

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 44 — No. 1

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1999

50¢

## U.S. changed forever by immigrants



by John Marcotte

As more than one undocumented worker in the U.S. has said, "If undocumented workers could strike for just one day, that would show how important we are to their economy." This idea of a one-day or even one-hour strike has arisen many times.

There may be a striving for a new movement among Latino immigrants in the U.S. The Oct. 12, 1996 march on Washington of Latinos was a possible first cry, with its slogan of "Here we are, here we stay!" ("Aquí estamos, no nos vamos"). It is a movement for amnesty for undocumented immigrants, or as they have referred to themselves in meetings, "undocumented slaves." Whether it will truly break out as a movement is too early to tell.

What is not a question is that the present conditions facing undocumented immigrant labor demand a movement. As neoliberalism or globalization or the so-called free market stage of capitalist plunder has intensified in Latin America (after it was incubated and birthed in Chile, 1973, with Pinochet as Dr. Frankenstein and the Chicago Boys as midwives), Latino immigrants have found themselves with no choice but to stand up and say, "Here we are, we are not going back." They cannot go back.

Whole provinces of various countries have emptied out to the North, leaving behind only the elderly and infants, who live only because of the dollars sent back from economic exile. Governments would collapse if the flow of immigrant dollars stopped. Mexico's second source of national income after oil is the dollars of their workers north of the border, and this is true of other countries.

Even the U.S. racist government had to recognize this fact to the extent that they have just "suspended deportations" for 18 months of Hondurans and Nicaraguans because of Hurricane Mitch. So even the plundering rulers, like the Ecuadoran congressmen who just voted themselves a salary 48 times greater than the minimum wage, live off the sweated dollars sent home by undocumented immigrants.

So why would a movement arise now? One, because

(Continued on page 3)

## Black World

### Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael) 1941-1998



Editor's Note: This month I've turned "Black World" over to the following in memoriam to Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael) by Michael Flug. —Lou Turner

by Michael Flug

It is said that in the last weeks of his life, as Kwame Ture was dying of cancer at his home in Conakry, Guinea, he still answered the telephone by saying "Ready for the Revolution." From the 1960s, when he was known as Stokely Carmichael, to his death on Nov. 15, 1998, he never wavered from the view that the "oppressive capitalist-racist system" needed to be overthrown.

Stokely came to New York City from Trinidad at the age of 11. He was a senior at Bronx High School of Science when the student sit-ins broke out across the South in February 1960. I first met him on a Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) picket line outside a Woolworth's store. In 1961, he volunteered for the Freedom Rides, was arrested in Jackson, Miss., and incarcerated at Mississippi's notorious Parchman Penitentiary. After his Parchman experience, he joined SNCC (Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee).

### BLACK POWER IN THE SOUTH

It was in the mid-1960s that Stokely first came to national prominence. The Civil Rights Movement had reached a crossroads; members of SNCC, CORE and SCLC saw that the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, far from signalling the end of the struggle, revealed the need for a fuller attack on the roots of American racist society. Stokely went to Lowndes County, Ala., determined to register Black voters and form an independent political party.

The Lowndes County Freedom Organization (LCFO), (Continued on page 5)

Lead-editorial

## Right-wing coup at home, permanent war abroad

by Olga Domanski

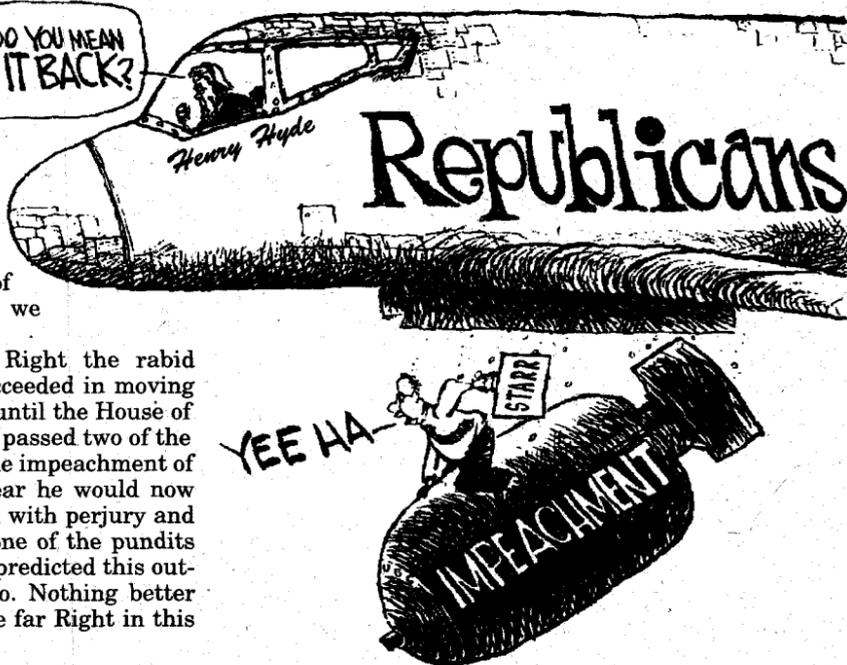
As 1999 begins, we stand at an extraordinarily dangerous new moment, marked both by the power the far Right has achieved over the U.S. Congress and by the new power U.S. imperialism has declared for itself over the world. It is their simultaneity that spells out not only the depth of the retrogression but the difficulties we face in fighting it.

The reality of how far to the Right the rabid Republican majority in Congress succeeded in moving this country did not begin to sink in until the House of Representatives, on Dec. 19, actually passed two of the four articles they had drawn up for the impeachment of President Clinton and it became clear he would now stand on trial in the Senate, charged with perjury and obstruction of justice. Not a single one of the pundits who had been analyzing the scandal predicted this outcome when it first broke a year ago. Nothing better shows how seriously the power of the far Right in this country has been underestimated.

### 'PERMANENT WAR' AT HOME AND ABROAD

The danger of the moment was compounded by the fact that it was the very same week in December, as the House was nearing its vote on impeachment, that Clinton unleashed more than 400 sea- and air-launched cruise missiles in four nights of intensive bombing of the Iraqi people. Although Clinton told the American people that the strikes were ordered because Saddam Hussein was not allowing the UN to conduct satisfactory weapons site inspections, the attack was carried out

WHAT DO YOU MEAN CALL IT BACK?



without even informing the UN.

It marked a whole new level of U.S. imperialist intervention about which we had been forewarned last August when Clinton's bombing of Afghanistan and Sudan was declared by Madeleine Albright to be the opening of a new stage of "permanent war" which the U.S. felt free to wage wherever and whenever it chose. It was revealed later that the U.S. had not only written the report credited to Richard Butler of the UN Special

(Continued on page 10)

## Serbs shatter Kosova ceasefire

"A crime against humanity" and "an unspeakable tragedy" was how American diplomat William Walker described the massacre by Serb forces of at least 45 Kosovar Albanian civilians at the village of Racak on Jan. 15. Shot execution-style and some with their eyes gouged out or otherwise mutilated, the dead gave the lie to the U.S.-brokered October cease-fire, under which the Serbian overlords had agreed to return to their barracks.

Two days later, after the world had learned of this horror, Serb forces shelled Racak, forcing residents to run for their lives as the military stole the bodies of the dead to cover their butchery. Kosova is once again on the brink of full-scale war, as Serb forces seem bent upon another series of massacres and "ethnic cleansing" of the majority Albanian population.

Today, however, as against even a few months ago, the Albanian-based Kosova Liberation Army (KLA) has developed better organization and has acquired weapons capable of destroying Serbian tanks, something they carried out during skirmishes in late December. In a series of small-scale attacks, the KLA has also begun to bring the war home against Serbian police and politicians.

Another new factor is the growing crisis inside Serbia itself. Strongman Slobodan Milosevic has in recent months seen the province of Montenegro begin to slip away as its newly elected leadership increasingly opposes his rule and especially the war in Kosova. This situation was behind Milosevic's decision to purge a number of top generals and intelligence officials late last year. While clearing the decks of potential opposition, these moves narrowed still further his shrinking base of support.

As he has done in the past, Milosevic is responding to his weakening position by using a U.S.-imposed ceasefire to undertake a new offensive. Instead of requiring that Serb forces withdraw from Kosova, the U.S. simply called for the introduction of 2,000 unarmed NATO monitors to

"observe" the peace. Only 700 ever made it there. They have achieved little except to serve as a cover for Serbian maneuvers. The "peacekeepers" often asked the Serbian army to accompany them on their inspections to provide for their "safety." They did nothing to prevent the massacre in Racak on Jan. 15.

After Milosevic responded to Walker's criticism of the massacre by ordering him expelled from the country, the U.S. shed some crocodile tears and arranged for two NATO generals to fly to Belgrade for talks with him. Even administration spokesmen admit, however, that U.S. policy is in shambles. Since the NATO observers are unarmed, Milosevic can take them hostage whenever he wants. The administration is already declaring that it has little leverage left to influence the situation. U.S. policies have again provided Milosevic with breathing space for continuing his genocidal repression.

This follows a tragic pattern by now familiar. The presence of UN "peacekeepers" in Bosnia several years ago did nothing to stop Serbian ethnic cleansing; they instead allowed Serb forces to enter the city of Srebrenica, where they promptly massacred over 7,000 Bosnians. More recently, the presence of hundreds of UN "peacekeepers" in Angola did nothing to prevent Savimbi's UNITA from rearming itself and launching a new chapter in that country's 30-year-old civil war. The UN's only response has been to declare that it is withdrawing from Angola altogether. Thousands more may perish in the coming months.

Whether or not NATO now decides to pull its observers from Kosova, one thing is clear—the only ground of opposition to Milosevic's genocidal policies remains that of the Kosovar people as well as others throughout the region, from Bosnia to Serbia itself, who are struggling for genuine freedom, self-determination, and democracy.

—Kevin A. Barry and Peter Wermuth



Special section, pages 6-7

### ROUGH NOTES ON HEGEL'S SCIENCE OF LOGIC

First of four-part serialization of Raya Dunayevskaya's detailed commentary on Hegel's pathbreaking work.



# Reproductive freedom and women's reason

by Jennifer Pen

While they shed crocodile tears, pretending to care about sexual harassment in order to topple Bill Clinton, the Religious Right's real agenda for women is to limit reproductive freedom. They work feverishly to ban abortion, limit child care, gut health care, impose marriage and compulsory heterosexuality, and then have the gall to call women selfish for wanting to regulate their own fertility! But while the Right tries to tighten the noose around women's bodies, women's minds are so deeply imbued with the idea of freedom that their resistance, time and again, creatively slips the knot.

Rosalind Petchesky and Karen Judd present substantial evidence of this in a new book, *Negotiating Reproductive Rights: Women's Perspectives Across Countries and Cultures* (Zed Books, 1998), which listens attentively to women from the Third World. The book comes out of the continuing work of the International Reproductive Rights Research Action Group (IRRRAG), in seven countries: the U.S., Mexico, Brazil, Nigeria, Egypt, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Each country's report is written by women from that nation who lead the research team, but stresses the voices and decision-making powers of grassroots women.

The IRRRAG team was concerned to maintain the integrity of each country's distinctiveness; indeed, they heed the warnings of Third World feminists and post-modernists to stress local knowledges and situatedness as primary. But this makes them too cautious about the commonalities they uncover which suggest universal dimensions in women's experience.

One striking feature which emerged in every report was how capitalism blights the lives of women. The impact of "hegemonic capitalist markets" (4), especially in terms of the World Bank's imposed structural adjustment programs, has been devastating in the realm of funding for health care. Even more crucially, the book documents how government, religious institutions, fundamentalist movements, and traditionalism often collude to limit women's freedom on all fronts. Official government pronatalism in Nigeria includes a declaration that "(t)he patriarchal system...shall be recognized for stability of the home" (187). The link between pronatalism and capitalism is evident in the Malaysian government's demand for a population of 70 million to create "a larger consumer base with increasing purchasing power to generate and support industrial growth" (114). The U.S. team noted the coincidence of "family-values" rhetoric with "the eradication of social welfare programmes for the poor" (267).

In all of the countries studied, abortion was neither safe nor easy to obtain; in addition, religious moralizing created an atmosphere of terror for women. This culminates in the ultimately murderous intent of capitalism and traditional religion against women: "In nearly all the country settings where punitive or restrictive abortion laws prevail, respondents' sense of entitlement to limit their childbearing was being forced underground...the three countries where abortion laws are the most restrictive have significantly higher estimated maternal mortality rates" (301, 296). Those rates reach as high as 100 out of 100,000 in Nigeria, and hospitalization for one out of five women receiving illegal abortions in the Philippines (297, 225).

## Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Protests against domestic violence are taking on global dimensions. More than 250 women marched in Amman, Jordan, Nov. 26, when a father killed his daughter after she eloped with her boyfriend. At least 25 women each year are killed here by male family members for having premarital sex. Punishment ranges from only two months to two years in jail.

On Dec. 10, the 50th anniversary of the signing of the UN Human Rights Declaration, women in Belfast remembered victims of domestic violence in Northern Ireland at a candlelight vigil. 1999 marks a year-long campaign of action throughout Europe to combat domestic violence, including marches and a conference in Belfast in September.

—Information from *off our backs* and *Women's News*

Turkey has finally ended the hated practice in many state-run schools of forced virginity testing of young women. The action came after an outcry by feminist groups last year when the country's minister of women and family affairs supported the tests even when several teenage women killed themselves after being subjected to the exams. "Girls who commit suicide because of virginity tests would commit suicide anyway. I don't think it's really important," she said.

Togo and Senegal have joined the growing number of African nations banning female genital mutilation. The new law in Togo sets a jail sentence of up to ten years. Senegal's ban, Jan. 15, resulted from a campaign by the Senegalese women's organization, Tofhan ("break-through"). UNICEF said the action "reflects the resolve of African women to end a cruel and unacceptable practice which violates the rights of all girls to free, safe and healthy lives."

The positive force opposing these horrors manifests itself in women's resistance and opposition to capitalism and its related restrictive ideologies, including religious imperatives. "It is not the church that will go hungry and experience poverty," says one Filipina (248), who could easily find common ground with her Egyptian sister who self-induced an abortion, thinking "I was afraid of God's punishment, but at the same time I wonder, does God accept the suffering of the whole family if I have to stop work [to breastfeed another baby]?" (99). While such statements arise in personal situations, their scope condemns existing conditions, and so becomes revolutionary in range.

In each of these country studies, whether because of existing organizations, or due to the work of IRRRAG itself, women's self-development was sparked by meeting with each other, sharing their stories, and empowering each other to resist dehumanization. From the rural Black woman in South Carolina, who confessed that "No one ever asked us to tell our stories before" (270), to the Brazilian woman whose self-transformation went from being "Mary Nobody, who was not aware of anything" to a woman "conscious that we have to struggle for our

rights, for our space, and to think about tomorrow" (44), the testimonies illustrate women in the process of becoming.

However earnestly IRRRAG members listened to and recorded women's voices, they abdicate part of their responsibility when they don't highlight the full revolutionary implications and contradictions of those voices. For instance, even though the researchers highlighted the distrust women have of government agencies, far from urging women to rise up against the government, the editors instead address their concerns to "governments, donors, and intergovernmental agencies" to fund future programs!

While rightly critiquing everyday resistance (which "by itself can work only at best to ameliorate oppression and at worst to distract women from engaging in collective, open, political actions"), the IRRRAG team did not fully comprehend the new openings in the voices they heard. These women do not let the government, or the economy, or religion, define them. While such institutions establish the material context within which these women struggle, their attempts to control their reproductive lives exemplify the will that Hegel saw as "self-instituted—an individuality, however, purified of all that interferes with its universalism."

## Woman as Reason

## ROE V. WADE—THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES



Women marchers in New York demand an end to sexism, Aug. 26, 1971.

