bullpen for hours waiting. We go through a tunnel to the court building and never see the street. At all times you're escorted by an officer so you can't get anything passed to you. So why do they shake us—make us cough and squat naked before going back to our cells?

After court if there's 100 women, all of us stand there naked coughing and squatting until they see everyone. People's butts are in your face and blood is all over the place. They make us all sound off and tell us: "You all aren't loud enough." It's just to humiliate us.

It's especially humiliating for people in the hole, or when the showers are clogged or we're on lock down. You can't get any water or soap. The guards talk about how nasty and funky we are. Because we're women the officers discriminate against us, try to make you feel bad.

Male officers are on the tier when they shake us and when we're in showers. There's male officers in here having sex with women. If you can't get a bond you may do it to have more movement. Some women do it for food from the outside—pizza, gyros. The guards say I'll do you a favor if you do me a favor. It's disgraceful.

The men don't have to squat and cough except sometimes. They are the ones making the weapons. We have never heard of females getting caught with weapons.

The men get more opportunities, better medical attention, more food, their floors are carpeted, their division is cleaner, their gym is beautiful. We get locked up at 9:30 p.m. and the men don't until 10:30-11:00 p.m., and Fridays not till 12:00 a.m.

Women who work here get \$7 a week but the men get \$15. Workers wax the floor, work the beauty shop, commissary, dinner and lunch. You ask to be on the workers tier so you can be out in the hall, have some movement. Many of us would rather clean our tier out of the goodness of our hearts than be a slave for \$1 a day.

Last week an officer hit a pregnant woman and then sent her to the hole. No one knows what happened to her. They abuse us here. One woman asked, "Why are you tearing up my perm box?" The guard threw all her things all over the floor and stomped on them.

Another lady on our tier had a baby less than one month ago. She should be in the hospital. She's bleeding like a hog and they're giving her one or two pads! (We have 40 women on a tier and one box of pads!)

Women need to stick together to stop the officers from scaring us. That's why we don't stick together. They scare us with the hole and what the officers can do. Maybe men scare the guards by sticking together. If everyone stands up for their rights they get what they want.

—Black and Latina women

*Oakland, Cal.*—The July *Women's Review of Books* was dedicated to the issues of women prisoners. One section is composed of 15 essays from criminologists, historians, prisoners, social workers who work with prisoners and wardens. Including an interview with wardens so outraged the California Coalition for Women Prisoners that our discussion concentrated solely on a critique of WRB for allowing Tina Farmon, the prison warden we know about from our visits to "her" prison, to whitewash her role in the travesty she runs.

## Women in Black conference



*Novi Sad, Serbia*—An international women's meeting was held in Novi Sad, Aug. 7-10, with almost 300 participants from the former Yugoslavia and 15 other countries. The meeting was arranged by Women in Black from Belgrade. It was the sixth year in a row this meeting has been held.

The meeting began with a message from Women in Black that was read out in the eight languages represented at the meeting. Part of the text read:

*"We, women who live in a state whose regime is responsible for this war, have all these terrible years transformed our bitterness into nonviolent resistance, our despair into public acts of disobedience, our sadness and helplessness into feminist solidarity. We have supported each other in order to transform the feelings of guilt into a form of communication and action..."*

On the last evening all the women from the meeting, now dressed in black, went into Novi Sad to stand for an hour in a big silent ring on the town's main square, with banners and slogans against war, oppression and discrimination.

—Toni Liversage, Denmark

Much of the issue is devoted to social programs dealing with women prisoners. While such programs are necessary, and we need more of them, they merely put band-aids on a system that is absolutely and completely broken. Other articles show that prisons concentrate what is wrong with the rest of the society. Nicole Hahn Rafter's history of women's imprisonment in the U.S. recounts that over time, whether women's imprisonment was "merely" custodian, i.e. punitive, or tried to reform women, it did little to deal with any real issues. She even questions what "crime" is, reminding us that women were once imprisoned for promiscuity. She concludes: "We have to resist looking at institutions as solutions to anything" (p. 4).

Andi Rierden speaks of today's media ban and other censorship of the press, which prevents them from telling what's going on inside prisons. Her book, *The Farm: Life Inside a Woman's Prison* (1997), based on thousands of hours of interviews with women prisoners, would not be possible now.

Rierden concludes from her research: "What's really going on is that there are more punitive sanctions and the recidivism rates are still the same. The whole prison thing isn't working." (p. 11) This resonates with women prisoners we have visited who fight for better conditions, but make no bones about their thoughts on prisons: they should be abolished.

Meda Chesney-Lind's point is that neither treating women differently than men, nor treating them the same as men has proven particularly helpful. The "equal" treatment consists, for example, in building Security Housing Units, the modern-day equivalent of medieval torture chambers, in women's prisons and, because women don't tend to be violent, filling them for very minor offenses. Her conclusion that "women in modern prisons [are] subjected to the 'worst of both worlds'" (p. 5) is certainly true.

The interviews with ex-prisoners are the most powerful. Those women show that what drove them to prison was alienation in society. In "Breaking the cycle," Jane, 45, a former prisoner now a student at Hunter College in New York, writes: "Aristotle said we're all political animals, political in the sense of social, that we need other people...The stronger the societal tie, the less likely I am to break it...Conditions that isolate us and keep us antisocial need to be addressed. When someone goes to prison you can't just write them off. Why should you write anybody off?" (p. 13).

Other prisoners also find that the forced isolation makes them appreciate what it means to be human. For example, Geronimo Ji Jaga Pratt, in a Sept. 20 meeting in San Francisco, said that being in the hole taught him to see through all the racist divisions the guards use to play prisoners off against each other.

Capitalism would make us believe that we are all independent isolated individuals, responsible for all that happens to us. Prisoners sometimes break through that kind of empty individuality and have a sense of a social individual. This precious opening needs care to develop. Prisons can't be "reformed from within" by wardens who love their jobs. It is the prisoners who can help build a society which needs no prisons.

—Urszula Wislanka

## Concrete gains won in UPS contract

**Memphis, Tenn.**—I'm a UPS part-time worker who was on strike and the UPS contract looks good to me. The agreement says that there is a commitment by the company to provide at least 20,000 full-time job opportunities for part-timers, including the creation of 10,000 new full-time jobs from existing part-time positions.

**The subcontracting agreement prohibits UPS from using subcontractors to do the work outside, except during peak season and then only if the local union agrees. We won the largest wage increase ever: \$3.10/hour more for full-timers and \$4.10/hour more for part-timers over the next five years of the contract. It leaves the two-tier wage system but it's better than before.**

On job safety and health they guarantee never to raise the package limit over 150 pounds. It's 75 pounds now, but often we get packages that weigh more than 150 pounds. The minimum number of hours necessary to qualify for a year's service credit was reduced from 1,500 to 750 hours per year.

Additional pay for inaccurate paychecks has also been implemented. We've had problems with this. Now, if UPS fails to provide payment for incorrect payment on the second day after a worker reports an error, the company must pay an additional one half hour, or one half of the worker's daily guarantee. I've had some big problems with that. When I switched over to a new operation, I got lost in the system. I didn't get paid for three weeks. When I did get paid, it was a lot of money but I was still behind.

I think people who've read the contract feel like I do, although a lot of people haven't read it. People who don't know about the company, who don't know the contract, really can't speak on it and say that this was only a win for Carey or Clinton, because they really don't know. It's second-hand information.

Carey represents the union. We all know that there are hidden agendas. The biggest problem I had with the strike strategy was that they really didn't stick to the issues, they jumped from one to the other to the other. I would always recommend, whenever someone represents you, to try to see through the rhetoric.

Of course there was some rhetoric as far as the pensions go. Anytime you have a mega-giant like UPS and have lawyer-type representation, like the Teamsters, then you've got some type of internal problems. I think the union had its own secret agenda as far as the pen-

## Officials erode nurses unity

**Oakland, Cal.**—The California Nurses Association (CNA) staged a two day strike Sept. 8 and 9 at Kaiser South Bay facilities over the newly created San Jose Advice Center. Kaiser management is restructuring the advice nurse hot-line service, ignoring seniority rights and compromising quality of advice. Some call positions will be eliminated. Non-RNs will screen calls and take on advice duties.

**Though this strike is in the South Bay only, the issue raised speaks to all Kaiser workers. They are also gravely concerned about the erosion of solidarity and outright internecine warfare going on between different unions. Kaiser management is already gloating that in this strike CNA is fighting this battle alone because, as Kaiser asserts, all other unions had already approved this deal.**

Recently, SEIU Local 250 officials sent out a leaflet attacking CNA for interfering in a union recognition election for RNs at Davies Medical Center. Just before the election, which was lost, CNA sent letters to Davies' RNs offering to represent them. CNA has since sent out an apology, but that doesn't excuse this kind of turf war. CNA also recently failed to support SEIU's picket lines at Sutter Health Hospitals in Antioch, Vallejo, and Roseville. The leaflet from Local 250 bureaucrats was a self-righteous condemnation of CNA, accusing them of "lack of principles and integrity."

**Many rank-and-filers have a different reaction: "Look who's talking!" The truth is, Kaiser management was on the hot seat from workers, patients, and government regulators when Sweeney, with the duplicitous consent of the local union leadership, gave them an escape hatch, declaring Kaiser a quality care provider. Kaiser management has been using the "strategic partnership" as a weapon against worker solidarity ever since.**

What is it about bureaucratic union organization that brings out the opposite of our much needed solidarity? There is a lack of imagination that could provide a challenge to the dominant competitive model which drives restructuring through high-tech capitalism. What is missing from the core of our struggle is the question "What is the nature of our labor? and how can it be freed of its commodity form of organization?" This problem can't be solved through an external organizational structure that only has a marginal presence in the workplace.

Organization with a human face begins with a view of labor in and for itself. The cost/benefit view of life infects Kaiser management as well as the union bureaucracy, which gets sucked into a strategic view of organizing. This doesn't answer the question: how do you achieve a workplace free from the constraints of corporate bottom-line logic which profits from withholding health care. A corporate campaign not only doesn't answer that question, but instead has led to an unprincipled collaboration with corporate restructuring.

—Kaiser rank-and-filer

sion plan was concerned. They are a union, they're the Teamsters, they have to represent other areas, other Teamsters, other procedures against other companies.

**If a huge company like UPS keeps having it their way, we get nothing. We're supposed to do the job, go home, and be happy. It's not negotiated like that. I'm still trying to get my COLA from 1992. When it happens it happens. Things don't come overnight.**

I have customers that didn't like the strike, but I haven't heard workers complain about it. There were some layoffs here in Memphis, but now everyone is back, everything is at 100%. No one I know of was dissatisfied with what happened because they knew it was for the betterment of themselves and their friends.

—Part-timer at UPS

## Union purged in Monterey

**Detroit**—The fallout from the Detroit newspaper strike now extends to Monterey, Cal. where Knight-Ridder, owner of Detroit's morning *Free Press* newspaper, recently acquired two newspapers, one non-union and the other, the *Monterey County Herald*, with most of its employees represented by the San Jose Newspaper Guild. Following the acquisition, Knight-Ridder required all union employees to reapply for their jobs and hired all but about 25—those who had been the most militant union fighters.

Following the Detroit experience, management laid the groundwork for a strike by making demands unacceptable to the union and playing the race card claiming its policies will provide equal employment opportunities in contrast to the guild's historic minority exclusion practices. To counter management's anti-union propaganda, the union has established a speakers' bureau to seek community support by exposing the owner's distortions and misrepresentations.

Meanwhile, the locked-out Detroit newspaper union workers were dealt a crushing legal blow on Aug. 14 by U.S. District judge John O'Meara, who rejected the NLRB and union lawyers' request for an injunction, which could have restored the jobs of the union employees. Despite the mountain of evidence submitted by the NLRB and union that documented the blatant unfair labor practices committed by management, O'Meara maintained that final court action on the unfair labor practices was still pending and therefore precluded injunctive relief.

This unexpected ruling dashed many hopes and blew holes in the union's battle strategy. While O'Meara's decision was appealed to the 6th District Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, it will be months before that ruling is made, which, if favorable to the unions, can still be appealed by management to the U.S. Supreme Court. This process can take years to determine.

"O'Meara's decision hit many union members very hard," said Armand Nevers, a fired union worker. "The core of union activists is dwindling. The union leadership has fallen back on appeals for advertising boycotts, which is not promising now. It looks more and more like the only hope now is for more militant action from the union leadership, and no one expects that to happen."

An indication of the lack of interest in the Detroit lock-out by the union leadership is reflected in the fact that whereas there had been a half dozen International Union representatives assigned to work in Detroit, there is now only one.

—Andy Phillips

## Mississippi Workers Center

**Oxford, Miss.**—The plight of low-wage workers in the rural south demands your urgent attention. Here in the state of Mississippi, individuals work in some of the worst conditions documented in the country. Many of these workers are without unions—without access to information regarding their rights. They are forced to work under some of the most inhumane conditions imaginable. When they speak out as individuals, they face unemployment, harassment, and intimidation.

I am working with local community organizers, labor leaders and legal advocates, to establish the Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights. The center is being established to address critical issues affecting low-wage workers, the majority of whom are Black and primarily work in non-union workplaces such as catfish and poultry plants. With a dual focus of Education/Outreach and Advocacy, the center will have as its primary goal the development and implementation of programs that will provide legal support, labor and employment counseling, training and educational opportunities. While the center will advocate for individual workers who have been treated unfairly, it will also work for broader change.

The center is needed now to lend support to workers who literally are without recourse. Your tax deductible contribution will help us to open the center in Jackson by January 1998. Please make checks payable to The Community Aid and Development Corporation and indicate that your contribution is to the Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights, P.O. Box, 1081, Oxford, MS 38655.

In solidarity  
Jaribu Hill

## Organizing led to UPS win

**Indianola, Miss.**—I think the key to the UPS strike was the strategy used. First you had to get organized. You have to come together as one, and create the leverage needed. A company always thinks that you are too divided to sustain a strike and also that you will never walk out, especially where some good benefits are concerned.

Mobilization of the Teamsters' efforts to bring together the unit beforehand was the crucial factor that strengthened and made the strike successful. The solidarity of all the UPS workers across the states, rallying and coming together as one, gave me deep flashbacks to our encounter as oppressed catfish workers on strike in 1990.

Standing together in unity and being determined shows that you can accomplish anything, and also demonstrates to the high-powered capitalists that we want a better workplace, and we are willing to go the distance to obtain it.

We as UPS, catfish, chicken, or any other workers, must demand dignity, respect and just treatment on these jobs, and we will stick together as one to achieve this.

They push helpless people off the welfare lines, strip them of the little income and medical treatment they have, and say you need to go to work. But look at what's out there: low-wage, part-time jobs with no benefits.

We don't want strikes or to fight with these companies. But that's the only tool we have to ensure that we are treated like human beings.

—S. Hamer

## Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

Messenger in the pending runoff which was then dropped. One worker told me, "If Sharpton got elected mayor and the only thing he did was bring the police under control, then he's got my vote. I've had too much experience with the police. Down South and up here, it's the same. What got me so angry is Giuliani and Police Commissioner Safir saying the Louima case was an isolated incident. That was no isolated incident, it goes on all the time. Anybody who's Black knows of many cases like this. The police feel they can get away with anything, anything at all. And Giuliani backs them up, and makes it worse."

What the grassroots, self-organized vote for Sharpton shows is that Blacks and Latinos, suffering under police brutality (when Anthony Baez was murdered by officer Livoti, Sharpton was there), have not forgotten that Giuliani was elected mayor by presiding over a racist lynch-mob type of police riot in front of city hall when Dinkins was mayor. It is no accident the cops, as they tortured Louima, proclaimed, "It's Giuliani time!" This is the mayor whose administration bragged about New York City being "run for 200 years by white men." He has been openly racist about Sharpton, saying he was "unqualified to be mayor." This infuriated Black workers on my job who know what these code words mean.

Meanwhile, white Democrats are flocking to Giuliani as their savior. He is a vicious man who uses race to divide. And just to show that Black misleaders can sow confusion on both sides of the electoral crisis, the leader of the largest municipal workers union, Stanley Hill, has betrayed his members both as minorities and as workers by throwing his support behind Giuliani.

Police brutality and the increasing criminalization of Black and Latino workers go hand in hand. In the garment district, Black workers doing hard and heavy work for minimum wage will tell you, "I'm working for my parole officer," virtual slave labor of the criminal justice system and its so-called war on drugs. Immigrant workers are criminalized by the racist immigration laws, and forced to work as virtual slaves for less than minimum wage.

The police state that Black and Latino workers daily live under (Asian workers are often the victims of police brutality as well) should be of concern to the whole working class. It is to the peril of all workers, when part of the class can be criminalized, brutalized, and made to live under a police state.

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From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya  
MARXIST-HUMANIST  
ARCHIVES

### Editor's Note

In light of the current interest in the work of C.L.R. James, we publish the following letter sent by Raya Dunayevskaya in May, 1972 to John O'Neill, author of a number of works on Hegel and Marx, in response to his request for her comments on James' *Notes on Dialectics*, a mimeographed copy of which James had just sent O'Neill. We are printing the letter as it was excerpted for inclusion in the 1972 pamphlet Dunayevskaya called *For the Record*, which can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, #4742-4759. The letter appeared there under the title, "Letter to a Professor." The full letter can be found in the *RDC*, #13062-13064. All numbered footnotes and page references below have been added by the editor. The page references are to the 1980 Lawrence Hill & Co. edition of James' *Notes on Dialectics*.

I typed James' "Notes on the Dialectic" back in 1948. At that time I thought it was "great," but to think that some who claim to write "not explanations" of the dialectic, but "directly the dialectic itself"<sup>1</sup> would consider that out of the past two critical decades, nothing had emerged that would demand he rewrite it, is surely stagnant thinking, especially when one has ended on something so far from reality as: "The Stalinists are over-running China. They aim at Burma, Korea, the Malay States, Indonesia, Indo-China and India." (p. 226)

The structure of these 226 pages is very lopsided, indeed. Thus, no less than 65 pages are devoted to the Prefaces of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, but the whole Doctrine of Being rates a mere 7 1/2 pages. The Doctrine of Essence (pp. 74-118) would seem to have gotten a more serious treatment, except that a reading of it shows that James began skipping as soon as he reached Ground (which is barely Section One, much less Sections Two and Three). Nevertheless, since we do here have the advantage that the references are to historic periods—not only 1948, USA, but roaming throughout the world from the English Revolution of 1640-48 through the Great French Revolution, and down to "today," at which point the author sends us on a "Leninist Interlude" (p.98) which is followed as soon as he ends with Essence (p.118) by continuing into "Leninism and the Notion" (p.134)—we can at least get to know what James thinks.

OK, that is a great number of pages and contains a serious study of Lenin. But that analysis is strictly political. The author obviously did not know Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks*. Here is how he refers to them. (p.99) "I remember on my journeys between Missouri and New York, stopping at Washington and R[aya] calling out an at-sight translation from Lenin's Russian notes, and my scribbling them down. I still have the notebook. I got plenty, but not nearly enough."

That certainly is true. The only two quotations James refers to are the ones Lenin writes on "Leap" against gradualness, and his excitement about the dialectic as "Movement and self-movement" (wrongly attributed by James to the remarks in the Doctrine of Essence whereas Lenin had made these conclusions long before he battled with the Doctrine of Essence.) This is no simplistic matter about "quotations." The point is that the one "leap" James makes is in the Doctrine of Essence, and so in love is he with Hegel's profound analysis of Contradiction that even in the "1971 edition"<sup>2</sup> he has the third Observation by Hegel retyped as "Appendix." But, as James keeps repeating over and over again, that was not "the new" for our age, for our Tendency;<sup>3</sup> his task was supposed to be to work out the Doctrine of the Notion. But the only (and it is the achievement, the only one James can chalk up) "working out" is the recognition that Lenin's slogan, "to a man," was the new Universal.

But what does he do with the doctrine of the Notion

# On C.L.R. James' Notes on Dialectics

and, on that which he specified as his goal, that is, the relationship between spontaneity and organization? Well, first, he says, "We have to get hold of the Notion of the Absolute Idea, before we can see this relation between organization and spontaneity in its concrete truth." (p.119) Then (pp.119-150), where he is supposed to develop the matter, we get no further than a heavy reliance on Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*: "Engels has what is in my modest opinion a very satisfying passage on the judgment." (p.121) He barely reaches further than just the categories themselves: Universal, Particular, Individual. As usual, just as he comes to a difficult passage in Hegel, he departs to the Particular, in this case Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.

Unfortunately, though he achieves something by "applying" the fixed particular to Trotsky's theory of nationalized property-socialism, he seems to be able to do nothing at all with his theory of permanent revolution. Indeed, he now claims that the peasantry is the revolutionary force, which he discovered. Yet, as we can see from these *Notes*, back in 1948, he leaves out entirely that critical question, the role of the peasantry on which Trotsky was most assuredly always wrong. But what he claims in 1971 was the furthest from his mind in 1948.

As for Hegel himself on the Doctrine of the Notion, he hardly goes beyond that first chapter (p.256 to be exact).<sup>4</sup> He had taken so many interludes on politics, without answering his question "What We Shall Do," at which point he does define Trotsky as "Synthetic Cognition" (pp.157-162). At that point it would appear, we will deal with Absolute Idea, if not with all that comes between p.256 and p.466. But here we have an abundance of quotations with hardly anything "direct" from James, unless by "directly" James meant quoting Hegel directly. Well and good! But the misplaced paean of praise to Engels hardly shows James knows much about the Absolute Idea, for it is buttressed by: "Engels has summed it up once and for all, despite all that modern philosophers write: the fundamental distinction in philosophy is the primacy of materialism/being, or idealism/knowing." (pp.162-63)

Is that all? And if that is all on the dialectic, then what about James' own goal about spontaneity and organization? "The Party is the knowing of the proletariat as being. Without the party the proletariat knows nothing." (p.172) That sounds absolutely unbelievable in view of the fact that the whole section is, rightly, devoted to the expose of the degeneracy of the party and the need for spontaneity, always greatly praised. How, then, can such hyperboles (so characteristic of James) commit so fantastic a contradiction as to claim that "Without the party the proletariat knows nothing"? I'm afraid you will have to ask him. Just such nonsensical formulations pepper the "book," and, if you should call this to his attention, he'll find the exact opposite on some other page to quote, not the least of which is the sudden and endless diversion to the English Revolution of 1640-48, then to France 1789-93 where, believe it or not, he says the embryo of state-capitalism was born!

I must now get back to why I referred to your letter as a strange one, why James would hardly appreciate my "advice," as you put it, and why, in 1948, I did consider the *Notes* "great." It was, as James does admit on p.135 "en famille"; it served as stimulus to "ourselves" getting down to Hegel. I, for example, promptly got down to translating Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* in written form. I am that half of Johnson-Forest that founded the state-capitalist Tendency in the U.S. that never once separated the economic analysis of the new stage of world capitalism from its opposite, the stage of workers' revolt, and thus presented it as a dialectic unity of the concept of world revolution. Grace Lee (Ria Stone) was the third in the trio of leadership. She did not occupy a formal post of leader in the SWP, but her name did appear on some Tendency documents, and, in any case, she was the only one who had a formal philosophic degree and carried on a personal correspondence with Johnson, and criticized his *Notes on the Dialectic* as "academician."

The third step in that digging into Hegel followed in 1948-50 between James, Lee and myself, this time on a much more precise level, section by section in Hegel's *Science of Logic* and its relevance for our age. It stopped in 1950 when, on the one hand, it all helped in formulating *State Capitalism and World Revolution*,\* and, on the other hand, the General Strike of Miners was on. I proceeded to West Virginia to participate in it. (My reports on that strike and role of women were published in *The Militant*, and then, as interviews with miners battling Automation before ever that word was invented, they became pivotal to the final chapter of *Marxism and Freedom*, "Automation and the New Humanism.")<sup>5</sup>

Finally, in 1953, when Stalin died, I was elated enough to break down the Absolute Idea as the movement from practice to theory and a new society. That was six weeks before the historic June 17 East German Revolution. These letters of May 12 and May 20 (included in the

Labor Archives of Wayne State University, where the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection is deposited, as written, not as rewritten by James some two decades after the events) so excited Grace that, with her usual hyperboles, she wrote that what Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* achieved in 1914, the May 12 and 20 letters on the Absolute Idea would do for the Movement in 1953. That was the beginning of the end of the Johnson-Forest Tendency, although the actual break-up occurred after the government decided to make the listing...<sup>6</sup>

Yours, Raya

\*(ADDENDUM written July, 1972—RD)

James had twice reproduced *State-Capitalism and World Revolution*, once in England in 1956, to which was attached a group of names that had absolutely nothing to do with its writing, much less its state-capitalist theory and the second time, in the 1960's under his own name, which, for the C.L.R. James of 1972 remains the fundamental document. Now, supposing, for the sake of argument, we had said nothing about the fact that it was not a personal, but a Tendency document, and had not made a point about the fact that *Facing Reality*<sup>7</sup> did not logically flow from it, but, in truth, was produced only after Johnson and Forest went their separate ways; supposing, furthermore, that we also would not have called attention to the fact that before "the third" 1967 document on the peasantry could be published, what had

remained of the "Johnsonites" had undergone still another split, this time with Grace Lee; and supposing, finally, we allowed James to forget the not-so-accidental break with his co-founder—how could all that possibly explain 1) the reproduction of the Tendency's 1950 document, *State Capitalism and World Revolution* "as is" as if the subsequent two critical decades had produced nothing new in the theory of state-capitalism; and 2) how could it possibly absolve James of the conspiracy of silence, not only around *Marxism and Freedom*,

but about the fact that the majority of the Tendency who had worked out that document he is so proud to keep reproducing had broken with him, to establish the Marxist-Humanist paper edited by a Black production worker, the Black auto worker whose autobiography (*Indignant Heart*)<sup>8</sup> signalled the beginning of that new dimension that made it possible, finally, to be totally independent of Trotskyism? In a word, *State Capitalism and World Revolution* is old hat not only in the sense that it was written in 1950, but in the more fundamental sense that it was argued within a Trotskyist framework, since the Tendency was then still part of the SWP.

1. James had written to O'Neill: "I take the liberty of sending you a work of my own...a study of the dialectic of Hegel, not explanations of the dialectic but directly the dialectic itself...I regret to say that it is the only direct study of the dialectic that I know...I am concerned with trying to find out what qualified people think of my book and the possibility of normal publication."

2. James called what had been mimeographed by "Friends of Facing Reality" in 1971 a "second edition" of his 1948 work.

3. C.L.R. James (J.R. Johnson) and Raya Dunayevskaya (Freddie Forest) had co-founded an opposition State-Capitalist Tendency within the American Trotskyist movement, which was named the Johnson-Forest Tendency in December 1945.