The victory of Roe v. Wade was the result of a mass women's movement that fought for abortion rights unseparated from the idea of women's liberation. Since then, the states and Congress have passed numerous laws restricting the right to abortion, from the 1977 Hyde Amendment which prohibited government funding of abortion to the more recent parental consent laws. Today, the same congressmen who aim to remove Clinton from office swear to prevent abortion rights in every way they can, making the following statement from *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future* by Raya Dunayevskaya even more relevant:

"At the end of so magnificent a decade [the 1970s], the [Women's Liberation Movement] faces a counterrevolution—from within and from without—so strong that in the U.S.... the 1973 Supreme Court victory on abortion stand[s] in danger...Never was there a more urgent need to finally find a theory that can match all the new beginnings in practice. Never was it more clear that the question which demands to be answered at this point is not even so much what theory as what is theory" (p. 103). (See literature ad page 9 to order.)

## Lesbians and gays fight back in Zimbabwe

As Zimbabwe sinks into crisis, President Robert Mugabe—rather than speaking to the issues of poverty, landlessness, the AIDS crisis, worker and student discontent, and soldiers rebelling from fighting in Congo—has stepped up his attack on gays and lesbians. His motivation is that of all tyrants: to stay in power.

In the mid-1990s he set about turning Zimbabwe society against homosexuals as a way to create a diversion from his own corrupt government. His opening salvo in 1995 was to ban the gay rights exhibit at one of Africa's largest book fairs organized around the theme of human rights. Participants at a fair seminar on free expression were outraged. South African author Nadine Gordimer said: "It is very strange to stand here under the banner of freedom of expression and know that a group has been denied the opportunity to express themselves."

Mugabe called lesbians and gays "worse than dogs and pigs," and *The New York Times* pointed out that "Gay-bashing seems to work for him much the way it does for Jesse Helms: the newspapers are full of letters praising his stand." While in 1995 a local journalist was able to report that "gay bashing goes on only at the highest political level," four years later Mugabe's policies have reached into the police force and the press so that a country once comfortable with gays and lesbians is becoming increasingly heterosexist.

Lesbians and gays are fighting back. Last year they upset a plan by California State Polytechnic University at Pomona to give Mugabe an honorary doctorate. They have started a campaign to educate people about his heterosexism and have asked human rights groups to picket his overseas trips.

In complete defiance of Mugabe, and on an occasion of international significance, GALZ (the Gays and Lesbians Association of Zimbabwe) marched openly for the first time. On Dec. 10 at the observance in the capital, Harare, of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, they carried a huge banner that proclaimed "GALZ—Out and Proud in Zimbabwe." Over 300 participated in this march, including women's liberation groups, AIDS support networks, and many who came to the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) held in Harare.

When asked what he thought of GALZ participation at the WCC assembly, Mugabe sputtered about how the church "can purge them." But rather than the church dominating GALZ, the issue of human rights for lesbians and gays transformed the WCC assembly by confronting it with an expanded concept of human rights. As the GALZ program manager proclaimed, "Gay rights are human rights. We are not saying that we want special rights but our rights are also human rights and we need to be respected." —Terry Moon

## Indian prostitutes organize

A *New York Times* article (Jan. 4, 1999) by Celia Fugger, "Hiring of Prostitutes at a Calcutta Health Clinic to Mobilize Against AIDS," brings a force into the power structure of red-light districts. Literate prostitutes are teaching others in the sex industry how to read. They are crusaders in organizing half the prostitutes in Sonagachi to challenge any pimp or madam who would insist on a customer's right to sex without a condom. The Indian government will use the project as its model in a larger scale battle; India already has an estimated four million people infected with the HIV virus.

"The skill, confidence and power" that is emanating from these prostitutes is further manifested in hundreds of them repeatedly encircling police stations to demand action against criminals. In a specific situation in which several men had tortured two prostitutes, a noisy protest led to the arrest of the abusers. Child prostitutes, sold or dumped into the trade, are being rescued.

The women are giving messages of strength and reason to prostitutes and madams. The article describes them as a "kind of labor union." This point is germane to my own understanding that prostitutes are referring to themselves as sex workers. This is historically

meaningful to the nature of prostitution, with poverty, heinous exploitation, occupational perils and hazards and the treatment of women as objects and commodities as the major factors. —Sheila G.

## NEWS & LETTERS

Vol. 44, No. 1

January-February 1999

*News & Letters* (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$5.00 a year (bulk order or 5 or more, 15¢ each) by *News & Letters*, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312) 663-0839. Fax (312) 663-9069. Second Class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *News & Letters*, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Articles may be reprinted verbatim if credited to "News & Letters."

Raya Dunayevskaya  
Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987)  
Charles Denby  
Editor (1955-1983)

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

*News & Letters* is printed in a union shop.

© GCU 759-C

# Company town back at Wayne Farms

Laurel, Miss. — Even though the Wayne Farms chicken processing plant has been union for about 10 years, almost half the 800 workers in the plant don't belong to the union. I was down here working on solidarity, on signing people up as union members so that the plant would be united for any struggle we might have.

Right away the Black workers I talked to told me that the company had brought in about 225 Mexican workers, straight from Mexico. Most of them don't speak English at all. The company hires them and has an interpreter to talk to them. Wayne Farms has put up a whole new complex of trailer homes on their private property. They rent each trailer to four workers, two in each room. Each worker pays \$40 a week. The trailers aren't near the plant either, so the workers pay \$10 a week to get to work in a company van. So before these Mexican workers even get to the plant, they are paying the company a fortune. It's like what they used to call a "company town."

It's even worse inside the plant. They put most of the Mexicans on night shift, and they are running it faster and faster. Some workers are doing the jobs of three or even four people. If they complain or argue, the supervisor says, "If you don't like it, go back to Mexico." The Black workers say that this fear of being deported is held over them all the time. The Black workers say that if they had to go on strike, the company might just run with Mexicans.

Several Black workers I talked to sounded like they thought the Mexicans were a threat to them. You wouldn't think that a big corporation like Continental Grain that owns Wayne Farms could find labor cheaper than what they pay Black workers in Mississippi. But a young Black man came into Personnel; they told him there was no hiring. Then 10 Mexicans came in, and they hired every one of them.

## Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

the material conditions have changed. Where several years ago the worker came with the idea of a temporary stay in the U.S., typically five or six years, leaving family behind to make enough to build a home and save a little to be self-employed on return home, this has changed. The economy of the home country is still spiraling downward, and no matter how much you save, there will be no future employment.

The devastation of the home economies meant the shock that, "I cannot go back; here I am, here I must fight." You can no longer shut your eyes, bend over the sewing machine, and say, "The more hours I work, the faster I save some money, the sooner this nightmare will pass, and I will be home with my loved ones." The immediate result was more wives joining their husbands, and children both brought here and born here.

A second change is that the individual solution to the problem of being undocumented has been largely shut down with the new draconian immigration law that went into effect last year. There is a new consciousness that if there is to be a solution to this "undocumented slavery," it will be a collective one.

I was asked to say a few words on labor struggles in the U.S. to one of these assemblies, meeting in a church. What seemed to me most concrete for their movement was the Montgomery Bus Boycott. I thought it might inspire them to know about this history. Making any human being "illegal" is unjust and an attack on human dignity, just as the segregation laws down South were. The leader of this group called "The Voice of Those Who Have No Voice" had quoted St. Thomas as saying, "Any law which goes against human dignity is not a law." And what I was hearing from these assemblies was a determination to do something about their condition as undocumented slaves, as "illegal" workers, and change these unjust laws.

For me to say, "Well, but is it practical? Is the political atmosphere right?" would have been like those people who preached that change in the South could only come from the North, that it was crazy to try to organize in the South; and then one day, Rosa Parks was tired, physically tired, and spiritually tired of those unjust laws; and she refused to get up, and that started the events of the most unlikely bus boycott, which not only changed a particular law, but changed human relations.

Where there had been fear arose self-confidence, and ordinary working people became subjects of history. It was not a matter of politicians or leaders deciding the time was right, but a mass movement changing the times, waking up a whole generation.

Likewise, if IF amnesty becomes a movement, IF it becomes no longer the project of some leaders but becomes massive—these are all "ifs" at this point—it could also awaken "the conscience of America," awaken solidarity among others like students, African Americans, and Native Americans. But we will never know unless that "if" becomes a reality.

I have said to the workers, I am here in solidarity with your struggle against an inhuman law, first, because no human being can be illegal; I am here also as a worker, because any immigration law is a labor law, and by cheapening labor and weakening labor by declaring any part of labor to be unprotected by the law, it affects me too. But also I am here because I hope their struggle can help to shake up all of us here and help us to struggle too, just as the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Freedom Now! movement shook up the whole country.

The same thing is going on at a nonunion catfish plant called Heartland in Itta Bena, Miss., but it's much smaller. There are about 100 Mexicans out of 225 workers. They are living on company property, and the company even built them their own church.

Last year I went to Tijuana, Mexico, and I listened to Mexican workers there talk about how the corporations use and abuse them in these border factories. I listened to everything they said, but I never believed I would see it all over again in Mississippi. I asked the workers at Wayne Farms what they thought the union should do. They said that about a year ago the UFCW international sent a union organizer who spoke Spanish. He signed up maybe 70 Mexican workers. But since then, nothing.

The Black workers I talked to want the union to send Spanish speaking organizers to sign up the Mexican workers, and to help Black workers and Mexican workers talk to each other. They say that's the only way they will ever win anything. —S. Hamer

## 'The Last Shift'



Romanian coal miners 10,000 strong battled police barricades beginning Jan. 19 and wrung some concessions from the government on mine shutdowns. This makes it especially timely to present the following poem, "The Last Shift," sent to us by English coal miner Stuart Young whose pit was closed.

<i>Arise the sun</i>	<i>but where's it gone</i>
<i>behind yon peak</i>	<i>can you perceive</i>
<i>and warm the miners</i>	<i>all you know,</i>
<i>as they sleep</i>	<i>and did believe.</i>
<i>for when they rise</i>	<i>She took it all</i>
<i>to toil and strive</i>	<i>and did destroy</i>
<i>walk up the lane</i>	<i>no more men</i>
<i>to yon beehive</i>	<i>to deploy.</i>

# Blacks as nuclear guinea pigs at Oak Ridge

Oak Ridge, Tenn. — In the Black neighborhood in Scarboro here—just as in Memphis, Tenn., and a thousand other places—the depth and depravity of environmental racism is much too ugly for America to accept, far worse than bureaucrats charged with protecting human health and the environment are willing to admit.

However, showing absolutely no fear of government reprisals, members of the Scarboro community like Mrs. R.L. Ayers informed the activists at the People of Color and Disenfranchised Communities Environmental Health Coalition meeting in November at Oak Ridge of the atrocities that Black members of the Scarboro community have endured since the early 1940s.

According to Mrs. Ayers, the white federal government exploited poor Black people near Oak Ridge Nuclear Reservation as if they were little more than human guinea pigs. Her account of insane white doctors concealing the health epidemic in Scarboro included the story of a Black man, not expected to live after a horrendous auto accident, who was injected—without his knowledge or consent—with a fatal solution containing plutonium just to see how the human body would react.

"At the time," Mrs. Ayers said, "the doctors would use me in their dirty dealings—not one of the nurses—because I was only a nurse's aide. A nurse would have instantly known what they were doing." She said she felt lucky that her husband was still alive after witnessing the epidemic of cancer killing her friends and neighbors.

Ms. Fannie Ball, who recently had her thyroid gland removed, told of her experiences as a worker at the Oak Ridge Nuclear Reservation—an experience filled with a total lack of concern for Black workers by their white superiors. Activists who had heard the horror stories of people all over the U.S. were stunned when Ms. Ball told them about Uranium 238, 235, 233, "Gas Chamber" Alpha 5 North, manually monitored smokestacks that emit radiation into the air and contamination into both surface and ground water, and of intentionally manipulated safety systems.

Ms. Ball said the fear and dread she felt after being exposed to dangerous radiation was not worth any amount of wages. She recounted how her supervisor acted cool and matter-of-fact when warning bells indicated she had been exposed to radioactive contamination. But the day she heard her supervisor hollering and act-

# Inside Texas death factory

Huntsville, Tex. — The week of Dec. 7-12 the Lone Star State's Death Factory, a.k.a. the Huntsville Walls Unit, was all abuzz with the lethal business it has gained global notoriety for. The state's shop of horrors was once again cranking up to churn out state murders in assembly line fashion.

I'm a cook at the prison kitchen. On execution days when the last meals are prepared the atmosphere becomes dour and heavy, as if the state were trying to smother us all. Faces that usually smile become sullen and serious.

I expect my fellow prisoners wonder as I do how it must feel to be the human being sitting in a holding cage and knowing as you tick off the minutes that your life will end shortly and that there is no escape. Executions are carried out at 6 p.m. and are generally over within an hour. Sometimes when I look at the clock I can almost feel my own heart stop.

These death row prisoners live for years, even decades, in brutal conditions, robbed daily of their dignity and debased by fascist prison guards. They live in constant conditions of anxiety and are reminded by their keeper's jibes that the state will one day kill them.

The people who carry out these executions must either be emotionally dead or sadistic fiends. An old man I know who used to clean up the death house after these rituals said he had to often clean up blood and vomit, and that from time to time signs of struggle were evident. One guard who used to transport death row prisoners said that "they will either go quietly to the death chamber or have their arms and legs broken and go to the gurney that way."

How do prison officials and law enforcement accomplices spend the hours leading up to these killings? Some very slavish minded inmates cook up all sorts of special food items, including doughnuts, cinnamon rolls, cookies, huge German chocolate cakes, barbecue beef and sausage, ham, and cheese sandwiches. All this stuff is paid for with the tax payers' money each time an execution is held. Visualize alcoholic cowboy boot-wearing bureaucrats with faces shot red with high blood pressure all shoving doughnuts down their maw and you get the picture.

Luckily, two prisoners received stays of execution the week of Dec. 7. One was a Canadian national named Faulder. The Canadian government has been trying to prevent his execution and Canadian officials have been met with utter rudeness on the part of Texas politicians. Victor Rodriguez, head of parole, kicked a group of Canadian officials out of his office and called the police on them.

Canada and Mexico have talked of a tourist boycott and even a trade boycott with Texas. It would be great if an international boycott of the Lone Star State could cause it to cease the practice of state murder.

I ask international fellow workers to promote and agitate for such a boycott and oppose state murder by any means necessary. We are all diminished a little more each time one of these atrocities is carried out. Workers have in ourselves the potential to abolish this practice and all the other evils born of capitalism. In solidarity with the late Martin Herale, let's make abolition our watchword. He was a comrade who went out on his feet. —Prisoner

ing crazy after he was accidentally contaminated by deadly radioactive substances, Ms. Ball said she knew there was a higher power at work that showed the supervisor his health was no more important than any worker's.

The heartfelt testimonies of the citizens of Scarboro to the suffering they have personally endured and witnessed of their friends, neighbors and families reopened fresh wounds, grievous wounds. To people of color, Oak Ridge is a living hell, where disease and death induced by radiological exposure run rampant.

—Kenneth Bradshaw

# Kaiser Aluminum strike

Oakland, Cal. — On Dec. 2 several hundred people from the Bay Area environmental coalition to save Headwaters Forest and a national contingent from the United Steelworkers of America gathered in front of city hall to show their support for striking workers at Kaiser Aluminum. Locked out ABC network technicians joined in support. Later steelworkers escorted a scab camera crew off the premises.

We were protesting the latest corporate merger and restructuring by Maxaam Corporation which now owns Pacific Lumber as well as Kaiser Aluminum. Under Maxaam, Pacific Lumber has been clearcutting ancient redwoods in the Headwaters Forest, and Kaiser Aluminum has been demanding the elimination of up to 900 jobs.

The marchers chanted, "We love trees! We love steel! This alliance is for real!" One Oakland city councilman said Kaiser Aluminum used to be a good company for the American worker, but now with globalization excessive corporate greed has taken over.

But the last speaker from the Kaiser Aluminum workers contingent went beyond love of things and psychological explanations. He said Charles Hurwitz, the head of Maxaam, can claim that these layoffs are just a necessary part of an unstoppable global restructuring. But he said in the end all these anti-human business decisions are made by human beings.

Human beings are responsible for this reality and human beings have to change it. That's why we and many others came to show our support for this cause.

—Htun Lin

## On the 80th anniversary of her death

# Recollecting the legacy of Rosa Luxemburg

**Rosa Luxemburg: Ich umarme Sie mit grosser Sehnsucht. Briefe aus dem Gefängnis 1915 bis 1918.** Ed. by Narihiko Ito. Bonn: Verlag Dietz, 4th ed. 1996

Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many have turned to Rosa Luxemburg for a different tradition within Marxism. The Japanese Luxemburg scholar Narihiko Ito once wrote in a review of Raya Dunayevskaya's book, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, "Raya Dunayevskaya has given new life to Karl Marx and Rosa Luxemburg as revolutionaries for our time. We need to read Raya's last words in this work as her message encouraging us about the future of mankind: 'Only live human beings can recreate the revolutionary dialectic forever anew.'"

Narihiko Ito is the editor of the German-language book to be discussed here, whose title in English is *Rosa Luxemburg: I Embrace You with Great Longing: Letters from Prison, 1915-1918*. A professor of Modern German History at Chuo University in Tokyo, Ito was the first to publish this collection in Tokyo in 1972 as the special edition of a research group. The present book comprises 153 letters that Luxemburg wrote to Mathilde Jacob (1873-1942), her personal secretary and close friend.

### LETTERS AND MEMORIES

In his very informative preface, Ito provides the political background of this correspondence. He explains that Jacob had a small typing and duplicating service in Berlin that produced the left oppositional *Sozialdemokratische Korrespondenz* from 1913 and the *Spartakusbriege* during the war, to both of which Luxemburg was an important contributor.

When Luxemburg was imprisoned from 1915-16 for her courageous antiwar activities and then kept in "protective custody" from 1916-18, Jacob assumed the responsibility of acting as her main contact with the outside world. Jacob was allowed to visit her once a week to take care of her daily needs and also bring her some food and books.

Called a "good spirit" and "good angel" by her deeply grateful friend, she helped to maintain Luxemburg's morale under the grim conditions of isolation. She also risked her own professional existence by smuggling in and out letters, newspaper clippings and the anonymous articles Luxemburg was able occasionally to write. She did all of that out of personal friendship and loyalty.

This correspondence with Jacob, of which only Luxemburg's letters survive, mainly consists of relatively short letters dealing with her everyday problems, fears and hopes, which she could express only in a very guarded way because of the constant surveillance and censorship. While there are far fewer letters to her other close friends, above all to Hans Diefenbach, Luise Kautsky, Sonja Liebknecht and Clara Zetkin, they are far more substantial. Clearly, Ito's publication of the correspondence with Jacob was an act of dedication and devotion to Luxemburg, as was Jacob's selfless work for her.

Ito quotes from Jacob's memories of her first encounter with Luxemburg in 1913: "When Rosa came to me for the

first time in order to dictate an article for the *Korrespondenz*, she immediately made a deep impression on me. Her large, shining eyes, which seemed to understand everything, her modesty and kindness, her almost childlike joy over everything beautiful made my heart beat faster and stronger. Full of admiration I looked up to this great intellectual, who was almost shabbily dressed" (7-8).

Long after Luxemburg's death, Jacob typed up her letters and wrote down her own memories *On Rosa Luxemburg and Her Friends, 1914-1918* (135 pp., unpublished). In 1939 she sent this documentation to Felix Weil, the cofounder of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, who lived in exile in Paris and gave it to Paul Frölich, the Luxemburg biographer authorized by the German Communist Party shortly after her death and before his expulsion from the party.

In the same year, Jacob gave another copy of this documentation to an American political scientist, Ralph H. Lutz, who wrote an article about it in *Central European Affairs* (1963) and deposited the material with the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. In 1942 Jacob was deported by the Nazis to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, where she died in the same year.

### WORLDWIDE ATTENTION

Ito mentions in a footnote that his volume was preceded by a comparable one, *Rosa Luxemburg im Gefängnis: Briefe und Dokumente aus den Jahren 1915-18* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1973), edited by the late Charlotte Beradt, an exile journalist in New York. He might have mentioned that her skillful combination of selections from Luxemburg's letters and from Jacob's unpublished memoir was a considerable achievement.

In February 1922, Lenin reflected on Luxemburg in his notebook and came up with a good old Russian fable about the eagle and the chicken, which teaches that "an eagle can sometimes fly lower than a chicken, but a chicken can never rise to the same heights as an eagle." After carefully enumerating all her mistakes (as Dunayevskaya also did in her book on Luxemburg), he wrote: "But in spite of all these mistakes, she was and is an eagle, and not only will she be dear to the memory of Communists in the whole world, but her biography and the complete edition of her works...will be a very useful lesson in the education of many generations of Communists" (quoted from J.P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg* [1966], vol. 2:793). Lenin of course committed the most fatal error of all by failing to prevent Stalin from coming to power.

Luxemburg was a political genius who lived her ideas and died for them. Because of her extraordinary life and work, she has attracted worldwide attention, and numerous studies have been written about her. At the end of her last editorial, "Order reigns in Berlin" (Jan. 14, 1919), Luxemburg wrote: "You stupid lackeys! Your 'order' is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will rear its head once again, and, to your horror, will proclaim, with trumpets blazing: I was, I am, and I will be!"

—Heinz Osterle

## Letter from Nicaragua

**Managua, Nicaragua**—Sadly, I am writing to express the sorrow of a people marked by the pain of the Nicaraguan peasants, victims of Hurricane Mitch. The rivers flooded and many communities were inundated. Some towns disappeared entirely, as was the case with Wiwili, a town close to the Coco River on the border with Honduras.

A mountain came down in Chinandega, a town near the border of El Salvador. The sides of the mountain got waterlogged and slid down, causing the mud to rise and bury the population of about 900 people. The people thought the noise from the mountain was an airplane flying in to rescue them after so many days of rain. It must have been horrendous.

The whole country became a tragedy. Most lamentable is that there was no communication from the government about the phenomenon. We didn't know what was happening to the peasants who live close to the rivers. Now we have to face the diseases that this type of disaster brings.

The victims are suffering from fungus on their feet from being in the mud so many days. There are some cases of cholera, fever and conjunctivitis. Managua has been very sad, and all Nicaraguans are complaining about the lateness of the government relief effort. There were not ways to get to the communities in need. Many died not because of the floods, but because of the lack of food.

I cannot say that we are all right now. Very hard times lie ahead in economic terms as well as social problems. The peasants lost everything. Food prices are now very high, having risen up to 300%. I am working three times as much as I did before, even on Sundays. If the government does not declare a national emergency, I don't know what will happen. In cases like this, it is best to declare an emergency and impose regulations so the merchants can't hoard food or raise the prices to consumers. There would be less robbery.

Well, forgive me for a letter full of such bad news. I believe that we Nicaraguans will continue to live here because it is nice to live among your own people, but many times nature afflicts us.

Dec. 5, 1998

## Puerto Rican independentista defiant

**Editor's Note:** Jose Solis Jordan, education professor at the University of Puerto Rico, was arrested at home in San Juan, on Nov. 6, 1997, in front of his family by a heavily armed FBI commando team. He was falsely accused by an FBI informant of the 1992 bombing of a military recruitment center in Chicago. For more information please call Mervin Mendez, Committee in Solidarity with Jose Solis Jordan, at (773) 278-9361. Financial support can be sent to: Jose Solis Jordan Defense Fund, P.O. Box 577826, Chicago, IL 60657-7826. Prof. Solis spoke to N&L in December 1998.

It was interesting that the day of the arrest the FBI issued a press release on it. I hadn't even been processed yet, which made me wonder if this was a prepackaged deal. I knew from what they told me and from what I deduced in the process that they wanted other people.

I was supposed to provide them with intelligence. They asked me questions in the interrogation about other independentistas in Puerto Rico. I thought, my god, these guys are really fishing. If one didn't know better, you'd think this guy is some intelligence carrier between the FALN and Macheteros, this whole movement. Yet if you look at my history, this is not there.

Granted, I'm very politicized. I defend our right to sovereignty and self-determination. I defend the right that any colonized people has to armed struggle, and I've said that everywhere. I'm not going to back off from that. But I'm not going to let them make a monster or a criminal of a patriot or a patriotic spirit. I think that's my political contribution and my human contribution.

At one point independentistas were called "dissidents," which is almost a positive term, then "subversives," which has more of a dangerous tang to it. But now they are equated with being terrorists, which is criminal. So you effectively criminalize those who advocate independence, particularly those who don't agree with the legitimacy (in this context) or viability of electoral politics right now in Puerto Rico for independence and see the need to give an international assertion to what the case of Puerto Rico is all about.

The case will probably start quickly in February. If we

## 'A place called Chiapas'



A vigil in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on Dec. 22 marked the first anniversary of the massacre in Acteal, Chiapas, of 45 Mexican peasants, mostly women and children, in a church. Paramilitary supporters of the government considered the town to be pro-Zapatista. The struggle continues.

**New York**—Two thousand people are terrorized by a right-wing paramilitary group into fleeing their village in northern Chiapas. They appeal to the mediator at the peace talks, Bishop Ruiz, and to the Zapatistas. But even the Zapatistas provide no help, since they are abiding by a cease-fire. In desperation, the community decides to retake the village on its own with no protection except the cameras of filmmakers.

This is the most engrossing of the stories told in "A Place Called Chiapas." The interview with Subcomandante Marcos at the film's end is another memorable moment.

The film is beautifully shot in stunning color, and is far and away the best documentary on the Zapatista rebellion we have seen. It includes interviews with peasant supporters as well as Zapatista leaders and a critique of the foreign supporters who came for a few days' "encuentro."

Nettie Wild, its director/producer, spoke with *News & Letters* after a showing of the film in New York. What impelled her to spend eight months in Chiapas during 1996 and 1997, she said, was the affinity of the Zapatista rebellion to a struggle that she documented in her award-winning 1993 film, "Blockade." The latter takes place in a very different part of North America, her home province of British Columbia, but it is likewise a story of native people's struggle for land rights.

The Zapatista rebellion is "the most compelling story in the Americas right now," Wild said. "The issues that the Zapatistas are presenting to us is that, 'hey guys, we need a new paradigm.'"

It is a story that Wild is having difficulty disseminating. Commercial distributors are steering clear of "A Place Called Chiapas." She therefore requests that, if you know a theater in your community that would be interested in showing this film, you contact her at Canada Wild Productions Ltd, 1818 Grant Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V5L 2Y8, or carson@smarrt.com. A videotape version is also available.

—Marxist-Humanists

can make that courtroom a classroom, then we've come a long way in terms of offering an expression of the potential this country has for being democratic. There are aspects of this country's fundamentals that speak to a democratic life. That they've been corrupted, prostituted, as we're witnessing now, whether with the war in Iraq or the impeachment hearings, is obvious. But you don't have to abandon the principles which have inspired liberation movements throughout the world. We can reassert and reaffirm that in a court of their own.

Then if we win, everybody's won. And if we lose, we've still won a lot. We'll start a whole different process. Then we'll move to phase two. Then I can contribute to the work that needs to be done to get other people out of prison and for others to open their minds to issues of folks that are still in prison under different circumstances but similar principles.

What helps is the solidarity of people. That just nourishes you and gives you more resolve. The day after the arrest I had a faculty meeting. I stopped at a newsstand, and there were all the newspapers with the headlines. I got to the campus and ran into the janitor. He stopped me, just out of nowhere, held both my hands and said, "I'll be with you always." It's that kind of stuff that's made this, not tolerable, but it's reaffirmed everything that we think about when we theorize what struggle is all about.

There's something that people recognize when a person is honest and open about the way they believe and what they fight for. People respect that in themselves and in others, but in Puerto Rico especially, because we're so colonized and there's a fear of taking strong positions.

This has sensitized me to understand more carefully and with more sensibility the difficulty of the colonized mind and the colonized person. I've grown a lot, politically and personally. That's the incredible dialectic of struggle; that the repression breeds a kind of growth, maturity and discipline. It doesn't make you bigger than others; it makes you humble. And if you are with your people and with people that are oppressed, workers, nations that are oppressed, folks across sexuality lines and others, then you look at things differently and you start to calibrate them differently.

## Black/Red View

by John Alan

Throughout the debate in Congress over whether or not to impeach President William Jefferson Clinton for lying before a grand jury, the media has often referred to the fact that this event happened once before in American history, when President Andrew Johnson was almost impeached by the U.S. Senate in 1868. But merely saying that these two events happened twice is not enough; it avoids looking at the historical meaning of Andrew Johnson's impeachment and how it compares with Clinton's impeachment today.

Both of these impeachments were and are deeply connected with the issues of race and racism in this country. Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's vice president and the seventeenth president of the United States is hardly known today. His picture isn't even on a postage stamp. Yet, when he became president after Lincoln's assassination, he at once became involved in a pivotal political struggle with the Radical Republicans, who controlled Congress

## Simmering crises in sub-Saharan Africa

The temporary victory in Sierra Leone of Nigerian-led forces against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Foday Sankoh is no solution to the problems of the country. Sankoh's forces have been battling Sierra Leone's President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah for many years now. He has been opposed by a "peacekeeping" force composed of troops from several West African nations, especially Nigeria.

Nigeria's effort to reinstate the Kabbah government is part of its struggle for regional hegemony. Nigeria had earlier arrested and detained RUF leader Foday Sankoh, showing that the military dictators in Lagos were never interested in finding a peaceful solution to the crisis. After recent fighting in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, the city is still under the control of the Nigerian forces. They have caused an untold amount of death and suffering.

The crisis in Sierra Leone has overshadowed other serious events occurring on the African continent, including in Nigeria. Local government elections were recently held there as part of a transition program to democracy, which hopefully the military will accept and respect this time. But the youth of the country seem to be preparing for more confrontation and are less than optimistic that the military will leave Nigeria alone.

A communique issued on Dec. 11 at a youth conference in Nigeria, entitled the Kaiama Declaration, declared among other things: "We Ijaw youths are drawn from over 500 communities and 40 clans that make up the Ijaw nation and represent 25 organizations...After exhaustive deliberations, we observe: a) That it was through British colonialism that the Ijaw Nation was forcibly placed under the Nigerian State; b) that but for the economic interest of the imperialists the Ijaw ethnic nationality would have evolved as a distinct and separate sovereign nation, enjoying undiluted political, economic, social and cultural autonomy..."

"We demand the immediate withdrawal from Ijawland of all military forces of occupation and repression by the Nigerian State. Any oil company that employs the services of the armed forces of the Nigerian State to 'protect' its operation will be viewed as an enemy of the Ijaw people."

at that time, over the social and political status of the emancipated African American.

The future that Johnson politically promoted for the recently freed African Americans would be as a source of illiterate, unskilled, propertyless agricultural workers providing a perpetual supply of cheap labor. In other words the white South alone would determine the political, social and economic status of the former slaves in the reconstructed Southern states.