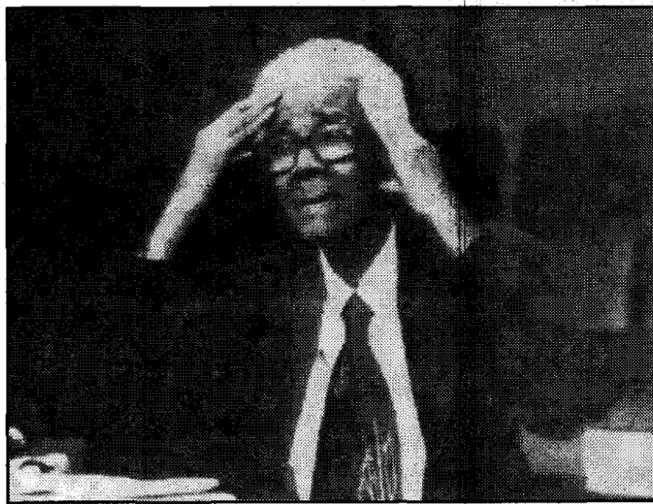
4. James' reference in his "Notes" are to Hegel's, *Science of Logic*, translated by Johnston and Struthers, Vol. II.

5. For a full discussion of the events of 1949-50, see *The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.*, published by *News and Letters* in 1984.

6. In December 1954, at the height of McCarthyism, Johnson-Forest were placed on the Attorney General's subversive list. For more on this period see *25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.*, pp.1-4.

7. *Facing Reality*, by Grace C. Lee, Pierre Chaulieu and J.R. Johnson, came off the press in 1958.

8. In 1978, this 1952 autobiography of Charles Denby appeared as Part I of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, in Part II of which Denby continued his life story after he became editor of the Marxist-Humanist journal, *News & Letters*.



C.L.R. James

## Post-Plenum Discussion Bulletin #1

Reports and Subreport to  
the 1997-98 Plenum of  
News & Letters Committees

"The 'Praxis of Philosophy' in Revolutionary  
Organization and Journalism"  
Olga Domanski

"The Power of Negativity: Forces of Revolt  
as Reason, Philosophy as Force of Revolt"  
Peter Wermuth

"Black Mind in Reality, in Revolution, as Recollection."  
Lou Turner

"The New Marxist-Humanist Statement on Black Dimension"  
John Alan

"On Editing the Dunayevskaya/Dialectics Book,  
and Some Reflections on Hegel and Dialectics  
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Editor (1955-1983)

Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, News and Letters Committees. Lou Turner, Managing Editor. Felix Martin, Labor Editor.

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759-C

## Essay Article

by Ba Karang

Though Kwame Nkrumah said some years after the death of Patrice Lumumba in 1960 that the coming revolution in the Congo will be fought in the spirit of Lumumba, the masses did it in 1997 not for the sake of Lumumba but for the present and future. There has been a revolution in the Congo, fought by revolutionary, dedicated people. Yet we are not sure if these are the same people running the affairs of the country. We fear that not giving the masses the chance to play their historical role in a revolutionary situation always leads to their isolation and the grounding of the revolution.

But our critique must go beyond these points. To critique the revolution because of, among other things, the recent demonstrations against Kabila in Kinshasa, might not give us a good picture of the forces that see the revolution as an open threat to their interests. These demonstrations occurred only when it was clear that the reactionary Etienne Tshisekedi would not be invited into the new government.

We must not forget that as the revolutionary forces were advancing against Mobutu, demonstrations in Kinshasa opposed them, accusing Kabila of being an agent of the Tutsi. The Western press was quick to declare the advancing revolution an ethnic war.

We must also keep in mind that when Thomas Sankara of Burkino Faso imposed certain rules in the 1980s, such as denying women the use of make-up and skin bleaching as long as they are government employees, he argued that cultural imperialism is the most dangerous of all, for it is only then that the human mind could be controlled without any use of force. What the Pan-Africanists have been referring to as cultural imperialism is the Western style of dress, among other things. This, they argue, is not only traumatising the minds of the Africans but also wiping away the African culture. Sankara argued that imperialism no longer needs a huge army or armaments to control a nation; their music and lifestyle can do it better.

Kabila's banning of certain women's dress is posing the same argument. My fear is that culture in this way could be misinterpreted; what we might call an "African culture" does not in the first place exist. Africa has diverse cultural experiences that could not be defined as a "whole" and static. We have cultures that are in constant change, and the dynamism of each of these cultures can only be found in the day to day struggles of the people for freedom and a better life.

Putting African culture in a nutshell is without a doubt the greatest achievement of racist Western intellectuals. At the same time, to argue that an African with a Western lifestyle is a sign of cultural imperialism, in my view, ignores the fact that classes also exist on the continent.

### THE ECONOMIC CONTENT OF THE REVOLUTION

Kabila has called his revolution a "national democratic revolution"; this means it is not yet socialist and that all the forces that are interested in democratic change are welcome. A national democratic revolution speaks more of compromise within the different forces that are interested in democratic rule.

But this might not be the only reason why we find in his government, among others, a finance minister who has no relation to the revolution. We are told that the economy of Congo will continue to be market oriented, but we have never expected anything else as long as the revolution is national democratic.

The collapse of "Communism" in Eastern Europe has not only created a new political debate but a new political situation. In Uganda, the finance minister, Mayanja Nkanga, is the leader of the conservative party; this not only releases the revolutionary forces from any blame of what is going wrong with the economy, but is also a way of meeting some of the requirements of the international finance institutions. Kabila made a serious calculation before bringing in a finance minister from Wall Street.

**If Kabila fails to understand that he is leading a multiethnic revolution and falls on one tribe against another to consolidate his power, we must only expect fire. No force could have challenged the power of Mobutu without the involvement of millions.**

His effort to resist the international monetary organisations by refusing to pay any debt is not an idea of the finance minister but of other forces. These are the very forces that Kabila has to satisfy if he wishes any continuous mass support in the country. The betrayal of the revolution in Congo will not be an easy game; this is a victory that has been hijacked for more than 30 years and won back with bitter experience.

Far beyond the boundaries of Congo, the defeat of Mobutu has again brought about political enthusiasm.

# Africa after the fall of Mobutu

The gradual political and ideological change that has been happening on the continent unnoticed for the past year has redefined its political geography.

### THE REVOLUTION'S IMPACT UPON AFRICA

Uganda, Rwanda and Angola have used the Congo situation to rid themselves of reactionary forces. It has also helped advance the struggle of the Sudanese liberation forces. This is a victory for Pan-Africanism.

We will have to see how much the Pan-Africanists are going to advance their victory. Their struggle to link up all Pan-African forces on the continent is of great concern. But the limitations here will be the many factions within the Pan-Africanist movement itself, and here is the great role that Kabila, and not Museveni, is going to play.

South Africa is incapable of playing any ideological leadership despite its rich revolutionary history. The basis for any genuine revolutionary leadership within the ANC has been lost since before its victory. Those

the answer to the problem and 2) as long as the masses have been left aside there is very little that can be done. The Pan-African movement has been seriously occupied by this at both the theoretical and practical level; the efforts to develop Ujama, Nkrumahism, etc. were all efforts geared towards this problem. But they have all ended up in isolating the people.

The committee form of organisation that was born in the liberated areas during the offensive against the Mobutu regime are not new to the African scene. As in all the other revolutionary struggles these committees represented the masses, were part of them and charged with serious assignments, like the recruitment of militants, political education, planning of production, etc. But immediately after victory these committees do not only lose their influence, but are put totally out of function and replaced with one-party or multi-party dictatorships.

In Uganda, they were called "Resistance Committees" (RCs) during the armed struggle. They existed at the local and regional levels. The RCs later became known as the Local Councils and we are told that they still have the same function and influence as in the days of the liberation struggle. However, what we know from experience is that immediately after victory these grassroots organisations lose their power and influence and become more a symbol of democracy rather than an active actor.

The victory in Congo has been masterminded by the ordinary masses, who for years have been struggling against one of the most brutal dictators and criminals in our lifetime. Whatever becomes of the revolution will have a creative effect on the rest of the continent.

One thing is certain: Kabila will be playing a great role in the coming struggles in Africa. It has given us a great chance to turn over the last reactionary capital supporting Jonas Savimbi. It has

strengthened the struggle in Sudan and against the many reactionary armed forces fighting in Uganda. It has become a source of inspiration for millions of Africans. This has not been achieved by the South African revolution, whose leadership has only become more anti-revolutionary. A revolution that is more interested in consolidating the power of the leadership than grounding the revolution in the masses is without a future.

The many issues that have arisen in the Congo, such as solving the refugee problem involving the Hutus, leaves us with many doubts. We know that leaving the Hutu refugee camps as they were would have been suicidal for the revolution; the backyard must be cleared. Yet we also know the situation could have been solved better than endangering the lives of the refugees.

Kabila can never become the last hope of the African revolution; even betrayal by great African revolutionary thinkers did not stop the masses from still demanding a revolutionary solution to the African problem. He might become another Sankara, which would then be a great victory for all humankind. If he chooses something else, he will without a doubt face the bitter experience of history.



Jubilant residents of Kinsasha greet a young rebel in May.

who worked within the South African solidarity movement long ago discovered the petty-bourgeois character of the ANC and the many efforts by leading its members to distance themselves from grassroots solidarity movements. Such tactics were meant to advance the diplomatic struggle, which became more important to the ANC leaders than anything else. The challenge of supporting the ideological struggle now going on in the continent is an impossible assignment for South Africa.

Within West Africa, apart from Nigeria, the political changes which have taken place for the past year have all claimed to be radical. The recent election victory of Charles Taylor in Liberia and the military coup in Sierra Leone are another matter. Neither of these countries have ever been a bastion of radicalism. How radical or progressive the leadership claims to be is of no significance; there is no doubt that there is very little substance in what they say.

**But what is interesting is that proclaiming a radical revolutionary change has again become a fashion on the African political scene, despite the self-proclaimed ideological victory of capitalism following the political collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.**

How is this possible? The local election victory of Maoists in southern Senegal and the election victory of the so-called young radical military officers in the Gambia were won in the spirit of anti-imperialism. The truth is that the African masses consistently opposed anything that did not represent their interests and offered heroic resistance to oppressive and exploitative systems that have betrayed them. But they have never moved an inch from their determination to search for a new society and a better life that represents their interests. The betrayal of these struggles has grounded these openings, and at the same time revealed the true nature of the backward African middle class. These openings create new theoretical grounds that are not always taken seriously. Herein lies one of the most serious obstacles in advancing the African revolution.

### CONTRADICTIONS FROM WITHIN

The experience of the African masses in relation to what happens after the revolution is of many betrayals and sufferings. The question of how the popular slogan "power to the masses" could be put into practical life, as we all know, is not only an African problem. But the other side of the fact is that no other people have been trying to solve this problem from a practical point of view more than the African people and the revolutionary left. The revolutions from the 1960s to pro-democratic movements at this very moment have been totally preoccupied with this issue.

**What we have learned is that 1) it is not enough to speak of past African institutions as having**

## Bosnia partitioned

(Continued from page 1)

hostilities, the Bosnians will be in the position to make major military gains. This is not an unjustified view. Bosnia was on the verge of inflicting a military defeat on the Serbs when the U.S. forced them to accept a ceasefire and the Dayton Accords. Since then, the Bosnians have become much more powerful in economic and military terms. A resumption of hostilities could easily lead to the total defeat of the Serb leaders in the "Republika Srpska."

Such a military defeat of the Serb leadership by the Bosnians could break the shackle of neo-fascist narrow nationalism which has gripped the region. This applies not only to the "Republika Srpska," but Serbia itself. As the failure of this year's protest movement in Serbia to detach itself from various narrow nationalist leaders showed, so long as Serbian narrow nationalism does not suffer a military as well as political defeat, it will be all the harder to loosen its grip on the minds of the Serbian masses.

It is precisely this eventuality that current U.S. policy aims to prevent. Far from taking the ground of Clinton's arguments with the Congressional Republicans, what is needed is opposition to U.S. military intervention in Bosnia rooted in a firm defense of Bosnia's struggle to create a truly multiethnic society.

## PRISONS— WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON?



I guess Arizona inmates don't have to worry any longer if their books on loan from the prison library are overdue. According to a wire report from the *Arizona Daily Star*, state officials have decided to close all but one of the state's prison law libraries. First the U.S. Supreme Court decided that state inmates are not entitled to law libraries and legal aides. The Arizona Attorney General said that cases that have merit "will always find their way to the court." It's hard to see how when the Arizona government has also decided to restrict use of non-recorded telephone lines, which negates client-attorney privileges.

But don't think that all these changes are to save taxpayer dollars. Prison law libraries cost taxpayers nothing since they are maintained through the "inmates' activities and recreation fund." Is it all just meanspiritedness?

Reader  
Oregon

\* \* \*

Can you put me on your mailing list? I've been incarcerated seven years and it's time for me to get involved with what

is really going on in the prison systems across the country and use what insight I have to correct what I can. I look forward to working together to correct the injustices around us.

Prisoner  
Texas

Editor's Note: Readers—can you contribute the price of a sub (\$5/year) to our special donor's fund, to enable us to send *N&L* to prisoners and others who cannot pay for their own?

## AN IN MEMORIAM TO A FRIEND

My brother and friend, George M., died last month at age 34. I'd like it known that he was the former prisoner quoted in the May 1996 issue of *News & Letters* on prisoners' efforts "to organize their own thoughts in opposition to the prison system—and also to that voice within that says 'don't believe in anyone, don't pay attention, everyone here is just trying to get over one way or another.'"

George struggled with that voice within all his life—as all of us are forced to do in this unfree world. His loss drives home to me like never before the profound importance of the work *News & Letters* has done and I look forward to working with the forthcoming pamphlet written by prisoners themselves. Let the world hear a new voice.

Fred  
Chicago

# Readers' Views

## PAYING OFF THE KILLERS

A fellow I know who has smoked for years and is now on a breathing machine told me, "The government fined the tobacco companies a few billion dollars for lying to us for years. They may have killed more Americans than World War II and not one of their CEOs has been indicted. Those merchants of death just go on selling cigarettes at \$20 a carton. I don't understand it."