Johnson made a dogmatic principle of this kind of white/Black relationship. As president, he vetoed the Civil Rights Bill of 1866, which would have made illegal the "Black Codes," laws enacted by the southern states re-admitted to the Union which created a new system of African-American slavery. Carl Schurz, the Radical Republican, called those laws "a striking embodiment of the idea that although the former owner had lost his individual right of property in the former slave, the blacks at large belong to the whites at large." (See *The Era of Reconstruction* by Kenneth M. Stampp)

They also stated, "We express our solidarity with all peoples' organizations and ethnic nationalities in Nigeria and elsewhere who are struggling for self-determination and justice. In particular we note the struggle of the Odua Peoples Congress, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni people, the Egi Womens Movement etc. We extend our hand of solidarity to the Nigerian oil workers and expect that they will see this struggle for freedom as a struggle for humanity."

**These kind of events hardly ever reach the attention of international media headlines.**

Further south on the continent, the fighting in Angola has taken on new momentum, exposing the UN for not being interested in dealing with the criminal Jonas Savimbi of UNITA. He not only violates UN resolutions but continues to murder UN officials without any reaction from the UN—other than saying that it will soon be withdrawing from the country. The U.S., which created UNITA during the cold war era, still has the problem of raising its voice against the criminal behavior of these horrible monsters.

These crises are an indication of the state of affairs on the continent. What will become of them is yet to be seen.

—Ba Karang

President Andrew Johnson's goal was a "New South" dominated by whites with a legally free but subjugated African-American population. It clashed sharply with the Radical Republican Congress' goal for a new South where Blacks were equal with whites before the laws. All nuances of that impeachment can't be summarized in a few words, but the fundamental intrinsic issue at Johnson's trial was, could the American capitalist democracy cleanse itself of a racism which was founded on human exploitation? Johnson's victory at his impeachment trial said no!

More than 90 years later African Americans did create a movement, the Civil Rights Movement, which radically changed Andrew Johnson's version of the "New South." But even today, when African Americans are free from the outright practices of racism and have recognized equal rights with white Americans, Johnson's concept of "New South" still exists in newer versions, both in American society and its politics.

It is not an accident that Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, who helped organize the impeachment trial of Clinton in the Senate, has ideological connections with the politically influential Mississippi Council of Conservative Citizens. The ideological concepts of this organization hark back to Andrew Johnson's white South. It calls itself a pro-white organization, and opposes school desegregation and race mixing. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the COCC is "The incarnation of the infamous white Citizen Councils, which helped to enforce segregation in the South during the 1950s and 1960s."

The question is: why did Clinton, this New Democrat, arouse the ire of the right wing in this country? He never was a Lyndon Johnson with programs to end discrimination and poverty. Instead, he "reformed welfare" by cutting it drastically. He endorsed and got a GOP Congress to pass a tough longer sentencing crime bill, which sent many more African-American young men to prisons.

The answer is that Clinton maintains, at least, an aura of liberalism. He appointed many African Americans to high political positions and made the overcoming of racism a national priority. Thus, he never lost the pivotal support of African-American voters. Many consider this a political ploy. But what African Americans know, is that any political swing to the Right in this country is inherently racist at its core. For the moment, Clinton is an alternative to these wolves of retrogression.

## Black World

(Continued from page 1)

born in 1965, drew wide press attention when it chose an image of a black panther as its party symbol, and later when it became known as the "Black Panther Party." But there were differences of views in the LCFO. Lillian McGill, one of its founders, said that even though no whites had joined the LCFO, the press should not imply that LCFO members were "Black nationalists. We are not. We have asked many whites in the county, poor working-class whites, to join with us, to join our party."

Carmichael, however, stressed all-Black political organization and armed struggle for the LCFO. Charles Denby, editor of *News & Letters*, and a native of Lowndes County, took issue with him. In his book, *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, Denby wrote: "My own conviction was that power did not come out of the barrel of a gun, but out of the mass power and reason of the people organized to win and defend freedom... [Stokely's] 'Black only' policy had the result of isolating the Black mass movement from the white revolutionary element."

In the same period, SNCC held a conference at Waveland, Miss. One of the subjects debated there was the role of women in SNCC. During the course of the debate, some of the men who had been dismissive of the issue were asked what they thought was the proper position for women. Stokely made a one-word response: "prone." He never repeated the remark, but he never lived it down either.

When the publicity about the LCFO was at its height, Stokely was elected chairman of SNCC. Two weeks later he joined the James Meredith March in Mississippi. On June 17, 1966, at a rally in Greenwood, Miss., Carmichael repeatedly used the slogan "Black Power" to rouse up the crowd. The press carried accounts of the rally around the world. Even though (as Carmichael often stated himself) another SNCC staffer, Willie Ricks, was the first to use the slogan, Carmichael quickly became known as the leading exponent of "Black Power."

### THEORIES OF BLACK LIBERATION DEBATED

Debates soon erupted over the meaning of the concept. In a series of articles that summer, Carmichael argued that the struggle for "psychological equality" necessitated Black Power, and that the "white psyche" rendered all whites, "whatever their political persuasion," incapable of joining a liberation struggle in the U.S. He singled out the Niagara Movement, led by W.E.B. DuBois in the first decade of the 20th century, as a model to follow.

Raya Dunayevskaya responded that such a perspective obscured both the class line within white America and the vanguard role of Black Americans in shaping American history. She pointed out that the Niagara Movement was exclusively an organization of the "talented tenth," too conscious of their own privileges as an elite ever to become a mass organization. This separation

between the elite and the masses, she said, resulted in a "type of thinking which Hegel called 'self-determination applied externally.' That is, from above, not as it emerged from internal self-development."

As the concept of "Black Power" was adopted by the Black masses it drew a dynamism of its own from the urban revolts. The way the masses reworked the "Black Power" concept took a different course than Stokely had intended. Stokely, however, continued to follow out the logic of his own viewpoint. He co-authored *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation* with Charles Hamilton. In 1968 he left SNCC. The next year, he moved to Guinea to work with former Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, then in exile there. He changed his name to Kwame Ture, and never lived in the U.S. again.

From his base in Guinea, Ture adopted the philosophy of Pan-Africanism and launched a new organization, the All-African People's Revolutionary Party. In frequent speaking trips to the U.S., he argued that Black Americans should adopt Pan-Africanism as their philosophy of liberation. As late as his afterword to the 1992 edition of *Black Power*, written only weeks after the Los Angeles rebellion, he wrote, "Pan Africanism is the total liberation and unification of Africa under scientific socialism...[Black Power] can only be understood within the context of the African Revolution."

In the early 1990s, when I last spoke with Ture, I said that his viewpoint located the Subject for the American Revolution not within the Black masses who had proven their revolutionary character from slavery to today, but in an external force. He did not disagree, saying that the most important actions Black Americans could take were those supporting "progressive struggles" in Africa, because no real change in the conditions of Black Americans would be possible until Africa experienced a Pan-African revolution. Such a perspective is, I think, very far removed from the creative energy of the Black youth, women and workers who made the Civil Rights Movement a truly revolutionary struggle.

While it is of course true that no one life embodies a whole movement, Kwame Ture's life is much more than one man's story. In his development from a high school activist to a movement thinker and leader and in the way he set course down a "river of no return," he represented the best of the generation of 1960s revolutionaries born out of the Civil Rights Movement. Unfortunately, his legacy also reveals the limitations that movement reached when the theories it developed were not equal to the challenge of the times.

### American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard



Order for Black History Month!

(See ad on page 9)

## Margaret Walker Alexander, 1916-1998

We mourn the death on Nov. 30, 1998 of Dr. Margaret Walker Alexander, one of the leading Black writers of the 20th century. A native of Jackson, Miss., and Professor Emeritus at Jackson State University, Margaret Walker also lived in Chicago in the 1930s. She was an energizing force in the development of the Chicago Renaissance. The following is taken from a speech she gave to the Black Academy of Arts and Letters in 1972:

*In this death struggle for freedom, for peace, and for human dignity the black artist and the black scholar must see and understand their role as thinkers and as artists. We must first see the state of our world which our art and actions must reflect, and we must understand our role as thinkers in the struggle. We must begin to use the black mind as a tool for black liberation, not as yoga to liberate a single individual, but to liberate an entire people. Then we can accept the challenge of a thinking black world whirling into action. We must understand that the masses of our people expect and need, no, more than that, demand, from the black mind a new paradigm for the shape of our burning society...*

*It becomes the awesome duty and destiny of the black man to bring about complete societal change because he is the slave that must throw off the yoke of oppression. He cannot expect the oppressor to condemn the chains of his slave. We black people can, and must, accept the challenge and the task because we have the creative minds, and the spiritual strength to do what must be done...*

# PART I PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

## Editor's note

As part of our effort to stimulate new study and discussion of dialectical philosophy, News and Letters Committees is breaking new ground in the radical movement by publishing the following detailed commentary on Hegel's *Science of Logic* in the next four issues of our newspaper.

The *Logic* is one of Hegel's most important works and was of great service to Marx, especially in the writing of *Capital*. It has taken on new importance in light of the need to comprehend the logic of contemporary capitalism and the struggles against it.

Completed by Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87) on Jan. 26, 1961, these Notes comprise one of the few studies by a Marxist covering the whole of the *Logic*. Lenin had earlier written a serious commentary on Hegel's *Logic* in 1914-15, which Dunayevskaya relies heavily on in these Notes. However, at several crucial junctures she expresses reservations about Lenin's interpretation of Hegel. For the most developed view of her critique of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence, see the 1991 edition of her *Philosophy and Revolution, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao*.

Dunayevskaya also refers to the writings of C.L.R. James and Grace Lee, her colleagues during the years 1941-55, as well as those of Herbert Marcuse and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Dunayevskaya's commentary will be published in four parts. The first part, which follows, comments on the Prefaces and Introduction to the *Logic*. Further parts in the next three issues will comment on the three major sections of the work—Being, Essence, and Notion.

All material in brackets as well as footnotes and page references have been supplied by the editors. "SLI and SLII" refers to the text of the *Science of Logic* as translated by Johnston and Struthers, in two volumes (Macmillan, 1929); "SLM" refers to the more recent translation by A.V. Miller (Humanities Press, 1969). Dunayevskaya's text has been slightly shortened, indicated by the use of ellipses. The original can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 2806.

These notes will serve as an anchor of a nationwide series of classes News and Letters Committees will soon hold on "The Dialectic of *Capital* and Today's Global Crises." See the announcement on page 7.



By  
Raya  
Dunayevskaya

Founder of  
Marxist-Humanism  
in the U.S.

### Volume I: Objective Logic

### Book One: The Doctrine of Being

Between the title of Volume I and Book One, we are confronted with two Prefaces, one of which was written when Volume I was first published in 1812, and the second Preface is one of the last things Hegel did before his death in 1831. Thus, the second Preface not only encompasses the first volume, but also the second volume (which contains Books Two and Three), which was published in 1816, and all of his other works; in fact it followed the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*.<sup>1</sup>

The historic period of Hegel's life will be one point of departure. The other point of departure will be 1914 when Lenin read this work. I will refer to his *Philosophic Notebooks* so that you in turn can study them simultaneously with the *Logic*. Finally, we must have also our own historic period in mind.

Philosophically speaking, Lenin's period was summarized by himself dialectically as "the transformation into opposite"; our period has been characterized by ourselves as the Absolute Idea, or the unity of theory and practice, which must be further concretized as Freedom—the realization of Freedom in life most of all and in thought. That is to say, in Hegel's philosophy the Absolute Idea also stands for unity of theory and practice and its point of departure and return is likewise Freedom. But it is abstract.

A better way, perhaps, to express it is to say that while in Hegel the unity of object and subject—the unity of the Universal and Individual—is in mind alone, in the Marxist-Humanist outlook, the individual is the social entity, or as Marx put it, there is no proof of freedom in society except through the individual who is free. I do not mean to burden these notes with too many random thoughts. On the contrary, I mean to follow Hegel in quite some detail, but history and dialectic method is Hegelianism and hence very brief references to the current situation will be made.

One other item in regard to Lenin. Along with the *Philosophic Notebooks*, we will consider the 4½ pages called "On Dialectics," which are on pp. 81-85 of his *Selected Works*, Vol. XI [see also *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, pp. 355-63; hereafter "LCW 38"] but which are actually part of his *Philosophic Notebooks*. I did not translate these because they had already been translated, but were put in quite undialectically by the Stalinists as if they and Lenin's *Materialism and*

*Empirio-Criticism* [1908] which follows it are by one and the same Lenin, whereas in fact the latter is quite mechanical and the exact proof of what Lenin had in mind when he wrote at the end of the *Notebooks* that none of the Marxists (in plural, that is, including himself, and the plural was the emphasis Lenin himself put in that word) had understood Marx's *Capital* for the last half century. In fact, in this short essay, "On Dialectics," he criticizes not only everyone from Plekhanov to himself, but even Engels, although he excuses the latter, who, he says, has treated dialectics inadequately, by way of "examples, a seed, 'for example, primitive Communism.' The same is true of Engels. But with him it is 'in the interests of popularization... and not as a law of knowledge (and as a law of the objective world)" [LCW 38, p. 359].

### The Prefaces to the *Science of Logic*

Hegel's very first sentence to the first Preface is a reference—"The complete transformation which philosophical thought has undergone in Germany during the last five and twenty years" [SLI, p. 33; SLM, p. 25]—to 1787 and Kant's work.<sup>2</sup> Hegel's dissatisfaction with even this great step is due to the fact that it has not lived up to the challenge of the time, i.e., the French Revolution, 1789, up to the Napoleonic Period: "There are no traces in *Logic* of the new spirit which has arisen both in Learning and in Life. It is, however (let us say it once and for all), quite vain to try to retain the forms of an earlier stage of development when the inner structure of spirit has become transformed; these earlier forms are like withered leaves which are pushed off by the new buds already being generated in the roots" [SLI, p. 35; SLM, p. 26].

The necessity for the new, the Hegelian departure, arises from the times and a new concept of philosophical method, not the dialectic in general, which [Kant] had reached for, but Hegelian Dialectic, the form of thought which was as one with the *movement* of mind: "This movement is the Absolute Method of knowledge and at the same time the immanent soul of the Content of knowledge. It is, I maintain, along this path of self-construction alone that Philosophy can become objective and demonstrated science" [SLI, pp. 36-37; SLM, p. 28].

Actually, this is only the fourth page of his Preface...and already we have covered, or rather Hegel has covered, the two fundamental movements of his entire work—the logical-dialectical and the polemical. These, in turn, contain reality—historic reality of the period in which he lived and historic reality as evolution up to that time. And sure enough, Lenin at once noted the two essences of the dialectic: (1) The emphasis on movement, "the *movement* of scientific cognition—that is the essence"; (2) "the *path* of self-construction' = path (here lies the nub, in my opinion) of true cognition, knowledge, movement" [LCW 38, pp. 87-88].

The Preface to the Second Edition is

2. In 1787 Kant published the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason*.

once again full of "immanent activity" and "necessary development," which leads Lenin to say in the very first paragraph: "What is necessary is not lifeless bones, but full-blooded life" and he stresses "an important beginning" [LCW 38, p. 89]. And Hegel, indeed, in the very approach to philosoph-

point Lenin remarks: "In my view, the conclusion essentially is: (1) in Kant knowledge hedges off (separates) nature from man; in actuality, it unites them; (2) in Kant "the empty abstraction" of the thing-in-itself is put in place of the living procession (*shestviya*), the movement of our ever deep-

# Rough Notes on HEGEL'S SCIENCE OF LOGIC

ic categories in the second paragraph is going to remind us that "so natural to man is Logic—indeed, Logic itself is just man's peculiar nature. But if Nature in general is opposed, as physical, to what is mental, then it must be said that Logic is rather that something Super-natural which enters into all the natural *behavior* of man—  
Feeling,

Intuition, Desire, Need, Impulse—and thereby alone transforms it all to something human—to ideas and purposes" [SLI, p. 40; SLM, pp. 31-32].