I told him I understand it. The tobacco companies own the federal government. They spend millions of dollars every election paying Congress to pass laws to protect them. The only protection the American people will ever have is when they uproot this system that kills them and create a new one where people are in control of production and of their own lives.

Retired worker  
Whittier, California

## MIDDLE EAST CAULDRON

We are living under deteriorating conditions where it appears war between Israel-Palestine and the Arab countries will be the inevitable result of Netanyahu's behavior. Moreover, this war seems very near. As peace activists, my

colleagues and I are trying to safeguard both peoples, the Israelis and the Palestinians, from the dangers of that war. One of the major problems we face is that the Israelis do not understand the level of the danger they are in.

The system of direct elections means that, were early elections to take place, Netanyahu would probably remain in power. The range of public activities against Netanyahu and his government must be expanded, but the majority of Israelis will very likely only take action when the danger is at their door and it is too late.

Latif Dori  
Tel Aviv

\* \* \*

The week Madeline Albright was here we were at our demonstrating best. We conducted a walking tour of "The Economic and Social Realities of East Jerusalem" to show the disparities between the Jewish and Arab parts of town—municipal services, schools, hospitals. It ended with a visit to what was left of the home of an Arab merchant with four children who had invested all his life's income to buy and renovate an apartment in the Old City. He was not sure why his home was demolished but believes the Israeli authorities counted

# OPENINGS, CONTRADICTIONS AND MARXIST-HUMANIST PERSPECTIVES FOR 1997-98

Congratulations on the Perspectives thesis published in the August-September *N&L*, which I support (except for the, alas, overoptimistic estimation of positive developments coming from the Kabila regime in the Congo).

I am totally convinced that if capitalism continues its mad and inhuman course, humanity, the environment, indeed the world as we know it will be destroyed by the end of the next century, and probably sooner. I don't know if the working people of the world have one chance in a hundred or a thousand to save it, given the retrogressionist trends that Marxist-Humanists are among the few to analyze fearlessly rather than grab at "shortcuts." But I do know that if there is that chance, it will be through international solidarity of working people around the globe. Only movements that know what we are for—a new society—rather than just against, can lead to true liberation.

Richard Greeman  
France

\* \* \*

I recently met a man from Hungary who said he has no further use for Marx because Marx did not propose a plan. He said that they weren't Stalinists in Hungary, and that they had all read Marx. It's scary that Marx's thinking is so difficult to grasp. Raya Dunayevskaya's value is that she took Marx's Marxism and opened it up like a rose.

Women's Liberationist  
Los Angeles

\* \* \*

It is right to mention Kabila was a Lumumbist, but what does this mean? Lumumba might have regarded himself as a Marxist (whatever it meant in Africa at that time) but where is any proof that Kabila's opinions had not changed during the long years when he seems not to have been purely a rebel leader? And what is the importance of Lumumbism today when another former adherent (Gizenga) can be of a different opinion as to the use of power? It seems easy to judge basing one's opinion on fragments of sometimes unjustified, sometimes only generalized knowledge (the sources of which are more often than not prejudiced one way or the other). Beware of easy labels the contents of which are different in Chicago and in Kinshasa. The only thing sure so far is that Kabila's regime—certainly not a revolution but much more than a putsch—is an opening. I myself would not dare to assume more for the time being.

Stephen Steiger  
Prague

\* \* \*

Within your Draft Perspectives I discovered a foundation that provides me with an educated-link—most notably, the context of rejecting American imperial-

ism, Russian Communism, Chinese Communism and establishing a new ideal or goal. Governments, like religions have been around for a very long time and both seek loyal worshipers/followers. The current American agenda of "pro-life, pro-safety, and pro-security" is a clever manipulation of government powers. Those who support and follow that agenda are trading off their fellow-Americans' freedom for their own irrational pursuit of "safety, security and life." This is an example of the laws and forces of man being in conflict with the laws and forces of nature.

Prisoner  
Kansas

\* \* \*

It seems that many of the contentions of poststructuralist theory which were born in the '70s are evident to varying degrees in the practice of youth today. A vision of a socialist society is definitely not what motivates youth today—not without justification as far as the example set by what some called "actually existing socialism." The foremost reason is the failure of revolutionaries to develop a vision of a human future to serve as what guides all activity.

The key to a freedom-filled future is to unite the principle of unyielding opposition to capitalism to a non-alienating form of organization in a way in which hostility to theory is overcome and a philosophy of revolution is developed. Only an entry into the battle of ideas at the highest level—which is what *N&L*'s proposed new book of writings on dialectics represents to me—can overcome the influence of post-structuralist ideas on the youth so we can take up the challenge of developing youth as reason in this uncertain and anti-dialectical world in which both the minds and bodies of poor, Black and Latino youth are at risk.

Young revolutionary  
Chicago

\* \* \*

As one who has lived through fascism, World War II, one and a half years of forced labor in Rumania, spent 10 years in Budapest witnessing the Communist takeover and the building of "Socialism," as well as what led to the Hungarian revolution, I have seen in practice the question of "what happens after." The powers to be have learned from the Russian Revolution and Castro and are making sure there will be no successful revolution. Even if there should be, some leaders will wind up on the top to "make order." The question of "what happens after" demands discussing first "what happens before." For a revolution to succeed, both a theoretical as well as a practical leadership is needed.

Intellectual  
Canada

\* \* \*

In the Archives column of the August-September issue, Raya Dunayevskaya wrote about workers' control at the point of production. To me that is what is involved both in "what happens after" and in how to get to revolution. *N&L* talks about knowing before the revolution what we want. What do you want in terms of the workplace, the factory, after the revolution? How will intellectual and physical work come together?

Social ecologist  
Tennessee

\* \* \*

You claim the position of Lenin in "What Is To Be Done" is: "... that the workers could not get to socialism on their own; that socialism would be brought to them by the intellectuals on the outside." Lenin says no such thing! In the chapter "Bowing to Spontaneity," Lenin writes: "This does not mean, of course, that the workers have no part in creating such an ideology. They take part, however, not as workers, but as socialist theoreticians...in other words, only to the extent they are able to acquire the knowledge of their age and develop that knowledge."

Lenin is saying semi-illiterate workers will not develop socialist ideas. They are more likely in the U.S. to join the militias—though we now have millions of workers who have some college education who can not only read but use computers who are only lacking organization. You have an absolute right to criticize Lenin, who made mistakes like all of us. But I believe his basic method was correct and his criticisms of spontaneity almost seem directed against *N&L*.

Earl Gilman  
San Francisco

\* \* \*

Dunayevskaya's column on the revolution in Portugal showed a methodology for developing revolutionary new openings. She singled out the revolutionary forces in Portugal, including workers and women's liberationists, but was also critical of them. I thought the column spoke to the Draft Perspectives in asking: "How can philosophy and revolution become integral to Angola and initiate a new world stage of revolution?" What the Draft was projecting to movements looking for direction is that to reach their potential a direct encounter with the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism is needed.

Terry Moon  
Memphis

\* \* \*

Your draft article was right on target that Marxists have failed because they do not oppose the present system with a positive vision of the society workers are struggling to realize. We cannot know the exact shape a future stateless society will take, but it can only be brought about by a revolutionary struggle to overcome the

human difficulties created by decades of rule by a class of exploiters.

D. Tyler  
Louisiana

\* \* \*

The most striking thing in British capitalism today is the de-industrialization that has taken place, with 80% working now in the "service sector" and the most militant groups of workers dispersed. A miners' strike like that in 1984-85 can't exist any longer. One thing it means is that revolution can no longer be seen as simply "taking over the means of production." How can you build a new society by taking over the hamburger restaurants and the hotels? We have to think in terms of changing relations at work and between countries, uprooting the patterns of exploitation.

Richard Bunting  
England

\* \* \*

Openings are not an automatic breakthrough of today's retrogression, but it was impossible not to get excited about the Iranian elections this year. People who refused to vote for 20 years and others who practiced to write legibly so their vote would count voted in massive numbers to try to put an end to the persecution there. While the reactionary forces are still in power, there are various tendencies we need to look at. The women's movement is trying to engage in the debates at the same time they gain some freedom. The point has been made that the Iranian revolution "etched the idea of freedom into the consciousness of the masses." That's the legacy we need to follow up.

Iranian revolutionary  
Los Angeles

\* \* \*

Where new openings may be appearing today, from the UPS strike to the protests against Prop. 209 in California and against police brutality in New York, the question remains how to fill the void in theory to meet the consciousness in action of the masses. What George Jackson posed about the failure of the Left in 1969 still plagues us today. Raya Dunayevskaya made the same call in a different form in *Philosophy and Revolution* by beginning a book first published in 1973 with "Why Hegel? Why Now?", and demanding that we recognize not only labor, women, Black and youth as Subject and force of revolution, but recognize the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism as a fifth force. It was in her Introduction to that work that she recognized George Jackson's discovery of the dialectic of liberation in that hellhole of San Quentin.

Gene Ford  
Los Angeles

his renovation to be expansion for which no permit had been issued. Thus 40 foreign workers showed up one morning and sledge-hammered in their life savings.

Our task is to keep the pressure up on Netanyahu. We need more rallies, vigils, letters and more pressure from outside Israel.

**Gila Svirsky for Bat Shalom  
Jerusalem**

**UPS  
STRIKE AS  
LABOR'S  
WEAPON**



I've been hearing people who aren't in manual labor call the Teamsters the "Mafia." They thought the Teamsters were going to sell out the part-time workers if they could keep the pension money going to the union. Then you had other people talking about the amount of money the UPS workers make. They don't realize that they **earn** that money. Some people are so ignorant that the only thing they look at is the \$21/hour the company says the workers make. But if the workers took that \$21 and lost their pension, they wouldn't have anything! It would be just like making \$5/hour.

**Black woman  
Memphis**

The Hoffa people said Carey would never pull us out on strike, that he was too close to UPS. Carey hates UPS management and always did. That's why he had us out for three months in 1974 and how we got good pensions. In this contract we got an increase to \$3,000/month with 30 years for pension. UPS wanted to make a separate pension for UPS. Carey said no way, UPS money funds the pension for all Teamsters. With Hoffa this contract would have been in a back room deal like it was with Presser and Fitzsimmons.

**UPS worker  
New York**

UPS in New York City has laid off 20 drivers, but not because there isn't work for them. The work is there and UPS is

purposely holding it back, staging trailers, so it can claim the strike was the cause of lay-offs. The workers are together and see what's really going on.

**UPS driver  
New York**

The recent UPS strike made me think of all the preaching about family and home but look at this: They say these part-timers at UPS are making \$11/hour. But look at how many jobs they have to work and look at what that does to the family. This is one of the main problems that is happening to the kids. We're out there working two or three jobs and the kids are raising themselves.

**Black working mother  
South USA**

What we all felt was that if UPS workers won, it would bring back the strike weapon. If they lost, it would rust some more.

**Retired UFCW worker  
New York**

**BOOT CAMP EDUCATION**

They start destroying our children and the parents in the schools. Two counties in Tennessee have "boot camps" for children, run by retired military people, not teachers. In Tennessee you can expel a child for battery, weapons or drugs. Now Fayette County has added disrespect and truancy, so a child can be sent to boot camp for missing a few days of school.

They are also punishing the parents by calling them to school several times a day because a child is talking and a teacher says she can't stop it. Some parents have lost a job because of having to leave work so much. They are trying to tell the parents they can't raise their children properly, to permit the school to say, "let's put that child away."

**Concerned Black mother  
Memphis**

In his article on "Selling the students" (Aug.-Sept. N&L), Peter Brinson told the truth. Here in Fayette County, children are being pulled from classrooms for extracurricular activities two or three times a week. The law says they aren't supposed to pull them from classes like

that. It's one of the reasons our children aren't doing well. They're not getting enough quality classroom time. At these events companies are making money selling popcorn and other merchandise to the students.

**Angry parent  
Tennessee**

**POETRY AS INSTRUMENT  
OF CHANGE**

The letter by Adrienne Rich refusing to be a recipient of a National Medal for the Arts at the 1997 Fall White House ceremony was a joy to read in the Aug-Sept. issue. Her definition of the relation between art and politics was wonderful and to the point. Mr. Clinton, who has a very thick skin, probably just shrugged his shoulders, but those who had a chance to read it in N&L and wherever else it might have appeared will be greatly affected.

**Performing artist  
Vancouver**

With her refusal to "decorate the dinner table of power," Adrienne Rich continues her "demand for accountability of the arts." Her meshing of poetry and revolution was no surprise. In **What is Found There**, which was previously reviewed in N&L, she reflected on the personal, political and aesthetic response to "new passions and new forces." Laying claim to poetry as an instrument of change, she there wrote of how "I move myself into a realm of human power which Marx says is its own end." What I saw her doing in her letter to the National Endowment of the Arts, was negating the brutal kinds of realities in our country and letting us forge with her vision of "inventing what we desire."

**Sheila  
New York**

**DIANA AND  
MOTHER THERESA**

Princess Diana and Mother Theresa were both constrained by the patriarchal system which consigns women to secondary but nevertheless necessary roles for keeping the machinery of society oiled.

Diana was useful to produce scions for the royal family, exposed her situation publicly after her divorce, and undertook a socially active career. Mother Theresa religiously dedicated her life to alleviating the plight of Calcutta's poor, but the root cause of the poverty was left untouched. That both appeared ineffectual in producing meaningful social change while they lived does not, however, detract from their worth.

**Mildred Schachinger  
New York**

One might identify with the idea that Diana suffered many of the anxieties of a consumer society in which thinness and beauty are such high requisites that persons who already fit the fashion mold will starve themselves to achieve them. Or you may identify with the neglect she suffered from her spouse. You may identify with a "good person" lost in a corporate world. Whether she fully realized it or not, Diana was part of that world and its public relations arm. Her life and death were played out by the corporate media as a soap opera turned tragedy.