For a man so full of profundities, he never forgets impulses, feelings, intuition, desires, needs; indeed, it is quite obvious that he refuses to make a distinction between physical and mental, and to this day, the so-called behavioral sciences, psychoanalysis included, cannot shine this great philosopher's shoes, much less his divine (yes, divine) concept of human ideas and purposes.

Historical materialism, strange as that may sound as any attribute of Hegel, is nevertheless basic to Hegelian analysis and in this Preface he traces philosophy back in a manner in which it is quite clear that the elements of that total philosophy with which Marx is mainly associated were present in Hegelian philosophy. This sense of history is present also in his polemical critique of Kant: "In the still spaces of Thought which has come to itself and is purely self-existence, those interests are hushed which move the lives of peoples and of individuals" [SLI, p. 42; SLM, p. 34]. Lenin emphasized this expression as well as the one in which Hegel said, "When the Critical Philosophy understands the relation of these three Terms so as to make *Thoughts* intermediary between *Us* and *Things* in such a sense that this intermediary rather excludes us from things than connects us with them..." [SLI, p. 44; SLM, p. 36]. At this

er knowledge of things" [LCW 38, p. 91].

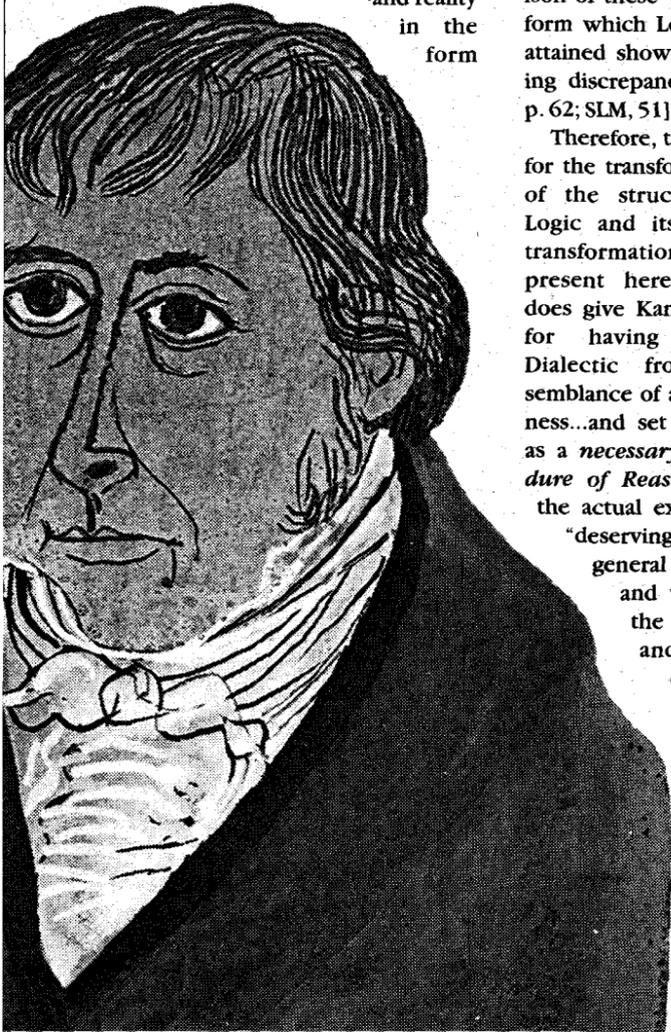
Hegel in this second Preface takes issue also with those who have criticized him since the *Phenomenology* and this first book were published. The severest of all criticisms is for those who assume a category, which, first of all, has to be proved, which he calls an "uninstructed and barbarous procedure" [SLI, p. 49; SLM, p. 41].

It is good to have in mind here our opponent, for the whole of Russian Communist theory follows precisely this barbarous procedure of assuming that Socialism already exists and then blithely goes on. If, however, one thinks that it is sufficient merely to know that the Russians assume what is first to be proven to be able to get to the bottom of their usurpation of Marxist language, Marcuse's *Soviet Marxism* is there to prove the opposite. Despite all of his *knowledge* of both Hegel and Marx and even Russian society, Marcuse still falls into the trap of apologetics on the basis that their professed theory discloses actual reality. The fundamental reason for the blindness is, of course, his complete isolation from the class struggle. But it is not the whole of the reason. The other part is the failure to create a category—state-capitalism in this case—for the new state of the world economy in general and Russia in particular. Without a category, an intellectual is just lost, since he has none of the proletarian instincts to carry him through on trodden paths, and therefore, falls into eclecticism.

1. This three-volume version of Hegel's philosophy, comprising the *Smaller Logic*, the *Philosophy of Nature*, and the *Philosophy of Mind* (Spirit) was first published in 1817, and then reissued with changes in 1827 and 1830.

**The Introduction to the Science of Logic**

Before Hegel begins Book One, we have, besides the two Prefaces, also an Introduction. In the Introduction, his reference to the *Phenomenology* will set us, too, in the proper spirit of continuity: "In the *Phenomenology of Mind* I have set forth the movement of consciousness, from the first crude opposition between itself and the Object, up to absolute knowledge. This process goes through all the forms of the relation of thought to its object, and reaches the Concept of Science as its result" [SLI, p. 59; SLM, p. 48]. Having assumed absolute knowledge as the truth of all forms of consciousness, Hegel can now proceed to treat both knowledge and reality in the form



Portrait of G.W.F. Hegel by Ben Shahn

of categories because they do include historical reality, present reality, as well as the long road of thought about it. That is precisely why he is opposed to the other form in which thought is presented in the philosophies that have not met the chal-

lenge of the times.

Thus, in criticizing [the idea] that the structure of Logic has undergone no change, despite all the revolutionary development, he says: "For when Spirit has worked on for two thousand years, it must have reached a better reflective consciousness of its own thought and its own unadulterated essence. A comparison of the form to which Spirit has risen in the worlds of Practice and Religion, and of Science in every department of knowledge Positive and Speculative, a comparison of these with the form which Logic has attained shows a glaring discrepancy" [SLI, p. 62; SLM, 51].

Therefore, the need for the transformation of the structure of Logic and its actual transformation are present here. Hegel does give Kant credit for having "freed Dialectic from the semblance of arbitrariness...and set it forth as a necessary procedure of Reason," but the actual exposition is not, says Hegel,

"deserving of any great praise; but the general idea upon which he builds and which he has vindicated, is the *Objectivity of Appearance* and the *Necessity of Contradiction*" [SLI, p. 67; SLM, p. 56]. It is Hegel's contention that only when you get to consider Universals, not as abstractions, but as concrete totalities of the whole historic movement, does Logic deserve to become the universal philosophy: "It is only through a profounder acquaintance with other sciences that Logic discovers itself to be subjective thought as

not a mere abstract Universal, but as a Universal which comprises in itself the full wealth of Particulars" [SLI, p.69; SLM, p. 58].

It is at this point that Lenin refers the reader to *Capital*, repeating Hegel's description of *Logic* as "not a mere abstract

**"While in Hegel the unity of object and subject—the unity of the Universal and Individual—is in mind alone, in the Marxist-Humanist outlook, the individual is the social entity, or as Marx put it, there is no proof of freedom in society except through the individual who is free."**

Universal, but as a Universal which comprises in itself the full wealth of Particulars" and then goes into paeans of praise, "a beautiful formula," and again repeats the phrase, adding "Très bien!" [LCW 38, p. 99]. From now on, it is *Capital* which Lenin will have in mind throughout his reading of the two volumes (three books) of *Logic*.

I would like to note also, although I will not elaborate upon this until much later, that the whole of the *Logic*, as well as each section of the *Logic*, as well as each separate thought in the *Logic*, will go through the following development, both as history, as reality, as thought: the movement will always be from U (Universal) through P (Particular) to I (Individual). Lenin takes it in the same form as U-P-I, but reverses the order more often precisely because he is thinking of the *proletarian* individual, who is also the social individual and the universal of socialism. Thus, when he concludes his *Philosophic*

*Notebooks* in those four pages of ["On] Dialectics" [which] I referred to, he says (the translator here used the word "singular," where the strict term is individual and "general" where the strict term is universal): "To begin with the simplest, most ordinary, commonest, etc., proposition, or any proposition one pleases; the leaves of a tree are green; John is a man; Fido is a dog, etc. Here already we have dialectics (as Hegel's genius recognized): the singular is the general. Consequently, opposites (the singular as opposed to the general) are identical; the singular exists only in the connection that leads to the general. The general exists only in the singular and through the singular" [LCW 38, p. 361].

In conclusion to his Introduction, Hegel returns once again to Kant, explaining that those who would just disregard him are the very ones who take his results and make the whole philosophy into a "pillow for intellectual sloth" [SLI, p. 73; SLM, p. 62]. (You will remember that that is the quotation I used in Chapter 9 in *Marxism and Freedom*, which deals with the Second International.)...

Announcing a new series of discussions beginning in March...

**The Dialectic of Capital and Today's Global Crisis**

The economic meltdown in such areas as East Asia, Russia, and parts of Latin America and the possibility that it might spread to the entire world economy has helped impel new interest in Marx's *Capital*. At the same time, a new generation of thinkers and activists has come of age which is searching for an alternative to both "free market" capitalism and the state-capitalism that once called itself Communism. This series speaks to these questions and concerns by exploring what Marxist-Humanism has contributed to the understanding of Marx's greatest theoretical work.

As Lenin once said, "It is impossible to understand Marx's *Capital*, and especially it's first chapter, unless one has understood the whole of Hegel's *Logic*." For this reason, the core readings will be selections from Marx's *Capital*, writings on *Capital* from the archives of Marxist-Humanism, and Raya Dunayevskaya's "Rough Notes on Hegel's *Science of Logic*."

For a syllabus and a schedule of classes, contact the News and Letters Committee nearest to you.

**Class 1**  
**The Origin and Scope of Capital: Marx's Re-creation of Hegel's Dialectic**

Class 1 discusses the origin and development of Vol. I of *Capital*, especially the impact of the Civil War in the U.S. and the struggle for a shorter working day upon Marx's thinking. Far from acting as a limiting factor on what he called "the power of abstraction," by integrating the revolutionary subject into his dialectical analysis Marx unchained the power of revolutionary thought itself.

**Class 2**  
**The Phenomenon of Capitalism: The Commodity-Form**

Class 2 focuses on the most difficult, controversial, and important chapter in *Capital*—"The Commodity." Of foremost importance here is its concluding section—"The Fetishism of Commodities." Dunayevskaya's "Notes on Hegel's *Science of Logic*," can greatly aid comprehension of the fundamental "phenomenon" of capitalism which contains in embryo the whole of its contradictions.

**Class 3**  
**The Essence of Capitalism (I): The Labor Process**

Class 3 focuses on the essence of capitalism—the labor process and on the production of what Marx called "absolute surplus value." This is also the area in which Marx discusses the conditions and struggles of working women.

**Class 4**  
**The Essence of Capitalism (II): The Labor Process and the Transformation of the Value of Labor Power into Wages**

Class 4 continues the focus on the essence of capitalism, the labor process, by exploring what Marx called "relative surplus value." It also discusses Marx's theory of wages, one of his three original contributions to the critique of political economy, along with the split in the concept of labor and the treatment of surplus value independently of profit.

**Class 5**  
**The Notion of Capitalism: The Absolute General Law of Capitalist Accumulation**

Class 5 focuses on the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation—the concentration and centralization of capital at one pole and the socialization of labor at the other, from which spring "new passions and new forces for the reconstruction of society."

**Class 6**  
**The Logic of Capitalist Crisis: Overproduction, "Underconsumption," or the Decline in the Rate of Profit?**

Class 6 focuses on the dialectic and humanism of Vols. II and III of *Capital*, long serving as the arena of debate in the radical movement over the cause and consequences of capitalist crisis, the relation between capitalism and imperialism/racism, and the kind of human relations which can transcend class society.

**Don't miss a single part of the series**

**"Notes on Hegel's Science of Logic"**

by Raya Dunayevskaya

**THE SERIES**

**This issue:**  
*Preface and Introduction*

**March:** "Being"

**April:** "Essence"

**May:** "Notion"

**Subscribe to NEWS & LETTERS**

**\$5 for one year (10 issues)**

To order, see page 9.

**How to contact NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES**

**CHICAGO**

59 E. Van Buren, Room 707 • Chicago, IL 60605  
Phone 312 663 0839  
Fax 312 663 9069  
**MEETINGS**  
Call for Information

**DETROIT**

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

**LOS ANGELES**

P.O. Box 29194 • Los Angeles, CA 90029  
**MEETINGS**  
Sundays, 5:30 p.m.  
Echo Park United Methodist Church  
1226 N. Alvarado  
(North of Sunset, side door)

**FLINT, MI**

P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502

**NEW YORK**

P.O. Box 196 • Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163  
212 663 3631  
**MEETINGS**  
Sundays, 6:30 p.m.  
(first Sunday of month, 2 p.m.)  
Washington Square Church  
133 W. 4th St. (Parish House parlor), Manhattan

**OAKLAND**

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

**MEMPHIS & MISSISSIPPI**

1910 Madison Ave, #59 • Memphis, TN 38104

**INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS**

**ENGLAND**

BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX

**INTERNET**

**Email**  
nandl@igc.apc.org

**World Wide Web**  
www.newsandletters.org

## THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE AS 1999 BEGINS

### CHINA

The *South China Morning Post* in Hong Kong has reported that Beijing is poised to hire up to 150,000 more paramilitary People's Armed Police officers to maintain order throughout 1999, deemed by some cadres as a make-or-break year for the Communist Party. As head of the new Temporary Leading Group on Rectifying National Affairs, President Jiang Zemin has identified three groups of "dangerous people" apart, of course, from pro-democracy activists. The other three are underground religious groups; illegal, wildcat trade unions; and "social volunteers," people active in fighting for workers' and consumers' rights and environmental issues. Jiang is urging the maximum attention to preventing activists from forming national networks. The attempt to "prevent unrest" means that dissidents who might stage demonstrations close to the tenth anniversary of Tiananmen Square in June could be locked up well beforehand.

Correspondent  
China

\* \* \*

### BRITAIN

There is little sign that the people who left socialism ten years ago to rally to Labour are disillusioned as it has moved steadily Right. Blair's betrayals of even the most minimal liberal standards continue. We hear he wants to allow the continuance of some hereditary peers' seats in the Lords. Now the government, going far beyond the Tories in its rush to privatize, is telling local councils to sell off their housing stocks. There are a few small signs: back in May the former Class War people called a conference of anarchists of a wide variety and it was worthwhile. And once again, the Anarchist Bookfair was the largest ever. Yet all over the country there seems a decline of single issue campaigning with the honorable exception of Ploughshares 2000. The campaigns against new roads and airport extensions seemed to take off during the Major government but now show far less vigor. It could be that the majority of the activists who were yesterday involved in single issue campaigns are now stopping to think out a more global opposition policy.

Laurens Otter  
Britain

\* \* \*

### GERMANY

The era of Kohl is over. Everybody is satisfied at not having to see Kohl's face again for the next four years. But nothing really will change but the faces. We have a real problem with the right-wing extremists, there is still an East-West conflict, there is still a big gulf between rich and poor.

Student  
Germany

\* \* \*

### SOUTH AFRICA

There is nothing inspiring in South Africa today. The elite are having a good time; the millions of the marginalized are worse off than they were and are sadly disillusioned. Many say they do not see why they should vote come the next elections. The people are looking for an alternative, but none is seen. Unemployment among Blacks is still over 40%. Hence the high rate of crime. The school system is in shambles. The health services have broken down; patients even have to bring their own linen when they go to the hospital. Millions of Blacks are still living in shacks on the outskirts of every town and city. Why? There is no money. In every province, the civil servants have stolen millions of rand, buying airplanes, going on holiday trips all over the world and buying themselves every luxury that money can buy. When caught and investigated, they are suspended on full pay and during this period some of them have negotiated a retirement package and have gotten away with everything. The incoming president has promised zero tolerance on corruption but it is felt that may be just election rhetoric.