**Dennis  
Chicago**

**POVERTY AND RACE**

Any chance of including a short notice about our recent book in an upcoming issue? Many thanks. I really enjoy your publication.

**Chester Hartman  
Poverty and Race  
Research Council  
Washington, D.C.**

Editor's note: We're glad to help. This new book is called **Double Exposure: Poverty & Race In America**. It includes over 60 articles by leading writers and activists, under 7 topics: Is Racism Permanent?; The Use and Utility of Racial and Ethnic topics; Immigration; The "Underclass" Debate; Multiculturalism; Affirmative Action and Reparations for Slavery; Democracy/Equality. With 240 pages and an Index, it costs \$19.95 paperback plus \$3.50 shipping/handling from the Poverty & Race Research Action Council, 1711 Connecticut Ave., NW, #207, Washington, DC 20009.

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**BOOKS**

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

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

BY CHARLES DENBY

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

BY KEVIN ANDERSON

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

**PAMPHLETS**

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard** Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby ..... \$2
- Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism** by Peter Hudis ..... \$3
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- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis** Includes critiques of Ernest Mandel and Tony Cliff ..... \$2
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.** by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya ..... \$2
- 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments** by Raya Dunayevskaya ..... \$1.50
- Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II** by Raya Dunayevskaya ..... \$2
- Theory and Practice, by Rosa Luxemburg** First English translation ..... \$2
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions** by Raya Dunayevskaya ..... \$1.25
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought** by Lou Turner and John Alan ..... \$3
- Working Women for Freedom** by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes ..... \$2
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## Black/Red View Who advises Clinton on race?

by John Alan

Little or nothing of significance has appeared in the major national media about President Clinton's race advisory board since he created it last June and appointed John Hope Franklin, the prominent African American historian, to lead it.

However, last month the American Association of Retired Persons Bulletin (September 1997) published an article about Dr. Franklin which said that a month after Clinton appointed the seven members of his race advisory board, they did hear "from communities working to heal racial wounds." Franklin thought that none of it was "earth-shaking stuff," just people trying to make their communities more genteel.

Nevertheless, at this time, neither African Americans nor any other ethnic minority in this country know what Clinton's race advisory board plans to do, or even whether it is capable of spurring into action a serious national dialogue on American racism in which masses can participate. It would be very naive to think that Clinton's race advisory board is something separate from Clinton's general political strategy to enhance his own political clout in his battle with the Republican-dominated Congress.

Will the President's race advisory board encourage racial minorities and others to discuss only the phenomenal practices of racism in their daily lives and in politics, such as Clinton's so-called welfare reform, which pushes racial minorities deeper into poverty, the racist police brutality in New York and the repeal of affirmative action in California? Or could it also focus on a critical examination of the objective source of racism in American civil society, i.e., the way it is socially organized for the production and the growth of capital in opposition to human development and freedom?

Such a dialogue would put American civilization on trial and, of course, is not the reason why President Clinton created his race advisory board. If the race advisory board only listens to the phenomenal experiences of racism, then Dr. John Hope Franklin and the six other members of the Clinton's race advisory board will be little more than public opinion pulse-takers for Clinton's administration.

Of course, President Clinton has carefully selected the members of his race advisory board. He needs to have assurance that there won't be any sudden unexpected political or ideological rupture between himself and his race advisors. This certainly would dampen his campaign to get the nation to engage in a dialogue on race. Therefore, it is relevant to ask, did Clinton select John Hope Franklin solely because he is a distinguished African American and is considered by many of his colleagues to be one of the nation's foremost historians? Or is it also because Dr. Franklin has a concept about the origin of racism in this country which has an affinity with Clinton's political ambivalence on racism?

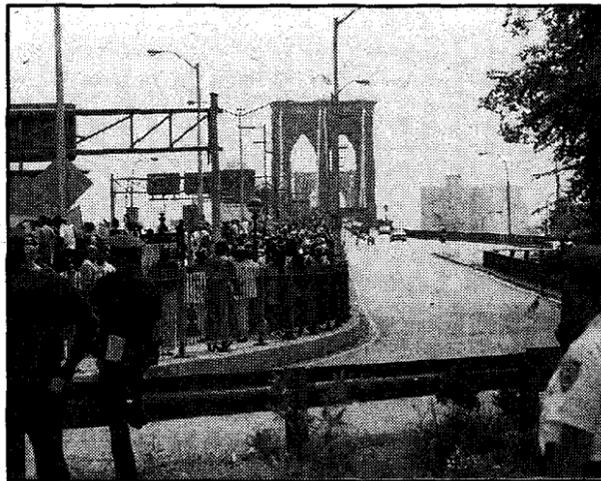
Franklin contends that America tolerates and cultivates racism today due to what he calls "the moral legacy of the Founding Fathers" who "created a tragically flawed revolutionary doctrine and a constitution that did not bestow the blessings of liberty on its posterity [thereby they] set the stage for every succeeding generation of Americans to apologize, compromise, and temporize on those principles of liberty that were supposed

to be the very foundation of our system of government and way of life." (p. 161, *Race and History* by John Hope Franklin)

Not only does Dr. Franklin think that racism and the ideology of white supremacy are the living legacy of the founders of this country, he also thinks that this legacy is so tenacious that the passage of civil rights laws will do little toward expurgating it out of American society unless the individual's attitude on race is transformed (see p. 8 of the AARP Bulletin)

Neither Bill Clinton nor John Hope Franklin seem to realize that any real change "in attitude about race" means also a radical change in social relations and the objective conditions of racism: poverty, forced workfare, police brutality, skyrocketing imprisonment rates, etc. This, of course, is not Clinton's idea of a dialogue on race, and neither that of Franklin.

## NYPD on trial



*New York*—Thousands of people turned out to protest police brutality Aug. 29 in wake of the police torture of Abner Louima, a Haitian immigrant, in a Brooklyn station house. The crowd of about 7,000—mostly Haitians and other West Indians but also many Latinos and U.S.-born Blacks and whites—marched across the Brooklyn Bridge to City Hall Park in Manhattan for a rally. The march was too big to be confined to the sidewalk of the bridge, and took over several traffic lanes. Former Mayor Dinkins (our only Black mayor) and Democratic mayoral hopefuls Messinger and Sharpton addressed the rally.

One Black participant said, "The demonstration was quiet, with the police keeping a low profile. It was too tame for me. The cops hassle immigrants who are afraid to fight back; they couldn't get away with what they do to the West Indians and Latinos if they tried it with American Blacks."

A week later, Black activist Sharpton did surprisingly well in the Democratic primary election, undoubtedly receiving a large protest vote because of all the police brutality that has recently been exposed.

There will be demonstrations against police brutality in cities all over the country on Oct. 22.

—Supporter

## Education for sale?

*Fayette County, Tenn.*—Tunica County, Mississippi's school system was taken over by the state, and one in Tennessee was also taken over. Fayette County's children scored lower on their achievement tests than any children in any county in the state of Tennessee. I'm looking for us to be taken over next.

In the past, our children's low scores gave the county a reason to ask the state and federal government for more funds to build schools and reduce class size. In May of 1998, the counties whose test scores have not improved will lose funds.

Private schools are hoping to pick up these funds because their scores are still up. They are lobbying for vouchers, and are hoping that the the public school money will be rerouted into vouchers for the private schools.

Parents don't have any input. The law says they have input and are to be placed on committees involved in educational decisions about their children, but it's not happening, and parents aren't allowed to speak in Board meetings. Our school system has been turned into nothing but a business, just making money.

When the Education Improvement Act was passed in 1992 there was a clause for children who were getting free lunches. They were to be given a waiver on anything that would cost extra money in class or a field trip. The government is sending money for those waivers to reimburse the schools, but the children are still being charged. Someone is picking up that money! The federal money gets to the school superintendent and never gets past there. We never get an accounting. Everything is hush-hush.

This is keeping the children from participating in a lot of things because they can't come up with the money. This is a way to deprive them.

They are doing this deliberately. The children will continue to be in poverty since they are not going to get what they need from the schools because they can't afford it.

—Candace

## Black World

(Continued from page 1)

years. Pneumonia, tuberculosis and infant mortality ravaged the 40-block eastside ghetto where Black migrants like Denby dwelled.

These oppressive conditions could be traced back to the miserable housing stock Black workers and their families were forced to inhabit and which had been condemned as unsuitable for living. Detroit's Black housing crisis continued through World War II, precipitating the 1942 Sojourner Truth Public Housing disturbance, and the race riots the following year.

Black workers' dreams of finally breaking free from the drudgery and toil of farm tenancy and low-wage Southern factory jobs, inspired by the relatively higher wages in Detroit's auto industry, came into abrupt conflict with the horrendous social conditions of the ghetto. Out of this conflict came social rebellion; it continues to this day.

Denby witnessed the '43 riot and participated in the strike actions and in-plant organizing of Black workers' committees that developed in its aftermath. Even during the rebellion, Denby recounts how Detroit's Black working class community organized itself. "It was organized among us that in the community, half of us would work one day, and part stay home, during the riot." Charles Denby came of age politically in this period.

One of the reviewers of the British edition of *Indignant Heart* noted this when he observed that the Chrysler plant Denby wrote perceptively on in 1973 when young Black militant workers wildcatted was the same plant at which a union boycott was carried out, in 1949, against overpricing by lunch wagons, until it was broken because the union refused to help Black workers break down the color bar at local restaurants in the area around the plant. The reviewer's point was that "The value of Charles Denby's autobiography lies in the attention he draws to the details of situations like these."

This illustrated a point that Denby discussed more than any other in his "Worker's Journal" columns and

## Save the dream, stop 209!

*San Francisco*—On Thursday, Aug. 28, thousands gathered to march to San Francisco's Crissy Field across the Golden Gate Bridge against the first day of life under Prop 209 which outlaws affirmative action in California. The march was called the "March to Save the Dream" because Prop 209 went into effect exactly 34 years to the day of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream speech" in Washington, D.C.

Jesse Jackson called that "poetic injustice" saying at a rally of over 10,000 that this is the beginning of a new fight to make equal opportunity a reality. On the platform with him was Eric Brooks, the lone African American student enrolled in the new ethnically cleansed first year class at the University of California's Boalt law school.

Local reactionary politicians had agitated to stop the march because it might cause a traffic jam, the worst of all consequences in their world. They had to eat their words as traffic flowed better than usual and many drivers honked and waved in support of the marchers on the pedestrian walkway. The only traffic jam was of marchers who filled up the stage area and had to leave early. Jesse Jackson had to be bused to the front of the march in the middle of the bridge.

The march came just after the worker's victory in the UPS strike. One strike activist said several people who didn't normally demonstrate were transformed by that experience and now joined the march to save affirmative action. There is a new sense of what an inclusive society means that can save King's vision from today's reactionary proponents of Prop 209 who use his words to transform that vision into its opposite.

—Affirmative Action supporter

## Prisoner defense rally

*San Francisco*—During an August benefit rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal's Defense Fund here, I was struck by the glaring deficiencies of the post-Marx Marxist Left. First, even though Geronimo ji Jaga Pratt was a principal speaker, and solidarity with political prisoners the main theme, women prisoners were ignored. Even the recent release of Native American Lesbian prisoner Norma Jean Croy went unmentioned over the whole three-hour program!

Cuba—a country which until recently imprisoned AIDS patients out of their "Communist" heterosexist prudery—was lauded as the Left's poster-child alternative to capitalism! Alice Walker read a poem about planting trees as a response to oppression. Philosophic and theoretic disagreements were never voiced in order to maintain an illusory "united front." Even history was rewritten as when Geronimo dismissed the distance between the Black Panther Party and the CP-USA as slight. At least the CP's apologist, Angela Davis, had some sense of philosophic totality in calling for the abolition of the entire prison-industrial system: she was the only speaker to take even that principled of a stand.

Sometimes the Left seems to be stuck in a game like the "Emperor's New Clothes." It's as if no one on the Left but Marxist-Humanists sees that far from being a shining suit of objective theory, the Left is wearing the onus of a century of revolutions that failed or turned into their opposite. It is important for News and Letters to continue providing a viable alternative and scathing critique to the movement—a duty from which Karl Marx never shirked.

—Jennifer Pen

## Charles Denby in retrospect

his autobiography, namely, how crucial Black labor is to the organization and struggles of the American working class as a whole, and how racism has undermined both.

The relation between race and class became more complex in Denby's dealings with the trade union leadership on shopfloor issues. Thus, when he led his first strike, the year of the Detroit riot, against discrimination in the job placement of Black women workers, Denby encountered the union's duplicity on the race question when the UAW used a Black union rep to thwart Black rank-and-file efforts to break down job segregation. Nevertheless, a week after being sold out by the Black committeeman, who was rewarded with a job in the international, Denby reported that Black workers involved in the strike were still organized as an in-plant group.

Two decades later, in a series of discussion articles he launched in the March 1963 issue of *News & Letters* entitled "Labor Must Clean Its Own House," Denby wrote a comprehensive editorial on the problem of discrimination in the "house of labor." Racism was the real inner weakness of organized labor when it came to fighting the anti-labor assault of Congress and the corporations. So long as labor failed to clean its own house of discrimination, it was in no position to fight the anti-labor laws passed by Congress that effected all workers.

This was what motivated Denby's dogged demand that the labor and Civil Rights movements unite. Often in the same articles, he wrote incisively of the changes in industrial production wrought by automation and of Black demands for civil rights. In Denby's view the two issues were tightly linked: automation led to the mass layoffs of workers, disproportionately Black.

To both of these questions, Denby brought in Marx. In his March 1964 column, he observed that the introduction of automation did not, as many left intellectuals assumed, make Marx's philosophy less necessary but more imperative for labor and Black struggles. Next month, we will see what this meant for what Denby called "working out...philosophy [as] the way to revolution."