Phyllis Ntantale  
South Africa

### ITALY

Over 100,000 people, for the most part students and teachers, went to Rome on a Saturday in mid-December to take part in a demonstration against the government decision to finance private and Catholic schools. Premier D'Alema and Public Education Minister Luigi Berlinguer (both are regretful and recycled members of the vanished Italian Communist Party) dared to ride roughshod over the 33rd article of the Italian Constitution that prohibits governmental financing of nonpublic schools. Not even the pro-clerical Democrazia Cristiana governments who ruled Italy during the last 50 years dared to grant the Vatican wishes on this. D'Alema is paying off his debt to the tiny, clerical, conservative UDR Party (Unione Democratica Repubblicana) of Francesco Cossiga who exchanged his support to D'Alema's government for the obligation of giving public money to Catholic schools. In spite of the Pope's continuous propaganda and the government's lies, slavishly reported in daily TV news, most of the students and teachers are opposed to financing the clerical schools while the impoverishment of the public schools worsens.

Alfio Massaro  
Milan

### THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO IN LIGHT OF TODAY



Generally, I have had a difficult time in understanding negation, dialectic, etc. I found Peter Hudis' article in your pamphlet celebrating the 150th anniversary of the *Communist Manifesto* helpful in clarifying those aspects of Hegel and Marx. When you see the struggle to negate the negation is not only collective but individual, you begin to understand how difficult is our quest for true freedom for humanity. One can see the limitation of many so-called alternatives offered by reformists who fool us into thinking their concepts represent basic change when they are really only cosmetic activities to make capitalism appear to be more just and concerned. The question is how to keep from being dragged into a superficial life of acceptance, how not to get stuck.

Longtime supporter  
Wisconsin

\* \* \*

From hearing comments about Marxism from my feminist friends, I would say there is a general critique that Marx just doesn't address women or women's liberation. But Maya Jhansi's article on "Feminism and the *Communist Manifesto*" in the December issue listed a lot of challenges to that frame of thought, from the 1844 Humanist Essays to the 1880s *Ethnological Notebooks*. I see her challenging feminist thinkers to go back to the source and think for themselves.

Young feminist  
Memphis

\* \* \*

*Editor's note: Copies of our pamphlet "Celebrations of the 150th anniversary of 'The Communist Manifesto,' which contains speeches, letters and presentations on the Manifesto from a Marxist-Humanist viewpoint, are available from N&L for \$2.00.*

### GIRL CONVENTION

We want to inform your readers that we are planning a girl convention for July of 1999 to be held in Memphis. We want it to be centered around the needs of girls in the South. We want to address the needs of all girls, not just punk rock teens. We realize that for real revolution to take place everyone's needs must be heard and responded to. With the help of the Women's Action Coalition we will be able to keep the costs minimal. We'd like to hear from anyone interested in attending so we can set a definite date and reserve the space necessary.

Robin and Jennifer  
787 Ellsworth  
Memphis, TN 38111

## Readers' Views



### MUMIA ABU-JAMAL AND POLITICAL PRISONERS

Watching the "20/20" broadcast on ABC about Mumia Abu-Jamal's case took me back 15 years. I might as well have been sitting back in apartheid Johannesburg in the mid-1980s watching state-funded and sponsored media that showed only one side of a despicable story. Never had I seen such a pathetic excuse for "investigative journalism" in my life. More than ever before I can now believe there is a huge miscarriage of justice in Mumia's case. His integrity and courage in standing in solidarity with the locked-out ABC workers by refusing to participate in a phone interview, when what he desperately needs is honest and fair reporting, is incredible to behold. In my mind he may be America's Nelson Mandela. He should run for president. He has my vote.

L.J.  
New York

\* \* \*

On the day of the "20/20" broadcast, an interview with Sam Donaldson ran in the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, in which he declared Mumia guilty, called for his execution and said his supporters were ignorant. It makes you doubt there is any chance to get fair and objective reporting on almost any issue in this country.

Disgusted  
Philadelphia

\* \* \*

At the Martin Luther King Day march in New Orleans the group called Workers Against Capitalism marched with the Committee to Free the Angola 2. Herman Wallace and Albert Woodfox have been in lockdown for 30 years at Angola State Penitentiary. They were framed up for killing a guard, but the real issue is that they became Black Panthers while they were in prison.

Worker Against Capitalism  
New Orleans

### WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN

The treatment of women in Afghanistan since the Taliban took

power in 1996 is being compared to the treatment of Jews in pre-Holocaust Poland. Women have been stoned in public for not having the proper attire. One was beaten to death by an angry mob of fundamentalists for accidentally exposing her arm while she was driving. Women are not allowed to work or even go out in public without a male relative. Professors, doctors, lawyers, artists and writers have been forced from their jobs. Depression has reached emergency levels. The suicide rate has increased significantly. It is not a "cultural thing." Women enjoyed relative freedom until 1996. The rapidity of the transition is the main reason for the suicide and depression. What I want to know is how we can let the women in Afghanistan know we support them. Human decency is a right, whether one lives in Afghanistan or the U.S.

Women's liberationist  
Chicago

### A VIEW FROM MAURITIUS

Did you know that Iraq was bombed by the U.S. in December via Mauritius? Diego Garcia (the U.S. military base) was severed from Mauritius at the time of Mauritian independence from the British colonial forces and was handed over to the U.S. to use as a military base. The Mauritian people who inhabited it, were born there, worked and lived there, were all kicked out in the late 1960s. There has been a struggle for the demilitarization and decolonization of Diego Garcia that continues today. We are active in that struggle and publicly protested against the shameful bombing of Iraq and the use of Diego Garcia in that context.

Muvman Liberasyon Fam  
Republic of Mauritius

### LEARNING ABOUT ABOLITIONISM

Someone from *News & Letters* talked to our class about Abolitionists. I had no idea that other people were interested in Abolitionism. I thought nobody cared. We all wanted to thank him.

Grade school student  
Illinois

### STATE-CAPITALISM, MARX, AND LENIN: A CONTINUING DEBATE

In the December issue you published a letter by Raya Dunayevskaya written in response to a letter I wrote her in 1968. Readers may have the impression that Raya's correspondents have long since been consigned to the "dustbin of history" and may be unaware of the circumstances surrounding my letter or that the writer is still very much with us.

I possess no copy of the letter I wrote more than 30 years ago and have no wish to engage in a posthumous debate. The letter was no doubt full of what I might now view as youthful error, but it was part of a process of questioning at once personal and historical. The most critical question for me had to do with the nature of the Soviet state: was it communist, or at least socialist, as I had been taught to believe, was it "revisionist," as the Maoists asserted, or was it a "degenerated workers' state," as the Trotskyists maintained? Your readers may be surprised to learn that my discussions with Raya and members of the New York News and Letters group actually led to my joining the organization since it was, as far as I knew, the only group that argued for a state-capitalist analysis of the Soviet Union, an analysis that increasingly made sense as Russian tanks rolled into Prague that summer.

Raya's letter reveals the reasons why I joined and why I eventually left. For if *N&L*, following Raya's lead, took working-class struggles seriously as a basis for advancing Marxist theory, it failed to pursue the implications of its state-capitalist analysis to a critical examination of Leninism (which is in

my view the theory for the building of the state-capitalist state) or the totality of Lenin's thought. This theoretical failure has led to an insularity that *N&L*, as an organization, has yet to overcome. Raya's frequent insistence that a particular view or analysis belonged to "we and we alone" has meant that *N&L* has failed to recover the revolutionary legacy of the German Council Communists, who long before Raya saw the Soviet Union as state-capitalist, but unlike Raya also developed a thoroughgoing critique of Lenin and Leninism.

Alan Wallach  
Washington, D.C.

\* \* \*

*Editor's Note: We are happy to print Alan Wallach's response to the material we selected for the Marxist-Humanist Archives column last month. We would point out, however, that there is a long and detailed legacy of critique by our tendency of Lenin's political, philosophical and organizational contributions—ranging from our opposition to his theory of the vanguard party to our critique of his ambivalence on matters of dialectical philosophy. For the fullest expression of this critique, see Dunayevskaya's "New Thoughts on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy," published as the Introduction to the 1991 edition of her *Philosophy and Revolution*. For a critique of the German Council Communists, Pannekoek especially, see the "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" (June 1, 1987) in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism*.*

### CLINTON'S TRIAL AND THE FAR RIGHT

How did Clinton think he could escape from the Republican Right when he let them come down so hard on all of us women and children on welfare? We know what it feels like to be hated by those people. When it's all over I think we may find out that the rich tobacco owners he was after like R.J. Reynolds are the ones that want him destroyed the most.

**Workfare mother  
Illinois**

\*\*\*

When the Republicans started this whole impeachment business I thought we'd all have to bring a bag lunch to the polls at the next election, the lines will be so long. By now, I think we may all have to bring our pajamas, too.

**Retired worker  
California**

\*\*\*

Clinton is guilty of "abusing women" all right. But it certainly isn't Lewinsky or Paula Jones I'm talking about. The real women he abused are the welfare mothers he attacked by putting into effect the right wing's vicious idea of what "welfare reform" should be.

**Women's liberationist  
Illinois**

\*\*\*

The disgraceful conduct of the Clinton government's actions in relation to Iraq and the world at large brings into question the basic theory of the State as a legitimate manifestation of national will. As the State has become a void in the national mind, its false religion buys, sells and corrupts all it comes into contact with. The ill-natured national government and its faithful minions are courting disaster for the entire planet. The Left is small and disunity is its rule, while the Right acts to suffocate all resistance, but the American war machine must be stopped.

**Kelly  
Louisiana**

\*\*\*

In the absence of a real Left, of any kind of visible political opposition, the triumphant neo-liberal, Republicrat Right has split wide open. Thus the consensus politics of the military-corporate state, having reached its apogee in post-Reagan, neo-liberal America, is incapable of further development along its present lines and is in the process of abolishing itself as politics. This develop-

ment in the sphere of appearances corresponds to the essential movement in modern capitalism, which is toward greater and greater decadence. The serious question that follows is what other kind of politics can emerge from its irrelevant orgy of self-destructive idiocy.

**Richard Greeman  
France**



### MUSICIANS AS WORKERS

Many musicians teach, perform, create under horrendously exploitative working conditions. For two years, the jazz instructors at the Mannes College of Music, Jazz and Contemporary Program of the New School have been struggling for union recognition and a fair contract as members of the Associated Musicians Local 802, AFL-CIO. An agreement has just been signed. The contract includes a wage increase, a first-time pension payment, health benefits and job security. Now another group of music teachers at the New School has started a campaign for union recognition. The New York News and Letters Committee will be active in whatever ways possible to support this campaign of the Justice for Jazz Artists. We have been told by other musicians that the union needs to explore other musician work places, most notably the conditions of accompanists at dance schools.

**Sheila  
New York**

### KAREL KOSIK'S CRITIQUE OF A COMMODIFIED WORLD

Some of the reviewers of Karel Kosik's latest book, *Antediluvian Reflections*, object to the author's almost agitator's fervor in criticizing the Czech present, especially as this turns out to be a critique of today's world in general. He sees an anonymous dictator as ruling this world—his name is Market. His iron hand is invisible and capitalist. Kosik says what is necessary is a radical, essential turn, a change of the attitude to nature, history, time, truth and

untruth. The schema of Kosik's reflections look like this: Let's describe the world as we see it, then let's philosophize on this picture, and finally let's refuse it. The lack of analysis, philosophical but concrete, is what we miss. The book is a collection of newspaper essays, mostly published in the left-wing daily *Pravo*, written in a rather sophisticated, literary language you would expect from a philosopher of Kosik's stature. Some critics appeal to Kosik, instead of republishing collected articles, to write a coherent, thick book with new views or at least a new analysis of old truths. They forget that the thick manuscript the Communist secret police confiscated from him in the 1970s took as long to mature in his mind as what he may be preparing now—and that these essays could represent just a preliminary step.

**Stephen Steiger**

**Prague**

### ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Your front page article on the Middle East in the December *N&L* was, as always, right on target. There is hope that Netanyahu will fall in this election. Not that he will be replaced by a socialist, but it will be better.

**Gila  
Jerusalem**

\*\*\*

Since the Zionists and the reactionary nationalist settlers led by Netanyahu wish to re-enact the Crusades that were mounted to "liberate" the Holy Land, they would do well to study that history. They failed. The UN voted to partition Palestine into a Jewish and a Palestinian state in the aftermath of the Holocaust, when the major powers suffered guilt feelings for allowing the extermination of six million Jews. Various Israeli governments have managed to drag out the implementation of that partition for more than 50 years, ignoring not only all the UN resolutions, but the suffering of the Palestinians in the refugee camps. Now Netanyahu has said that if Arafat declares a Palestinian state on May 4, 1999 (as the Stockholm Peace Agreement stipulated) it could be the end of the peace process. By setting the date of the elections past the above deadline, it is obvious Netanyahu wants to use eventual Palestinian statehood as an election issue.

**Holocaust survivor  
Canada**

In January, a nine-judge panel of Israel's High Court of Justice will consider petitions concerning the legal basis for the methods used in the interrogations of Palestinians by the General Security Service. Human rights organizations estimate that some 85% of the 1,500 Palestinians interrogated each year are subjected to methods which constitute torture. Those methods include sleep deprivation, tying-up in painful positions, sensory deprivation for days and even weeks, exposure to extremes of heat or cold, degradation and threats, and violent shaking. The Human Rights Committee of the UN has reiterated that no exceptional circumstances can justify torture but this has not affected Israeli practice. We are concerned that the High Court could legalize the use of these interrogation methods which would be the first instance of a modern democratic state openly embracing the intentional infliction of severe pain as a legitimate tool of government.

**B'Tselem  
Israel**

### HONDURAS AFTER THE HURRICANE

I have heard from friends in Honduras that they are OK but homeless and everyone lost their crops. For coastal communities it's back to ground zero. They're trying to figure out how to start from the beginning again. Your editorial on "Hurricane's unnatural rage" in the December issue did a real good job making connections explicit between environmental degradation and poverty and U.S. foreign policy. It was powerful when it asked "did the politicians think we would forget...?"

**Peace activist  
Memphis**

### WHO READS N&L?

Two of my friends, both of whom read *N&L*, told me that when they wanted to get to the bottom of an issue or get the "real scoop" they always turn to it for the best coverage. They talked about an article on a police blacklist in Chicago which they had cut out and sent to a woman attorney in Chicago, who found it extremely useful.

**Supporter  
California**

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

### 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

- NEW! Voices from within the Prison Walls**  
by D. A. Sheldon. Prisoners' views of (in)justice system and organizing from within .....\$8  
For pamphlet plus donor copy for a prisoner .....\$16
- Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism** by Peter Hudis .....\$3
- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'** (Expanded edition) .....\$5
- Marx 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
- Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya** .....\$2
- News and Letters Committees Constitution** .....\$3 postage

- Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog**  
A full list of publications (includes many not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees....\$5 postage

### ARCHIVES

- Guides to Collection and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development**  
Full description of 15,000-page microfilm collection ....\$4.50
- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development**  
A 15,000-page microfilm collection on 8 reels available from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202 .....\$165

### NEWSPAPER

- News & Letters subscription**  
Unique combination of worker and intellectual published 10 times a year. (Request information about gift subscriptions) .....\$5/year
- Bound Volumes of News & Letters**  
1970-77, 1977-84, 1984-87, 1987-94 .....\$25 each  
*N&L* is also available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. *N&L* as well as other Marxist-Humanist literature is available on audio tape.