# UPS strike awakens passions in contingent army of workers

(Continued from page 1)

vocabulary—"replacement workers," "lockout," "give-backs," "two-tier" and "contingent workers"—the number of strikes so plummeted that corporate cheerleaders have crowed that the strike weapon was ancient history.

UPS had reason to feel in command as it faced the strike that began on Aug. 4. The corporation had hauled in a billion-dollar profit in 1996 from which to build a war chest, while the strike fund for 185,000 Teamsters at UPS was essentially depleted. The 80% of the package delivery business controlled by UPS could not be absorbed by all its competitors combined. The company had made full-timers a minority of the UPS workforce with a flood of part-time hires since the 1993 contract. As arrogantly as UPS had unilaterally increased the package weight limit from 70 to 150 pounds, it stuck to what it called its "last, best, final offer" until the strike entered its third week.

To the astonishment of UPS, picket lines were at least 95% solid nationwide, from union towns to right-to-work Southern states. The Teamsters had held months of pre-strike meetings and rallies involving rank-and-filers. Credit also strike issues that for the first time in years drew support from the public at large as the struggle became a referendum on part-time life and untrammelled corporate greed.

The UPS carnival pitchman appeal to workers, by promising a higher pension than what they would get with the portable, region-wide multi-employer fund, was transparent even to the public as a simple pension grab. The great division UPS had created in its workforce between full-time and part-time was supposed to undermine strike solidarity as well.

UPS finally caved in to Teamster demands after a show of solidarity from other AFL-CIO unions committed to loaning the Teamster pension fund enough to maintain the strike. After their new offer Clinton intervened. He who had Taft-Hartley in his hands predicted erosion of support if the Teamsters rejected the offer, ending the possibility of further gains.

But strikers returned to work with a victory. They had defended themselves against UPS demands to subcontract out the semitrailer runs and grab their pension money. They had begun making inroads into the dominance of part-time jobs at UPS with contract language that, in addition to changing 10,000 promotions into full-time ones, 10,000 new full-time positions would be stitched together out of existing part-time jobs if business didn't drop. The likely outcome is a drop of part-time workers from 57% to under half the workforce by the end of the five-year contract. The contract length, less than the seven years the company had demanded but still one year longer than what the union wanted, is the concession that workers say UPS really wanted.

## UPS: INDUSTRY LEADER IN EXPLOITATION

UPS had been resisting converting even back-to-back part-time shifts into full-time jobs, saying shifts of four hours or less were more "efficient." That betrays the

underlying intensification of part-time shifts—UPS made workers sprint, not jog, for three hours, then recover on their own time. They get "volunteers" to come back for extra hours just to afford to eat. Split shifts in the comparable railroad industry were abolished in the strike of 1919.

Part-time starting wages rose for the first time since 1982, just 50¢, to \$8.50 per hour, but the maximum increased \$4.10 an hour, a full dollar more than the full-time increase of \$3.10 an hour, which, though just about 3% a year, is more than double management's "last, best, final offer."

Teamster President Ron Carey publicly marked as the union's goal, following on the heels of the UPS victory, organizing Federal Express which had lobbied Congress to make it immune to any union election except a national all-or-nothing vote. But attention focused immediately on Carey's 1996 election being overturned by the government election monitor. UPS whined that that announcement should not have been withheld until the strike was over.

**Oddly enough, the Teamster opposition behind James Hoffa Jr. voiced an identical protest, in effect regretting that UPS wasn't given another weapon to use against the strike.**

Since the Hoffa spokesman is a LaRouchite named Leebove, we can't help but be reminded of the 1980s reign of mob-connected, FBI-protected then-President Jackie Presser who brought in the classically fascist LaRouche organization to try to disrupt Teamsters for a Democratic Union and any other rank-and-file challenges to his autocratic rule.

Meanwhile, the fledgling trucking company Overnite arose unchallenged after deregulation as the model for non-union trucking companies, closely followed by the growth of non-union subsidiaries of unionized outfits. Only now and belatedly are the Teamsters doing organizing that we would expect of any union, with widespread rank-and-file involvement winning elections at dozens of Overnite barns.

## NEW ECONOMY, NEW REVOLT?

The best proof that the UPS strike created new openings is the effort by business spokesmen to prove that this strike was unique and could have no offspring. The most comical reason given for victory at UPS is that people liked their UPS drivers.

Another argument heard for the union's success was that "UPS couldn't threaten to move to Mexico." This ignores that fact that, after the first wave of runaway shops to the right-to-work South or Mexico or China, even more companies demanded conditions like those in runaway shops—without moving.

That is what the low-wage, part-time workforce is about, as seen in the UPS demand to subcontract semitrailer runs. Even cities act like runaway shops, as Chicago's latest budget again threatens more privatization for municipal workers.

Another claim is that UPS lost because they couldn't use replacement workers, either because the routes were too complicated or because unemployment was too low.



Hospital workers march in support of UPS strikers, left, in New York City.

## Rally protests Headwaters logging

Stafford, Cal.—Over 7,000 environmentalists gathered here in far Northern California to celebrate the life of EarthFirst! activist, organizer and theorist Judi Bari who died earlier this year (See *News & Letters*, April 1997).

The Sept. 14 rally's main focus was saving the nearby old-growth redwood groves known as the Headwaters Forest. Originally slated for the site of last year's event in Carlotta, local tensions forced the last-minute removal here to Stafford. However, even this change highlighted the cooperation of workers and environmental activists.

The rally and parking lot lands were donated by workers from the lumber industry, and rally participants mobilized to sandbag a worker's home threatened by landslides. Clear-cutting logging practices around Stafford have destroyed sizable portions of the small town.

This year's event was even larger than last year's rally owing to the brokered deal that President Clinton and Sen. Dianne Feinstein had been so self-congratulatory about that opened the way to Headwaters logging. The compromise deal with the Maxxam Corporation and its CEO, Charles Hurwitz, is even more despicable because of Hurwitz' history as a corporate raider and participant in the savings and loan grabs of the 1980s. Protestors in Stafford were incensed that Hurwitz would even consider killing ancient redwoods to pay quarterly inter-

est on failed S&L debt.

Connections between struggles such as Native American land rights, feminism, the UPS and BART strikes, and world-wide environmental concerns were voiced from both the podium and by those in attendance.

Unfortunately some crucial connections were missing or not articulated. Environmental racism and the movements against it spearheaded by Black, Latino and Native American communities went unmentioned. In fact, the connections to urban pollution were not

approached at all. Likewise, the palpable gay and lesbian energy in the crowd was silent from the podium.

Police reinforcements from as far as 350 miles away conveyed to the scene. An EarthFirst! speaker noted this "full mobilization of the capitalist state to protect Maxxam." However, she also recalled some martial arts wisdom: "In a fight, the one who pulls the knife first is losing. The state is losing their battle with us and with the earth: That's why the cops are here!"

This event was only one high point in a season-long campaign of non-violent resistance aimed at preventing any logging of the Headwaters. The site of the rally will serve as a base camp for these activities and discussions.

For more information, call EarthFirst! (707) 825-8911 or the Mendocino Environmental Center (707) 468-1660.

—Jennifer Pen



Northern California rally against capitalist lumbering.

All that belittles the accomplishments of UPS strikers who maintained solidarity across all company-created divisions and maintained links with other unions and rank and filers, and whose demands registered even with people who weren't involuntarily part-time themselves. If Caterpillar dared replace skilled mechanics, and Reagan disrupted the airlines and endangered the skies for years by firing uniquely trained PATCO strikers, give credit to worker and public support for UPS not going that route.

After all, the 4% unemployment rate was already a sham and a severe undercount even before considering new workfare workers. UPS had at the time of the strike already become a dominant private employer of workfare workers, slotted into part-time jobs.

As to the claim that manufacturing shop floor conditions are not relevant to a service sector employer like UPS, how does one tell sorters and loaders who handle upwards of 1,200 parcels an hour that they aren't in a factory? When it suits them, capitalists treat every kind of human labor as factory labor, and service workers have been hit hard by two decades of economic restructuring.

## SERVICE WORKERS STEP UP

Sixty years ago clerks at Woolworth, with an affinity for the wave of sit-down strikes in auto shops and factories of all kinds, sat down to gain a union in their stores. Now as the Woolworth chain closes, unionized Sears workers are under attack as the workforce moved from 70% full-time employment to 70% part-time in a decade. A union election at a Wisconsin Wal-Mart, though defeated, is a sign of battles ahead for a company that has answered to none of its workers in pocketing the fruits of its restructured distribution system—and so endangered labor gains in every competitor.

Any reversal of capital's drive toward the ultimate contingent workforce, whether by victory at UPS or battling outsourcing at GM, has come none too soon. From PATCO to Hormel in Austin, Minn., to Staley in Decatur, Ill., to the Detroit newspaper strike, labor has more than a few defeats. Undermined by lack of solidarity, workers were permanently replaced or forced to work alongside scabs.

Even those strikers who never got their jobs back have almost always said that going on strike was the best thing they had done. Those strikes paved the way for whatever cracks in the dominance of capital that the UPS strike has exposed.

## Stop toxic genocide!

Memphis, Tenn. — About 50 people came out on Sept. 27 to oppose the toxic genocide inflicted on South Memphis by the Pentagon-run Defense Depot of Memphis, Tenn. (DDMT). Brought by DDMT-CCC (the Concerned Citizens Committee), most were from the Black community surrounding DDMT. A dozen middle and high school students not only brought great energy and enthusiasm, but showed that they understood the issues of environmental racism.

The youth created their own chants, such as: "1-2-3, the Depot's killing me; 4-5-6, they're always playing tricks; 7-8-9, they do it all the time; 10-10-10, we'll get them in the end." They adapted Master P's rap to say, "Dump the Depot! Get 'bout it!"

Members from News and Letters Committees and the Women's Action Coalition, and students from the Univ. of Memphis joined the freedom struggle of the Black community and made it an interracial demonstration, which is all too rare in Memphis. Posters for the rally used "American Civilization on Trial" as a theme, taking quotes and pictures from the News and Letters pamphlet by that title.

Liberal environmental activists and groups in Memphis were invited to the protest, but none showed up. One white grassroots activist said, "The elitism in the environmental movement has got to go."

One woman testified to the over 50 deaths in Prospect Heights, a neighborhood sandwiched between a bayou carrying toxins from DDMT and the now-closed Perma-Fix chemical plant, which exploded earlier this year.

Speakers ranged from a Black environmental justice activist from Atlanta, Lukata Mjumba; to a white one from this county, Kenny Kelly; to Kenneth Bradshaw of DDMT-CCC, who explained how the state gave DDMT "a permit to poison you—a license to kill Black people." He explained that Frederick Douglass's picture was on the flyers because he had the audacity to challenge Lincoln, and the foresight to see that the divisions in the U.S. would tear this country up if not fixed.

DDMT-CCC is demanding a free health clinic staffed with doctors trained in chemically induced diseases, and permanent relocation of area residents, because people are dying now.

—Franklin Dmitryev

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## In-person report: Zapatistas tackle 'neo-liberalism'

I have just returned from the Second "Inter-continental Encounter Against Neo-Liberalism and for Humanity" held in Spain and inspired by the Zapatista movement. It was organized in various locations in Spain as a follow-up to the First Intercontinental Encounter in Chiapas. It is fitting that these efforts to organize the first truly international response to the brutal offensive of global capital against the working and living conditions of the world's poor and oppressed should take place under the sign of the Zapatistas.

The Zapatistas' occupation of a few towns in remote Chiapas on Jan. 1, 1994—the day that the anti-worker, anti-environment North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect—can only be compared to the "shot heard round the world" on April 18, 1776. For just as the resistance of a few obscure farmers at Lexington and Concord two centuries ago revealed the weakness of the worldwide monarchical system of tyranny then in force and ultimately sealed its doom, so the actions of the farmers of Chiapas have set in motion a process which has already shaken the world financial system and sealed the doom of the system of one-party tyranny in Mexico.

The Zapatista claim to attention of rebels and revolutionaries around the globe is at once bold and modest. Bold in that the Zapatistas are implicitly calling on the whole of "humanity" to follow their example of resistance to what their spokesmen call "neo-liberalism." Modest in that the Zapatistas call upon each and all to search for solutions. To quote Sub-Commander Marcos: "Our historical role is perhaps limited to pointing out weaknesses and opening up a new type of discussion and participation."

Although this year's Spanish meetings were somewhat disorganized, I was delighted by the atmosphere of openness, non-sectarianism and sensitivity to cultural differences that surrounded the 1997 Encounter. I heard many interesting ideas put forward about alternative economies and forms of resistance as well as about ongoing attempts to resist globalization and the commodification of life. However, I also sensed a good deal of confusion over the fundamental questions of who, precisely, represents "humanity" and whether we are supposed to be simply "against neo-liberalism" or against capitalism itself. Finally, I came away worried that using the phrase "neo-liberalism" as an ideological short-cut to designate the system to which we are opposed may prove imprecise, misleading, and potentially dangerous.

First, I find the use of "neo-liberalism" instead of "capitalism" imprecise. Strictly speaking, the phrase "neo-liberalism" refers either to an economic theory or to a policy based on that theory. For example, the free-market theories of the Chicago school of economists and the privatizing policies of Margaret Thatcher and her foreign disciples are both correctly termed "neo-liberal." The word "capitalism," on the other hand, designates a whole economic and political system.

Second, I find the substitution of "neo-liberalism"

for "capitalism" misleading, because it appears to imply that we should attempt to force the powers-that-be to adopt another theory (e.g. neo-Keynsianism) or another economic policy (e.g. welfare-state capitalism) in the hope that under such policies the oppression of humanity and the destruction of nature would be checked or at least significantly diminished. If this attempt were successful, it would certainly be a neat short-cut, eliminating the need to think about living through the collapse of the world capitalist system and its uprooting by the forces of a new humanity, with all the upheaval and suffering that prospect entails.