### Mail orders to:

News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605, Phone (312) 663-0839

Enclosed find \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the literature checked. Please add \$1 for each item for postage. Illinois residents add 7% sales tax.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# Right-wing coup at home, permanent war abroad

(Continued from page 1)

Commission on Disarmament, but had used that commission to spy on the Iraqis, in direct violation of UN regulations.

**While the bombing of Iraq was seen by some as nothing more than a "wag the dog" scenario, its effect has been the exact reverse. Far from the bombing deflecting attention from the impeachment, the impeachment deflected the greatly needed opposition to the bombing.**

It is true that a number of demonstrations erupted as soon as the bombs began to fall. They ranged from the sit-in at the offices of liberal Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone who supported the bombing, to the demonstrations organized by Voices in the Wilderness, a Chicago-based group that has been delivering medicine and medical supplies for children's hospitals in Iraq in defiance of U.S./UN sanctions responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths since the end of the Gulf War in 1991.

## RIGHT-WING COUP, AMERICAN STYLE

Some demonstrators found themselves protesting two things at once—one sign demanding "Stop the impeachment" and the other "Stop the bombing." One elderly Black protester in Chicago at a rally against the bombing of Iraq carried a hand-lettered sign: "This is the impeachable offense." But many who would be expected to protest held back from speaking out against Clinton on the grounds of not wanting to help what Congressional Black Caucus member John Conyers called nothing less than an attempted right-wing "coup," American-style.

No matter how broad their dismay may be at the vulgarities Clinton has displayed in his personal conduct, the overwhelming majority of the American people has consistently made clear their disgust at the inquisition to which Clinton has been subjected to by Kenneth Starr's allegedly "independent" investigation. The November elections were sure proof of the extent of this deep opposition to the Republican agenda. Yet far from slowing down the Republican attack on Clinton it appeared to spur them on to actual impeachment.

Their vicious hatred is hard to explain when one looks at how consistently Clinton has capitulated to nearly all their reactionary demands ever since his election six years ago when the arch-conservative forces began their campaign to destroy him. That record includes everything from the greatest expansion of the prison system in our history to the complete dismantling of the welfare system that for six decades has been the only "safety net" for hundreds of thousands of poor families.

The Right is determined to bring down all the forces opposed to the kind of life they are driving toward, with the Christian Coalition in the driver's seat. Suddenly Henry Hyde began reminding us that the U.S. is not a democracy but a republic, that it was organized to be run by the "wisdom" of its leaders, not by the polls that boosted Clinton's approval rating to an astounding 74% as soon as he was impeached.

## THE RACIST STENCH

It is neither an accident nor surprising that the Black dimension has expressed the deepest opposition to this drive. The stench of the racism that pervades those driving for impeachment—the conservative Southerners who hold nearly all the Republican leadership positions in Congress—is especially pungent as it rises from Trent Lott, the Senate Majority Leader.

He has lately been trying to disavow his close ties to the reincarnation of the racist White Citizens Councils of the 1950s known as the Council of Conservative Citizens. Their quarterly newsletter, *Citizens Informer*, publishes what the Southern Poverty Law Center describes as "a steady stream of anti-Black and anti-homosexual columns." It has described Martin Luther King Jr. as "a depraved miscreant" and the American population as turning into "a slimy brown mass of glop."

Unfortunately for Lott, his fellow council members in Mississippi refuse to accept his denial, affirming that he is an honorary member and citing the speeches in which he has declared the council to "stand for the right principles and the right philosophy."

It was fitting that the Senate trial should open with the 96-year-old relic of old-line segregation, Strom Thurmond, swearing in the arch-reactionary William Rehnquist to preside during the trial. Rehnquist, first appointed to the Supreme Court by Richard Nixon and elevated to become the chief justice by Ronald Reagan, had at that point tried to repudiate the memo that he wrote as a law clerk during hearings on school desegregation, in which he had concluded that Plessy v. Ferguson (the legal foundation for mandatory racial segregation) "was right and should be reaffirmed."

As he was being sworn in to preside over Clinton's trial, the sight was surreal, with Rehnquist wearing the black robe to which, some time ago, he had affixed four gold stripes on each arm, inspired by the costume of the Lord High Executioner in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*. Ludicrous as the sight might be, it cannot hide the dangerous moment we have reached, whether or not the Senate actually votes to remove Clinton from the presidency.

## REWRITING OUR HISTORY

All of this demands a look at the long history of the

far Right in this country. To suggest that there is anything in common between Clinton and Nixon's "crimes and misdemeanors" is to hide what Nixon really represented. The crime of Watergate was not a question of a lie or even the overwhelming mass of lies that surrounded it. Watergate marked nothing less than a totalitarian president's criminal attempt to set up a single party state within the two-party system.

Nixon had defeated Hubert Humphrey to win the presidency by a hair's breadth in 1968 at the height of the anti-Vietnam war protests by posing as a critic of that hated war. Instead, he intensified it and quickly moved to crush the anti-war forces. On the pretext of acting against "terrorism," a campaign was launched against all "radicals"—by which was meant the youth, the Black masses, labor and the militant women who had just burst forth in a totally new Women's Liberation Movement.

Although the break-in at the Democratic Party's campaign offices at Watergate did not take place until the next election year 1972, Nixon had begun working out his new police state methods at home and abroad as soon as he took office.

Nixon's politics were the politics of blatant wiretapping and infiltration. By the time the investigation of Watergate was over, it had been revealed that, while informers had been sent to selected campuses, every Black student organization that existed in the U.S. had been wiretapped. But it was not until 1974 when the transcripts of Nixon's tapes of the discussions in his Oval Office finally appeared that the American people experienced the shock of seeing how petty, debasing, and completely disgusting they were, complete with an "enemies list" to be taken care of by his henchmen. It was only then that his Republican cronies urged him to resign—so they could get him out of the White House before the next election day.

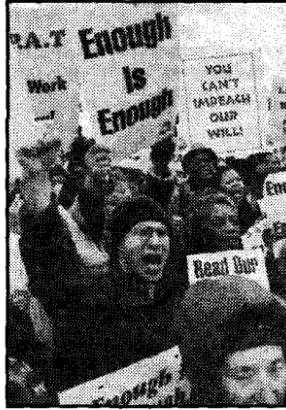
Watergate was not just about a "cover up" of all of Nixon's crimes. It revealed how far we had traveled toward neo-fascism at that moment. To cover that up is a dangerous rewriting of history.

Nixon represented a new moment in the growth of the Right in this country, taking power only four years after the defeat of Barry Goldwater, who had become the spokesman in 1964 not just for the Republican Party but for the "lunatic fringe" of the KKK, the Minute Men, and the Birchites.

Goldwater's deep racism was revealed in his railing during the 1964 campaign against the "hyphenated Americans" who supposedly ran the country. A sigh of relief was heard throughout the land when the Black masses and white labor joined forces, at least at the ballot box, to vote against Goldwater's drive to make the "open shop" the rule of the land.

But what has happened over the decades since that election is what we warned of then: that Goldwater's defeat, welcome as it was, did not mean that Goldwaterism was dead. It gained a new lease on life with Reagan, who rolled back the social gains of the 1960s to a degree only envisioned by Goldwater.

While we cannot here detail the entire chronology of the many stages that have appeared since World War



II, it is important to recognize that at two distinct points the Right was stopped only because it "went too far." McCarthy was stopped when he tried to go after the Army; Nixon was stopped when he moved from cutting down the students at Kent State and Jackson State to go after the other capitalist party that commanded state power.

**The question today is whether the far-Right will overreach itself again today in its drive to impose its reactionary agenda on the entire country. But this is only half the question, for at each point the reactionary forces get as far as they do because they know where they want to go and are determined to get there.**

It is clear that the hand of the Right is not going to be stopped by the liberals, much less the Democrats who have capitulated to it on every occasion. A far more fundamental pole of opposition is needed which flows from the forces of revolution who are trying to reach a very different kind of world than we have today.

## THE REAL STATE OF THE UNION

Clinton's popularity polls soared even higher as soon as the Republicans had finished presenting their charges against him and his own lawyers began his defense. That same night he delivered the last "State of the Union" message to be given in this millennium. Those soaring polls were surely not a reflection of any reality between the real state of the union and the glowing picture Clinton painted of a booming economy.

The latest economic figures claim we were enjoying the lowest jobless rate since 1957. But as against the strength of the service sector, steep price declines for their products have swept U.S. farmers into a global economic decline that show no signs of letting up. At the same time, the U.S. blue collar workers are also being whipsawed by the global economic crisis. Since last March, U.S. factory employment had fallen by 272,000 jobs.

As for "welfare reform"—which earned Clinton an ovation from both sides of the House in his speech—the most recent study on the situation in Wisconsin, one of the first states to implement "workfare," documents that most who have left welfare for jobs are barely getting by and find it much harder to buy sufficient food. What is growing is the working poor.

Most significant of all is the complete masking of the real unemployment in the U.S. by the incredible tripling of the prison population in 15 years to no less than 1.8 million now incarcerated. It underlines the importance of the way in which, within those prisons revolutionaries are being discovered, as witness Mumia Abu-Jamal, whom the state seems determined to kill, if for no other reason than to put a chill on the mind of the oppressed who views him as a symbol of their own struggles—including the youth who are mobilizing for a massive rally for Mumia in April in Philadelphia.

At this critical moment the new depth of the retrogression we confront is marked not only by the attempted "coup" from the far Right in Congress, but the simultaneous open declaration that we have entered a new stage in U.S. imperialism's drive for single world mastery. It is being backed up by the proposal to pour no less than \$100 billion to the military. Never was it more imperative to work out an opposition to such madness, one that expresses not only what we are against, but what we are for. The principle on which Marxist-Humanists stand was never more needed: **To the barbarism of the wars waged at home and abroad, we pose the new society.** January 21, 1999

## A voice of the wrongfully convicted

*Detroit, Mich.*—My brother, Timothy Kincaid, #169059, also known as Sha-Teak A. Imani, is in prison in Michigan, convicted 17 years ago for three murders he did not commit. He was 16 years old and with six other people, three men and two women when two guys pulled their guns and started shooting. Two men and a woman were killed, and the other woman was hit and is in a wheelchair, paralyzed from the neck down.

My brother was arrested, put in a youth detention facility to await trial, but escaped and went to California, where he married and had a son. Three years later, he was arrested and brought back to Michigan to stand trial.

He was convicted on three counts of murder, assault with intent to commit murder and felony firearm possession. There are a number of questions about the trial, including the legality of a self-incriminating statement he was tricked into making, as well as whether he got adequate legal representation.

I believe he was at the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong people and for the wrong reasons when the shooting took place, and was set up to take the blame for a crime someone else committed.

Everyone who was involved in the trial is now dead except my brother and the woman who was shot and is in the wheelchair. She knows my brother did not shoot anyone, and has said so.

In the meantime, my brother has been catching hell in prison, charged with everything from attempting to escape, drug trafficking, attempted assault against a guard with a knife, embezzlement, loan sharking and assaulting a nurse. He has spent many years in solitary confinement as a result of these charges, all of which he denies and says he can prove. But as any prisoner can

tell you, when it comes to the word of a prisoner against any prison officer, the prisoner always loses.

My brother has ring worm on his head, and when a nurse started to examine him, he asked her to put on a pair of gloves to avoid infection. She ignored him, and when she reached for his head, he put his arms up to keep her hands off of his infected scalp.

She accused him of assault for this simple act, and a guard said he would support my brother's innocence, but all of this was a set-up because my brother's parole hearing was scheduled for the next day. Of course, he was declared a menace to society and the parole was denied.

During all these years my brother has been rehabilitating himself as much as he could, including learning to type and setting up an organization called Prisoners Doing The Right Thing, which is designed to help prisoners as well as youth outside of prison. Through this type of education, prisoners can be helped in rehabilitation and youth outside can learn to avoid problems leading to criminal behavior.

I have been trying to free my brother for the past five years, and from the way he looked when I last visited him in October, it is very critical for his own health to get out. He is only 36 years old, but he looked like he was over 60.

Since I gave my testimony at a recent public hearing on police brutality held by the Detroit City Council, my brother has been getting his mail, which he had not been before. I have also written to many places trying to help him, including Detroit Congressman John Conyers, 60 Minutes, Nightline, NAACP and Prison Legal Services. All we want is justice.

—Vivian Kincaid

# Youth Mumia's voice breaks through state-imposed silence

by Kevin Michaels

Imprisoned journalist and activist Mumia Abu-Jamal is known the world over as the "voice of the voiceless" for his resolute advocacy of the rights of the dispossessed. Few of us, however, have had the opportunity to actually hear his voice because of his physical isolation on Pennsylvania's death row since 1982. We have instead had to rely on his syndicated column and the two published collections of his writings, *Live From Death Row* and *Death Blossoms*.

When National Public Radio announced its intention in 1994 to air a series of commentaries by Mumia on its flagship news program "All Things Considered," his supporters rejoiced at this blow against the silence imposed on Mumia. The feeling was short-lived, however, as the forces of reaction led by then-Senator Bob Dole and the Fraternal Order of Police went on the offensive to prevent Mumia's voice from being broadcast. National Public Radio capitulated to the pressure and locked its tapes away in a vault.

Despite this instance of the media's complicity in the stifling of the right to free speech the world now has a new chance to hear Mumia speak for himself. The Quixote Center's Prison Radio Project was able to conduct three recording sessions with Mumia which have been put together with introductions by prominent supporters of Mumia, such as Alice Walker and Robert Meeropol, and released on compact disc as *All Things Censored Vol. 1*. All the proceeds from the sale of the recordings will go toward Mumia's legal defense.

## 'ALL THINGS CENSORED'

The importance of the recordings is underscored by a November 1996 dictate from the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections banning anyone from photographing or using any electronic device to record a prisoner. This harsh restriction has withstood a U.S. Court of Appeals hearing.

Mumia's topics on *All Things Censored Vol. 1* are diverse. They range from the 1857 Dred Scott Supreme Court case to NAFTA, from the Philadelphia police force's ongoing war against the MOVE organization to the death of his mother. What characterizes these remarkable essays is his conviction that American civilization is deformed by race and class oppression and that the criminal justice system—and ultimately the death penalty—is the most salient manifestation of this deformity.

This message comes across with great impact in the piece "Acting Like Life's a Ballgame," one of the suppressed National Public Radio essays read here by the late radical lawyer William Kunstler. In it Mumia describes how the retributive nature of the criminal justice system—with its glib "three-strikes" metaphor—serves to dehumanize those young lives caught in its clutches by describing its effect on just one young Black man he has come to know in prison. Mumia reminds us

that although his case has succeeded in gaining the world's attention, hundreds of thousands of other Black, Latino and Native American prisoners will serve out their long sentences in the brutal anonymity of today's overcrowded prisons and jails.

## VOICE FOR VOICELESS

*All Things Censored Vol. 1* is a valuable contribution to the urgent struggle to free Mumia, which will in all likelihood be the outcome of his winning a new trial.

## Oakland schools interfere with Mumia teach-in

**Oakland, Cal.**—Supporters of journalist and former Black Panther Mumia Abu-Jamal, imprisoned on Pennsylvania's death row, are opposing moves by the Oakland School Board and the Oakland chapter of the NAACP to undermine a planned teach-in on Mumia's case sponsored by the Oakland Teachers Association.

Originally scheduled to occur on Jan. 14, both the Oakland School Board president and superintendent stopped the teach-in as an assembly by prohibiting it from taking place on school property and during school hours. The excuse used was to "show respect" for an Oakland police officer killed in the aftermath of a recent high-speed police chase. Teachers, however, voted to continue the teach-in in their individual classes.