But I am afraid that this hope is an illusion. It also tends to focus peoples' minds on opposing the most recent manifestations of capitalism (downsizing, conglomeration, restructuring, free-market dogmatism, globalization) while neglecting to attack its essential nature as the system of wage-labor and commodity exchange where profit derives from capital's theft of unpaid labor.

Moreover, to the extent that "neo-liberalism" is synonymous with "free trade" and "globalization," being "against neo-liberalism" misleadingly suggests that humanity would be better off under some form of national capitalism.

If I seem to exaggerate the importance of this issue, it is because I have lived long enough to witness the tragic fate of two generations of radical activists whose struggles failed disastrously because they balked at anti-capitalism and found it more convenient and fashionable to take ideological shortcuts and define themselves as "against" something more immediate and tangible. I refer to the anti-fascists of my parents' generation and the anti-imperialists of my own.

The only explanation I have heard for the near-phobic avoidance of "the C-word" is that a certain Karl Marx used it, and we don't want to be labeled as "Marxists." To be sure, many people today consider Marxism rigid, tainted, and, worst of all, passé. So we reinvent the wheel of "capitalism" and awkwardly rename it "that neo-liberal round thing that rolls."

In 1997 Marx's analyses of unemployment, pauperization, concentration and accumulation, and globalization of capital are more and more obvious to observers (and generally accepted in practice by capitalists and stock market analysts), while Marx's name remains anathema. So powerful is this anathema that even Sub-Commander Marcos, in his recent manifesto "The Fourth World War Has Begun" (*Le Monde*, August 1997) expounds precisely all these Marxian points without once alluding to Marx or his theories. As a result, one is not sure at the end of Marcos' manifesto whether the "Fourth World War" is the war between the rich and the poor or the war between globalizing neo-liberalism and what Marcos defends as "national sovereignty."

What I love about our Zapatista inspired movement is the general understanding that it is the system of commodity exchange including wage labor itself

that must be eliminated if we are to live like human beings, as the Indians of Chiapas are attempting to do. This humanism contrasts with previous movements (socialist, communist, etc.) which often got stuck inside the capitalist game by simply demanding more for the workers or by assuming that if only the state would replace the market, capitalism would be different. In this respect, our Zapatista analysis—based on the humanist philosophy of pre-capitalist indigenous people whose revolt is a refusal of wage-labor commodity society—is a thousand times closer to the original ideas of Marx than the analysis of most of the self-designated "Marxists." And we are light-years ahead of all the welfare-statists, social-democrats, nationalists and "communists" with their bureaucratic panaceas.

The Chiapans have understood, as Marx himself did, that capital is not a thing but a human relationship—a power relationship which enables one person to steal another's labor and disguise this theft under the "free and fair exchange" of money for labor power. Like the original Marx, they understand that this perverted, money-mediated relationship must be uprooted and replaced by new human relationships, based on equality, cooperation and community.

But can humanity accomplish this task without using the name of the beast we must face and conquer—capitalism?

—Richard Greeman

## Homeless question the wealthy in glass offices

San Jose, Cal.—On August 19, a small contingent of homeless people and their allies marched from the Community Homeless Alliance Ministry church, through the "re-developed" downtown of this self-styled "capital of Silicon Valley." Arriving at the centerpiece of this multi-million dollar stronghold of capitalism (a high-rent, high-rise hotel and office complex) the marchers decided to directly question the officials of the city's Redevelopment Agency on their neglect of the poor.

The well-dressed agency professionals (situated on the 15th floor with a panoramic view of the city) were not happy to see our group, especially when the homeless demonstrated their intelligence loudly and mercilessly. Confronted by a 3-D scale model of the developers' dreams for the future San Jose, the homeless noted that there were no people and no housing in the model, though they were sarcastically grateful for all the new highway bridges under which to sleep!

Once an actual conversation broke out, the agency's lead agent had to beat an agitated political retreat. Claiming that the city did care about the poor, he piously declared that "we have started a dialogue with the non-profit providers...that dialogue will never end." His speech revealed his lack of sincerity about actually changing human relations, as well as his uneasiness in facing the homeless themselves: he prefers to deal with a mediator of his own class.

The homeless would not hear of such delaying tactics. "My friends can't live off just a dialogue." "We saw you open your hotels, we saw you open your sports Arena, but you never have time to face the people." "We've appealed to your conscience for seven years — it turns out you don't have a conscience." Rachel, a Native American and Chicana activist, reminded the protestors that "we are the ones who worked the land so these rich people can have their hors d'oeuvres."

While the members of the Homeless Alliance left the Redevelopment Agency after openly challenging their hypocrisy, the Alliance plans other direct actions for the fall. This is especially urgent since the El Nino weather condition threatens to bring floods, which wiped out numerous homeless encampments three years ago.

—Participant

## Central Europe floods expose capitalist 'nature'

Prague—Non-care of the earth (see Draft Perspectives, August-September *News & Letters*) has wrought catastrophic floods this summer in Central Europe. It hit the Czech Republic (CR) first, worked its way north to Poland, south to Slovakia, and west to Germany (formerly East Germany).

It is the worst flood to hit what is now the CR (Bohemia and Moravia) in history. The CR is about the size of North Carolina with 10.3 million people. Fully one-third of the country (Moravia) is devastated. More than 50 people were killed.

More than 2,000 homes have been destroyed; thousands more are in need of drastic repairs. One village lost 91 of its 200 homes. Heavy industry, including the coal mines, in Ostrava (North Moravia) were flooded with some knocked out. No one knows when they will be working again. The "infrastructure" (railroads, roads, telephones, etc.) is facing major repairs costing billions of crowns.

Over 200,000 animals (farm, livestock, wild) were killed and their carcasses burned to prevent disease. It is estimated that over two million chickens drowned. Farm crops were destroyed; lead is now in the soil and farmers have been told they cannot plant for three years. Well water is contaminated.

Although the "free market" governments did nothing to improve the soil degradation and deforestation, they are right when they point their fingers at the previous state-capitalist regime's industrialization and farm policies.

Felling trees and bushes to farm land and build factories without regard for the aftermath, plus persistent acid rain killing off forests, prevented the earth from absorbing the torrential rains that fell in the second week in July. Rivers swelled and the raging water swept away everything in its path.

The damage to psychological and emotional health is incalculable. Lifetimes have been wiped away by the raging waters. Soldiers sent to help said it looked like they were back in Bosnia.

Unprepared mayors of small villages could only think to put "old people," who have lost their homes and all their possessions, into "old people's homes." Families living in public buildings don't know when they will have a "home" again.

As the caseload of the mental clinics in Moravia increase daily, what has helped many people keep their sanity has been the outpouring of help from the Czech people. Help has come in the form of volunteers who have gone to help rebuild, contributions of money, clothing, food and water, and the buying of millions of crowns worth of bonds set up to help the flood victims.

Although the government has committed itself to rebuilding and during the flood concentrated all efforts in helping, some mayors have reported monies received so far as a mere "drop in the bucket."

The "nature" created by capitalism doesn't wait for good times to strike. This flood came when the CR is entering economic hard times which according to some will be devastating for the economy.

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Youth

by Kevin Michaels

New Year's Day of 1994 saw a well-coordinated uprising in the Mexican state of Chiapas by an armed group of the indigenous people of the area—the descendants of the ancient Mayans. The rebels declared themselves against the ruthless integration of Mexico into the free trade structure of a hemisphere dominated by the U.S. and against a Mexican government which was busy moving clauses protecting communal land from the country's

Pirate radio with a cause

Memphis, Tenn.—Free Radio Memphis 94.7FM is the micro-radio project of the Constructive Interference Collective. We began nearly two years ago with the purchase of a transmitter, amplifier, power supply, antenna, and other equipment from Free Radio Berkeley. Two months ago we put a call out to our community for the creation of a collective and CIC was born. There are eight of us directing the project democratically using a process of consensus for policymaking.

As an organization we are committed to the total uprooting of the current system and the creation of a new one. From our mission statement:

"Our intention is to motivate ourselves and others to be fully liberated and to also work towards the creation of a truly democratic society. As a collective, our contribution to this work is to offer alternative views and information which is being deliberately filtered out by the mainstream media. In doing so, we consistently strive to broaden the parameters of what is publicly debated and to provide a space for voices of dissent as well as to provide a space to express our passion for life."

It could be said that the most significant steps towards a micro-radio movement were taken by Mbanna and Dia Kantako of Springfield, Ill. They have been operating a micro-radio transmitter since 1986, always with a theme of Black Liberation. Today their station is called Human Rights Radio, reflecting a broader analysis.

According to one source there are now more than 1,000 such micro-radio broadcasters. According to Free Radio Berkeley, "It is our intent and purpose to see thousands of transmitters taking to the air in an all-out, no holds barred movement of electronic civil disobedience. When was the last time you were referred to as a citizen and not a consumer by the media?" The micro-radio movement is global with small community radio networks set up (thanks to Free Radio Berkeley and its founder Stephen Dunifer) in Chiapas, Mexico, and Haiti among other places.

The purpose of such a movement is the breaking up of the capitalist stranglehold on the flow of information and ideas over the airwaves. It is a striving for the freedom to express a diversity of ideas and non-corporate music/culture. In some cases an effort is being made to create space on the airwaves for the community and for the dissemination of information regarding the struggles for freedom. Are all those involved revolutionaries? Are they working for the uprooting of the old and the creation of new human relations? Not necessarily. Beyond a shared commitment to Freedom of Speech it is difficult to say what those involved have in common.

While Constructive Interference does strive to go beyond this commitment to Freedom of Speech, we are of us identify ourselves as Marxist-Humanists, while others identify as social ecologists, anarchists, or women's liberationists. Through it all, we believe in the necessity to struggle for freedom and create a democratic society. We see for freedom and create a democratic society. Constructive Interference is a collective, a learning process, a message, and an example of people trying to create new human relations.

—Eli Walker

Will Zapatistas, supporters find a way forward?

constitution, land which the peasant farmers of the region desperately need to grow their subsistence crops. They were for, they said, a free Mexico in which human needs were the first priority.

The rebels called themselves the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), styling themselves as continuators of the tradition of the Mexican Revolution's Emiliano Zapata. They and their leader, "Insurgent Subcommander Marcos," captured the imagination of the world, especially youth, the world over. Indeed, the worldwide attention and support that Marcos succeeded in bringing to the Zapatistas has proved to be a persuasive force much stronger than the rifles of his guerrillas.

Many of those supporters gathered in late July and early August at a series of meetings held in towns throughout Spain called the Second International Encounter Against Neoliberalism and for Humanity, a successor to a meeting held in the Lancandon jungle in Chiapas in 1992. The workshops and panel discussions which took place in Spain reflected the many questions the Zapatista movement has posed, oppression of women, despoliation of the environment, marginalization of indigenous peoples and the globalization of what the Zapatistas have termed the neoliberal economic model. Two Zapatistas, Felipe and Dalia, even succeeded in reaching the Encounter to bring greetings from Chiapas.

One thing which characterized the reports and papers from the Encounter posted on the internet is something which has marked the Zapatista movement from the beginning—a studious avoidance of the traditional lan-

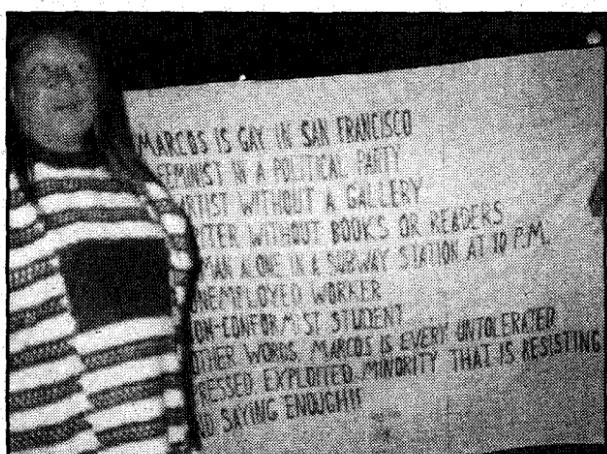
guage of the left. Like many of the mass movements of the last decade or so—the anti-nuclear power movement, the Green movement—the supporters of the Zapatistas strive to create something new. They emphasize communication towards difference, culture and identity. Marcos himself, like many Latin American revolutionaries of his generation, was influenced by Che Guevara's theory of the military/political group operating in the countryside, yet the achievement of the Zapatistas shows that he has gone far beyond the limits of focoism.

Inasmuch as this is a rejection of the sterility of a left which has failed to recognize the future in the present and work out ways to develop it, this is a positive change. Yet if it is simply another form a left which has failed to recognize the future in the present and work out ways to develop it, this is a positive change. Yet if it is simply another form a left which has failed to recognize the future in the present and work out ways to develop it, this is a positive change. Yet if it is simply another form a left which has failed to recognize the future in the present and work out ways to develop it, this is a positive change.

The Encounter in Spain was followed not long after by another development. The Zapatistas announced that they would undertake a march to Mexico City to participate in the opening congress of the Zapatista National Liberation Front (FZLN), a political organization meant to link their struggle in Chiapas to national issues. The EZLN is in a dire situation now—Chiapas is occupied by a large contingent of the Mexican army and Zapatista supporters are harassed by paramilitary groups sponsored by landowners and local representatives of Mexico's ruling party. The march was to be an attempt to break out of the isolation the EZLN has been in since the integration of the San Andreas peace talks in August of last year.

Large crowds turned out to welcome the 1,111 marchers, a symbolic number representing as many villages in Chiapas, at all their stops en route to the capital and thousands in turn welcomed them at a rally in Mexico City's Zocalo square on Sep 13. Yet the FZLN congress failed to establish a clear identity for the organization, other than stating that it will not be a political party. Whether or not the Front will enable the Zapatistas, who state that they will not assume the leading role in its direction, to participate in the struggles of an increasingly urban and proletarianized Mexico remains to be seen.

The Zapatistas represent a high point in an otherwise retrogressive period. Hopefully the inspiration they revolt provided to many the world over will lead to the theoretical effort needed to build on the significance of their achievement.



New York—A small demonstration in support of the Zapatista movement found supporters outside a Mexican Independence Day concert here on Sept. 15. The "NY Zapatistas" passed out leaflets urging people to petition the Mexican government to stop its genocide against the indigenous people of Chiapas.

Dialogue

Youth seek a revolutionary direction

"There are people who set a price on freedom. Money is power and their wisdom. The iron fists of plutocracy punches holes in our democracy."—song by A.P.P.L.E.

This is the kind of music and ideas I grew up listening to as a teenager. The youth scene was filled with politics like anarchists. The hardcore and punk bands we listened to sang about our dreams and the hope of a free society. Unfortunately, the anarchist ideals started to slip away and the music became all that was necessary to be a rebel, a revolutionary.

There is now nothing revolutionary about punk. But the anarchist in me that was inspired by punk still thrives and anarchism is still appealing to many other young people who find capitalism a sham.

I can remember how important anarchist bands like Citizen Fish and Crass were to me when I was in high school. I had all these ideas on how to create a real learning space, but was knocked down for them. I had few to talk to about these ideas and, as far as I was concerned, there were no revolutionaries in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. I was wrong and the ideas in the music drew me to others who felt the same way about society.

At the youth meeting, at the News and Letters Plenum, one topic brought up was why young people are attracted to anarchism and another was why not many kids are into N&L. My attraction to anarchism may be of some help. I remember feeling elated when I read Emma Goldman's quote, "If I can't dance I don't wanna be part of your revolution." I can't dance I don't wanna be part of your revolution. So when I was sitting in a coo-coo cage for eight hours a day, reading this, I could understand what was wrong with the school system. We were dead. Anarchism gave me a chance to see life as life and not through the lens of a ball bill.

I think N&L has a lot of this passion in it that I see in anarchism, but first I had to understand the philosophy. Kids are pissed about authority righteousness. They aren't going to believe in something that doesn't represent their ideas, their philosophies. The N&L youth page often lacks their voice of revolution. If we want more youth, then we need to see what the youth are doing.

In most places the youth are active and are trying to fight oppression the best way they know how. I can remember wanting to meet experienced revolutionaries when a group of us had started Riot Grrrls in school, because our philosophy was lacking. N&L would have been a great help.

N&L is hard to find in Memphis unless you know where to go and even then I'm not sure if the youth

would keep reading it unless they knew it would relate to them. Some suggestions are to print the contents on the front page so everyone could see there is a youth page, put in more art and poetry, have your locals go to youth events and ask the youth to write about their issues as you give them a paper, put up posters that catch the eyes, and by all means celebrate freedom the best way you can in a capitalist society. You never know who will be looking and for most of us, what we see speaks louder than words.

—Kind Lady

The rising trend in American society to belittle and mock "Generation X" promises to have profoundly negative effects on today's youth and the future of the American social structure. Needless to say, the revolutionary left will be affected as well. However, there is some doubt in my mind as to whether such extensive degradation will be beneficial in the hastening of revolution.

Youth are seen by the left predominantly as an idealistic, energetic body. News and Letters in its Constitution states that youth are "the ones whose idealism in the finest sense of the word combines with opposition to existing society in so unique a way that it literally brings them alongside the workers as builders of the new society." While I do not disagree with this statement—for I find that idealism in myself—I believe that a group of people can only take so much berating before that idealism begins to mix with nihilism.

This is especially true when a system of oppression is so subtle and disguised, yet persistent. The attacks on youth have all of these qualities. A lot of youth feel bitter and jaded—it is evident in our culture—but many do not know from where the shots are coming. Not all people can identify their oppressor and react to it in a constructive manner. Often youth counterattacks are not pointed in the right direction (no pun intended). And for some, what could potentially blossom into revolutionary idealism becomes lost in the nihilistic response to the society that despises them.

We must consider what implications this has on the future relationship of youth to organizations like N&L. I certainly do not have the answers but would like to hear some dialogue on the issue. I will say, though, that I feel that the right adaptations to our current situation could reap some very appealing and revolutionary rewards.

—Peter B.

**How to Contact NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES**

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<b>DETROIT</b> P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227 <b>MEETINGS</b> Thursdays, 6 p.m. Wood Methodist Church Woodward and Adams	<b>OAKLAND</b> P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays, 6:30 p.m. Center St. (at Milvia) Berkeley
<b>LOS ANGELES</b> P.O. Box 29194 Los Angeles, CA 90029 213 960 5607 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays, 5:30 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)	<b>MEMPHIS</b> 1725B Madison Ave., #59 Memphis, TN 38104
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**INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS**

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## Our Life and Times **Israeli provocations, U.S. acquiescence**

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The failure of U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's trip to the Middle East in September only underscored the explosive situation on the ground in Israel, in the Palestinian territories, and in Lebanon. On Sept. 15, the very day she left the region, Jewish settler fanatics occupied yet another house in Arab East Jerusalem.

A week earlier, on the eve of Albright's visit, the rightist government of Benjamin Netanyahu attempted yet another of its provocative raids on Lebanon. In the past, Israel's most elite commando unit, Flotilla 13, has engaged with impunity in killings, kidnappings and destruction of homes and property. This time, the celebrated Flotilla 13 was ambushed, set upon and virtually destroyed by Lebanese militia units, with 12 Israeli commandos killed. This incident shocked the Israeli public, which has long assumed that Israel, armed to

the teeth by America, could indefinitely stave off its Arab neighbors by armed force alone. It led to some forceful calls for withdrawal from Lebanon.

These events were preceded by two suicide bombings by Muslim fanatics inside Israel. On July 30, 15 Israelis were killed in Tel Aviv, and then, on Sept. 4, four more in Jerusalem, giving the lie to Netanyahu's 1996 election promises that "firmness" would be able to stop suicide bombers. An incident such as July 30 had been widely expected, especially after a series of provocative anti-Arab moves by Netanyahu, including the announcement last spring of a massive new Jewish settlement at Har Homa (Jebel Abu Ghneim) in East Jerusalem.

After July 30, Netanyahu carried out still further provocations. As in earlier crackdowns by both Labor and Likud governments, he carried out arbitrary arrests, admitted publicly that prisoners were being tortured, destroyed homes in collective punishments which violated international law, and sealed off the territories

to prevent Arabs there from reaching their jobs in Israel. In addition, in total violation of the 1993 Oslo accords, Netanyahu deprived Yasir Arafat's quasi-government, the Palestinian Authority (PA), of tax revenues paid by its own residents, effectively strangling it financially.

The U.S., instead of sharply condemning Netanyahu, indicated that it now agreed with his unsubstantiated claim that Arafat was behind the new terror attacks, or had allowed them to take place. In addition, the U.S. suddenly announced that it might accept Netanyahu's proposal of moving immediately to final status talks, thus alleviating Israel of already signed pledges committing it to gradually ceding more territory to PA rule.

Inside Israel, protests were launched against Netanyahu, but did not force an alteration of his policies, in large part because the opposition Labor Party has refused to confront Netanyahu. For his part, the authoritarian Arafat moved to defy Israel and the U.S. by publicly embracing a top leader of the above-ground wing of Hamas, the Islamic fundamentalist and rejectionist group whose underground wing has carried out many of the suicide bombings. This miscalculation, reminiscent of his support of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War, allowed Netanyahu to step up his charges that Arafat backed the suicide bombings.

The Clinton administration, egged on by an even more anti-Arab Republican Congress, has come close to endorsing Netanyahu's view that the Palestinians are the cause of the looming breakdown of the Oslo accords. Outside of the U.S. and Israel, whether in the European Community, among the Third World nations of the UN, or in the Arab world, opinion from both governments and their citizens is nearly unanimous that it is Netanyahu's reactionary, provocative policies which are destroying any chance for peace.

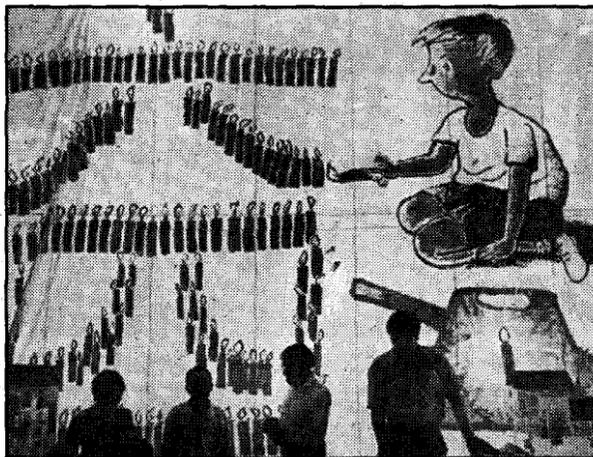
## China's CP Congress downsizes state enterprises

The 15th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress which met in mid-September was the first since the death of Deng Xiaoping last February. Far from deviating from Deng's state-capitalist path, his economic policies especially were enshrined as "Deng Xiaoping Theory."

President Jiang Zemin consolidated his control over the CCP and formalized the "reform" which officials had alluded to earlier this year: the plan to sell over 10,000 large and medium sized state-owned enterprises, and nearly all of its 300,000 small companies. Deputy Prime Minister Zhu Rongji expects to carry out privatization

within three years. Zhu, popular with foreign businessmen, will replace Prime Minister Li Peng when his term expires in March 1998.

Sounding like any capitalist boss, Jiang lectured on the need for the state to "encourage mergers, standardize bankruptcy...divert laid-off workers, increase efficiency by downsizing staff and encourage re-employment projects." While playing down the potential for



Demonstrators in Hong Kong, Sept. 16, displayed a banner depicting with candles "June 4" in Chinese, protesting China's refusal to release two democracy advocates, Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan.

local officials and factory managers to line their pockets on a huge scale, Jiang and CP rulers are more concerned about the tens of millions who will be thrown out of work by the sell-off. By their own admission, the Labor Ministry reported a 59% increase in "labor disputes" in the first half of 1997.

One aspect of "Deng Xiaoping Theory" missing at the Congress was the decision to send the army to massacre demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in 1989. However, it was raised in a letter reportedly written by former CCP head Zhao Ziyang, addressed to the Politburo, circulated in Beijing and printed in at least one Hong Kong newspaper. The letter called on the party to reassess the June 4 massacre which it has legitimized and cleansed as suppression of "counterrevolutionary rebellion."

Zhao was ousted from his position right before the June 4 massacre, and his place was taken by Jiang. Whether or not the letter was written by Zhao, who may have his own agenda with the party, his assessment that "the people will not just forget" June 4 is correct

## Woman challenger in Kenya

The recent protests against the government of Daniel Arap Moi in Kenya have taken an exciting turn with the run for the presidency of a woman, Charity Kalluki Ngilu, a 45 year old activist and mother of three children from Kituya, a poor suburb of Nairobi. She had been raising money for clean water supplies and clinics for women and all poor people in her home district when she was approached by a group of working women in her neighborhood who wanted her to run for parliament in 1992. Enraged by the indignities of poverty and women's lives in Kenya, she agreed to run for office.

She is running on the platform of constitutional reform to repeal colonial-era laws that give the presidency sweeping powers to jail dissidents, ban political parties and break up political demonstrations. She offers an alternative to the disenfranchised voters of the two largest ethnic groups—the Luo and the Kikuyu—who do not trust the ethnic slant of each group's opposition leadership.

Ms. Ngilu, herself a member of the small Akamba tribe, defected from the Kikuyu-dominated Democratic Party and is running on the Social Democratic Party line, a small party with no particular ethnic slant. Many women and men support her because she represents a complete break with tribal politics.

Charity Ngilu's campaign undermines Moi's efforts to foment ethnic hatred to divert the opposition to his rule. Her challenge to Moi has already endangered her life. On June 12, three days after she declared her intention to run for the presidency, she was attacked at a rally by thugs with machetes from the governing party, the Kenya African National Union. In the face of these attacks and precisely because of her brave and in many ways revolutionary stands, Charity Ngilu needs support from women and men internationally.

—Sheila Fuller

## Turning point in Ireland?

In September, the British government agreed to negotiate directly with the Catholic nationalist party Sinn Fein, the legal wing of the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA). The largest Protestant loyalist party, the Ulster Unionists, also agreed to attend the talks. This occurred after 28 years of armed conflict which has claimed 3,225 lives since 1969.

At no time since the 1920s have all-party talks taken place between the British government, the nationalists, and the loyalists. One factor in bringing this about was the May election in Britain, which not only ousted an intransigent conservative government in London, but also saw Sinn Fein draw its highest vote ever, about 40% within the mainly nationalist Catholic community.

In the period between the British election and the IRA ceasefire on July 19, Britain outraged nationalist opinion by deploying thousands of police and troops in order to permit the Protestant fanatics of the Orange Order to carry out their triumphal annual marches through Catholic areas once again. In response, thousands of Catholic youths battled police on the streets.

The Protestant sectarians blinked, for the first time calling off any further marches into hostile Catholic areas. They evidently sensed that the new British government, and even their own Protestant constituents, might not back their provocative intransigence indefinitely.

Now that negotiations have begun, issues will include questions such as: What can be done to create representation for the over 40% of Northern Ireland's population who, as Catholics, suffer blatant discrimination and are shut out almost completely by the political structure? Will the loyalists and the British agree to any serious steps toward a united Ireland?

## 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*.