The fundamental reason for the effort to silence the teach-in is an ideological one. This was clearly expressed by School Board President Noel Gallo, who

said, "We're tired of being distracted by all these political issues that have nothing to do with learning how to read, write and get algebra done." This similar sentiment was also expressed by the Oakland NAACP President Shannon Reeves's presumptions of the students to be mere empty slates devoid of political insight or interest. In reality it was many of the same students themselves who initiated further exploration into the issues of race, the criminal justice system and the death penalty, as a legitimate topic for a social studies class.

Students' social concerns aren't separate from what they see as a profound lack in the education system itself. Nearly 3,000 Bay Area students rallied in October for more money for schools and less for jails. As one student put it: "We want to make sure we have money so our schools don't look like prisons."

—Htun Lin

## Resisting the war machine by refusing to sign up

**Memphis, Tenn.**—I am a 17-year-old high school student writing from the "mid-South" region of the U.S. As a minor, I am free to make some of my own choices pertaining to how I express myself and put my words into action.

But in a couple of months, one very important thing will change. Every male who turns 18 in the U.S. must file his name for Selective Service. This presents a problem for me, being that I will not fight a war or kill another human being for any nation, no matter who tells me to.

So my path is set: I must resist this law which forces me to be a paid assassin for the government. I asked around to see what some other people, especially in the punk/hardcore community, did when they turned 18 and had to file for the draft. Most just said they really didn't think twice about it and just signed up. Another couple of people said they prolonged it as long as they could, then signed up.

I then discovered a group of people who apparently have found a way to escape this ordeal: Conscientious Objectors. My understanding is that this group of people has found a way, within the boundaries of the legal sys-

tem, to become exempt from the draft. I also found out that it is necessary to have very strong religious affiliations. Not having any religious affiliations rules this out for me.

It should be clear to all of us why we should resist the U.S. war machine. Any revolutionary or radical group must see that to support the armed forces by adding your name to a list of willing killers is to be totally counterproductive to the social change we are striving so deeply for. We must show them that it is anyone's right to refuse to "serve your country" by doing something morally wrong. And most of all, we must show them that we will not use violent ways, as they do, to obtain goals of greed and power.

There are better ways to take a stand and really serve your country: Help people in need whenever given the chance rather than pound them into submission; sign your name to a grassroots organization volunteer list, not a federal document prostituting yourself; start at home with yourself and build a community where human beings co-exist with each other and have no need for such things as war.

—Active resister

## Nationwide protests oppose permanent war against Iraq

**Memphis, Tenn.**—Thirty peace and justice activists joined in a Vigil for Peace at the Federal Building Plaza here on Jan. 1. Braving rain and cold temperatures, the activists gathered to renew their commitment in the new year to continue to resist U.S. policy regarding Iraq.

The vigil was part of ongoing actions in Memphis in opposition to U.S.-led sanctions and bombings directed against the people of Iraq. Those actions and the vigil were organized by a broad coalition of people and groups in Memphis. Speakers pointed to the failure of sanctions and bombings to dislodge Saddam Hussein while instead leading to the deaths of an estimated 1.2 million Iraqi civilians.

Dr. Nabil Bayakly, director of the Muslim Student Association at the University of Memphis, spoke of how important it is for people here to publicly state their opposition to U.S. policy. "Your voices give needed support to Muslims in the U.S., and more importantly give us hope that U.S. policies, which are only hurting the people of Iraq, may someday be changed so that peace and justice can come to the people of Iraq and the Middle East," he said.

Surrounding Dr. Bayakly as he spoke were large pictures of some of the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children who are dying from the effects of the sanctions, and banners calling for an end to the sanctions. The pictures came from Voices in the Wilderness, a Chicago-based group that has been violating the sanctions by sending delegations to Iraq with food and medicine for the Iraqi people.

Following Dr. Bayakly's remarks, participants in the vigil joined in a candle-lighting ceremony and stood in vigil in remembrance of the victims of the sanctions and U.S. bombings.

—Participant

**San Francisco**—On Dec. 19 around 2,000 people demonstrated against U.S. bombing of Iraq. The crowd consisted mostly of anti-war youth, but included many previous wars' opponents, including the Gray Panthers.

Many families from Middle Eastern countries were present as well. Supporters of Leonard Peltier, who had held a rally earlier in the day, joined in as well.

The rally in the heart of the Mission district featured a variety of speakers. Some called for Clinton's impeachment not for sex but for war crimes. Some made clear that while they are here to oppose U.S. bombing, they do not support Saddam. One young man from Iraq said that he would be more than willing to go fight against Saddam in person, but that bombing only helps Saddam stay in power.

The march wound through many streets, spontaneously passing

by the planned ending point at the UN Plaza and continuing down Market Street, full of holiday shoppers, chanting "Stop your shopping, bombs are dropping!" It ended in front of Chevron building, calling attention to Chevron's willingness to spill blood (of the Ogoni and others) for oil.

The permanent nature of this war calls for continued response. Many smaller demonstrations followed in later days. On Jan. 16, for example, about 150 carried small cardboard caskets through major San Francisco streets in a symbolic funeral procession for the many Iraqi children killed by bombings and by sanctions imposed on Iraq since Bush's Gulf War eight years ago.

—Participants

**New York**—A conference on "The Crisis in Iraq" was held the night before the U.S. began to bomb that country Dec. 16. Put on by a coalition of The War Resisters League, religious and left groups, the conference stressed the cruelty of the economic sanctions which prevent the Iraqi people from getting food and medicine, resulting in thousands of deaths each month. The horrors described that night can only have been magnified by the new waves of bombing.

Jeremy Scahill of Pacifica Radio told of his visit to Iraq in November when a U.S. attack was threatened. He interviewed people about the 1991 war when, they said, the U.S. intentionally bombed air raid shelters including one attack that killed 1,000 civilians. As a result, many people will not go to shelters. An 11-year-old told him she was not afraid of bombs, she was so used to them and what they could do.

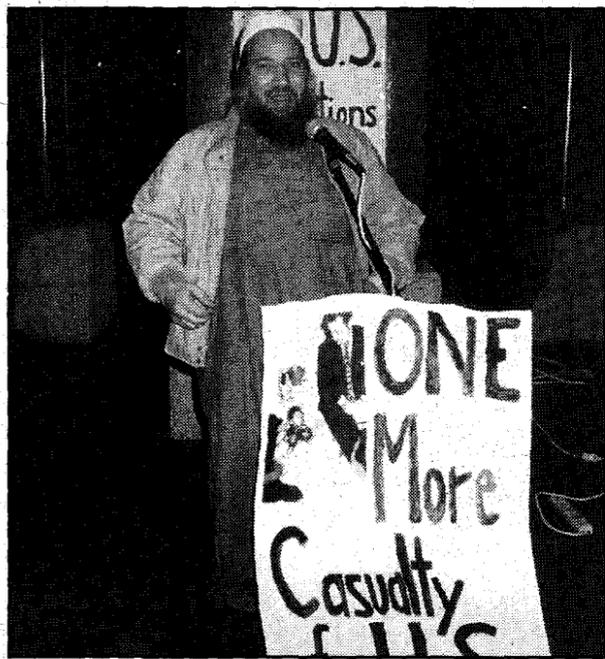
Scahill discussed how little publicity was given to Dennis Halliday's resignation from the UN over the sanctions which Halliday estimated cause 6,000 deaths a month. Scahill talked to U.S. network reporters who filmed Iraqi hospitals, devoid of supplies, but whose film never gets on TV here. He described children with terrible birth defects in the areas where the ground war was fought and the U.S. used a million depleted uranium-tipped bullets. "The American people are being told that sanctions are diplomacy; if they knew the reality, they would not allow it to continue," he said.

Scahill's condemnation of Saddam Hussein for persecuting his own people was criticized by a speaker from the Workers World Party's front group, International Action Center. He insisted we should only criticize the U.S., and he also criticized the anti-Gulf War movement for its lack of "unity."

I criticized his analysis of what kind of new movement we need. I experienced his group's heavy-handed manipulation of the 1991 movement. It turned off many new activists and contributed to the complete collapse of the movement as soon as the war ended.

The four days of bombing that followed this meeting saw three demonstrations in the streets of New York, the last with about 1,000 participants. Since then, however, I have not heard about one event on the subject. I also have not seen any government estimate of how many Iraqis, not just soldiers, were killed by the missiles and bombs, and how many more have starved since then.

—Anne Jaclard



Dr. Bayakly speaks at Memphis demonstration.

News & Letters

## Our Life and Times **Euro strengthens capital, but widens dissent**

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Eleven countries began to introduce the euro, a common monetary unit, on Jan. 1, increasing further the economic links among most of the countries of Western Europe.

Clearly the euro will immensely strengthen the power of capital. Many major economic decisions will be made, not by individual governments, but by the unelected leaders of the new European Central Bank based in Frankfurt, Germany. With the euro as a single

### Crackdown in China

Chinese rulers initiated a systematic crackdown on dissent shortly after President Clinton's visit in June 1998 as preparation for two conflicting anniversaries this year—the 50th anniversary of the October 1949 Chinese revolution through which Mao Zedong enshrined the Communist Party (CCP) in power and the 10th anniversary of the June 1989 Tiananmen Square mass demonstrations which were reaching out across China before they were brutally crushed.

Organizers who attempted to register the China Democracy Party (CDP) at the time of Clinton's visit



Xu Wenli's daughter joined New York protest against his imprisonment in China.

were targeted, including Xu Wenli from the 1970s Democracy Wall protest era, and Wang Youcai, a leader from the Tiananmen Square demonstrations. In late December, both were summarily tried and dealt harsh prison sentences.

Zhang Shanguang, who had served a seven-year sentence for activity involved in forming independent labor unions in 1989, was arrested last summer for reporting news on farmer protests in Hunan and helping organize the Association to Protect the Rights and Interests of Laid-Off Workers. In December, Zhang was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Already the CCP plan to eliminate failing state-capitalist enterprises has resulted in the loss of a reported 10 million jobs, with another six million projected for 1999. In a state with virtually no welfare system for people who are not working, state authorities are already dealing with daily demonstrations by unpaid or laid-off workers.

The *New York Times* reported, Jan. 16, a battle in Hunan between police and thousands of farmers who were demonstrating against exorbitant taxes and "fees," the widespread form of graft enforced by local government officials. China's rulers want to stifle any rival political party formations and especially any hint of a merging of intellectuals with independent workers and farmers' organizations. President Jiang Zemin warned in December that any challenges to the CCP's exclusive hold on power would be "annihilated in the early stages." That remains to be seen.

currency, large and even medium-sized corporations will now be able to shift production more easily to low-wage countries within "Euroland."

At the same time, however, fear of the growing power of global capitalism and anger at persistent unemployment has led to the election over the past two years of left of center governments throughout Western Europe. In addition, greater economic integration has created new possibilities for labor and other grassroots social movements to assume cross-national dimensions, sometimes challenging these new governments as well.

In November, for example, railroad workers in six countries went on strike against plans by European Union Commissioner and former British Labor Party leader Neil Kinnock to privatize the railroads, something that threatens both jobs and working conditions. In Belgium and Greece, the strike was 100% successful, in France about a third of the trains were idled, and in Spain, Portugal, and Luxembourg the impact was smaller but still serious.

**Struggles over immigration and against racism have become another arena of cross-national debate, if not yet action. Despite furious resistance from the conservative opposition, the new German Social Democratic-Green government plans to liberalize immigration laws, making it much easier for Turks and other immigrants to claim German citizenship. This has also had a regional impact. For example, French politics has been shaken up over immigration by a series of interventions by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, formerly a French student leader and today a leading member of the German Green Party.**

Cohn-Bendit, who will head an international Green slate in the European Parliament elections in June, called recently for Lionel Jospin, the Socialist Party leader of France's coalition government comprising Socialists, Greens, and Communists, to legalize without further delay that country's illegal immigrants, most of them Africans and Arabs. While Jospin has refused this sug-

### Unravelling of Brazil

The January devaluation of Brazil's currency was not unexpected, but it still sent shivers through stock markets and government cabinets, especially in the U.S., which saw the waves of global capitalism's financial contagion lapping perilously close to its shore.

The four-year-old "Real Plan," which tied the value of Brazil's currency (real) to the U.S. dollar, had succeeded in cutting inflation from a high of nearly 2,500% to below 5% and won the election of President Cardoso twice. But in the wake of Russia's economic collapse last year, Brazil began to unravel also, as foreign capital pulled a hasty retreat from "emerging" markets.

**The subsequent U.S.-IMF bailout of credit failed to insulate the real. The nearly 20% January devaluation falls most heavily on the vast majority of Brazilians in a class-ridden society where only 10% of the population sucks up nearly half the national wealth. Workers and the poor are already reeling from dislocations caused by the burgeoning national debt, soaring interest rates, and growing unemployment.**

While financial leaders from Brazil went to Washington, D.C. to discuss ways to "stabilize" the economy, an initiative by officials from Germany, France and Japan reportedly was announced to place international controls on currencies through an "exchange rate regime among major currencies which would reduce excessive volatility." This kind of tampering with "free markets" is taboo to the U.S.-IMF and is sure to produce more heat—but no light—among the so far contagion-free global capitalist giants.

gestion, it has been supported by both Greens and Communists, and has also impacted France's large grassroots pro-immigrant movement.

A recent decision by the new German government to phase out nuclear power has also had a regional impact. The French government has objected to Germany's plan to cease exporting nuclear wastes by 2000, claiming that this will have a negative economic impact on France's nuclear reprocessing industry, which has handled much of the German waste. Within France, this debate has pitted pro-nuclear French conservatives, Socialists, and Communists against Greens and the far Left.

In Germany, I.G. Metall, with 2.7 million members the country's largest labor union, has begun a series of warning strikes against DaimlerChrysler and other companies to demand a hefty 6.5% wage increase.

### Iran assassinations

Ever since their stranglehold on power solidified in the early 1980s, the death squads of the Iranian government have operated with impunity, assassinating hundreds of writers, teachers, journalists, and other political opposition members both in Iran and abroad. In January, however, for the first time the government was forced to officially admit the existence of these so-called "irresponsible colleagues" and arrest several of them working in the Ministry of Information. It was forced by a massive uproar caused by five recent assassinations of opposition figures.

First, in November, Dariush Foruhar, a National Front politician and ex-labor minister in the provisional government of Mehdi Bazargan, was found murdered along with his wife, Parvaneh Eskandari. Then three intellectuals, Majid Sharif, Mohammad Mokhtari, and Mohammad Puyandeh, were found strangled to death in Tehran's outlying areas. Puyandeh and Mokhtari were long active in the formation of an independent writers union. Both were hauled into court in October and told to stop their attempts to register such a union.

**The government of President Khatami, which has declared its aim to be the building of civil society, promised an investigation. Then in the first week of January the Ministry of Information announced the arrests of its "rogue" members. Even Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Spiritual (and unelected) Leader, had to admit the killings had resulted in "grave damage to the credibility of the sacred Islamic" system, forcing them to officially announce the arrests.**

Khamenei tried to blame the damage on "American and Israeli" agents and praised the Minister of Information, Najafabadi. Tehran University students have responded by holding street demonstrations carrying banners that seek the resignation of Najafabadi.

An editorial published in *Zan* (Woman) is calling for open investigations into numerous other cases of attacks and threats on people. So strong is the internal opposition, that Khamenei is accusing them of "acting like enemies—like foolish children who would ridicule their father for being in a verbal fight!"

Apologists like Tehran University professor Zibakalam allege that the arrests are proof that the government is "genuinely people-oriented." But others, while optimistic and understandably cautious in their public utterances, have other perspectives. As one writer, K. Kardavani, who was recently hauled before the courts for organizing the writers union, stated: "It is not enough. The government must follow up the case until the entire organizing structure behind these crimes is identified and explained to the people"

—Cyrus Noveen

## 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 nuclear 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*.