

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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50¢

## Lynch law prevails in Mississippi



by S. Hamer

Racism. Why does that word hold so much power? Why has it passed down through society as a vicious symbol of everything that penetrates deep hatred toward another human being because of his or her color and their place in society? How can we banish this racism, and do we have the power as people to control its burning path of destruction?

This is what we are talking about all over again in Mississippi today. Racism is very much alive in this country, even though people try to sugarcoat the truth to make it appear that we've outgrown racism. In Mississippi, and all over the South, Black men, women and children have been at the center of racism's attack.

On the plantation we had to pick cotton and plow the fields from sunup to sundown. We were forced to use separate water and eating facilities. Our children had to walk to separate schools. We were forced to stand and give up our seats on the buses after working all day. And our right to vote for a change was taken away.

Did the 1960s rebellion against racism really bring about justice and inner change? Or did it embarrass white society so that racism was hidden better, until certain moments come along when it is used in all the old vicious ways? We are asking these questions today in Mississippi because of what happened to three Black men in three different towns in our state.

Most of America has heard about how Raynard Johnson, a 17-year-old high school student in Kokomo,

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## Black World

### American civilization on trial, 2000



*Editor's note: I am turning over Black World this issue to excerpts from the following report Gene Ford gave to the Resident Editorial Board of News & Letters on our current work-in-progress, the Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension.—Lou Turner*

by Gene Ford

For over 200 years racism has been the complexion of the United States of America, that is, the Achilles heel of American civilization. Black in particular has been criminalized by the state and by the majority of this population; in the back of the mind Black is seen as a negative, a thief, a welfare cheat, a tax burden, i.e., expendable in relationship to "white" capital progress within the "richest nation of the world."

As recently as July 12, 2000 in the city of brotherly love, Philadelphia, Pa. the nation/world saw the ruthless beating of another young Black man, Thomas Jones, a suspected carjacker, by a gang of police who snatched Jones from a stolen police car, beat, stomped, and kicked him. They were implementing street "justice" for his shooting at police who were pursuing him during a ten-block chase.

Jones' relatives say that he ran from police because he feared for his life. The television footage shows eight to ten cops working over an already shot suspect. The police mentality is that of a gangster: If you hurt one of us we will inflict ten times more pain upon you and your family, a form of revenge through intimidation.

"We saw the tape. We saw that there were as many Black officers kicking and punching and jumping as white. We are not questioning that. We are concerned about the whole brutality," stated Rev. Simms, head of Black Clergy of Philadelphia and Vicinity. This is how the established Black leadership attempts to explain away the racism of this beating by recognizing that Black and white cops joined hands and beat a Black man who had been trapped or subdued by an army of cops.

The racist history of the Philadelphia Police Department goes back to the 1970s when Frank Rizzo was police chief and then mayor of the city. Rizzo expounded white power as a political system for the powers that be. By the 1980s a Black mayor, Wilson Goode, gave the police the authority to drop a bomb on the

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## Unrest beneath defeat of single party rule in Mexico

by Mary Holmes

In the period since the July 2 national elections in Mexico terminated 71 years of rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), a great deal of maneuvering is going on. It all concerns who and what will constitute the new federal government headed by Vicente Fox who takes office as president on Dec. 1. But as important as the removal of PRI from power is, fundamental change in Mexico will not come from the electoral process alone.

Fox, candidate of an opposition coalition headed by the rightist National Action Party (PAN), won the presidential election with 43% of the vote. Despite the PRI's well-oiled machine—doling out washing machines, food and money here; threatening the cut-off of welfare and jobs there; and committing outright fraud when it had to—its candidate, Francisco Labastida, got 36%, considerably less than expected.

Significantly, the desire to defeat the PRI ran so deep that, early in his campaign, Fox was able to convince a segment of the Left that he was the only viable electoral alternative to the PRI and lure support away from the left coalition of the PRD (Party of Democratic Revolution). Its candidate, Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, got 17% of the vote, far less than in previous elections.

The PAN coalition also defeated the PRI in the federal legislative vote, although no single party has a majority now. PAN also won the two gubernatorial races, although others will be held this year, most notably in Chiapas, Aug. 20. Finally, while the PRD



Residents blockade military's strategic road-building project through Amador Hernandez, Chiapas, earlier this summer.

retained the mayoralty in Mexico City, the PAN will now be the largest party in the city council.

While the electoral defeat of the PRI represents an important defeat of a one-party state machine that intruded into every Mexican's life—through jobs, health care, education, social security—there was virtually no difference in the basic programs put forward by Fox and Labastida. Under prior PRI governments, Mexico was already well integrated into the neoliberal constructs which Fox will certainly continue.

The PRI began to lose credibility as anything other than a self-preserving, pro-capitalist party long before its army mowed down protesting students in 1968, and more recently, stole the 1988 election from Cardenas.

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## Voices against Republicans

**Philadelphia** (July 31)—A march and rally for Economic Human Rights by thousands of people took place today in Philadelphia, site of the Republican National Convention, July 30-Aug. 4. They were organized by the Kensington Welfare Rights Union ([www.kwro.org](http://www.kwro.org)) which had also set up a tent city for educational activities and lodging for demonstrators from all over the U.S.

The main purpose of the march was to deliver a letter to the convention and expose the fact that the poor are consciously being made to disappear by both major parties. Poor people are being abandoned and denied their rights in the rich U.S.

Children and homeless people led the march in spite of the threat of arrests because there was no permit for the march. In fact, the city had tried to scare people from coming by announcing a few days earlier that there would be arrests, and that participants with children would have their children taken away and placed with city agencies.

After some negotiations, the police allowed us to march, but only if we walked single file. Yet they closed the half of Broad Street going in our direction. This stretched the march out many blocks.

The mood was lively and relaxed, with street theater, large puppets and homemade signs. The main disturbance came from the large police presence lining the route on foot, in cars on the side street, on horseback and about 20 buses and vans following the march to let us know that they were willing to make mass arrests if we failed to disperse or broke any laws.

A Black woman activist from the Kensington Union told us, "I had been a migrant farm worker with a third grade education. I went to do factory work for Owens Illinois Glass and Bottle Company. I worked there for 20 years and supported my two children without a vacation because I couldn't afford to take one. The company closed, I had a heart attack and couldn't work."

"But I made a mistake on the paperwork for social security, and I fell through the cracks. I didn't get it, and the case is under appeal. I'm poor, and I know what it's like to eat out of a garbage can. I have no confidence in the government."

She continued, "I'm here to let other poor people know you are not alone! You can transcend it! That's why I live on the edge, to tell my story and stay fresh and alive!"

One of the organizers of the United 2000 coalition told us that he was disappointed that more outreach to labor unions, the gay, and Black communities hadn't taken place so they were notably absent.

A street theater group dressed in gowns and tuxedos had a banner that read "Billionaires for Bush and Gore." One young woman artist told us that she thought Marx was right about the increasing concentration and centralization of capital—that lay behind her message about the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. Signs at the demonstration decry our "one party system with two right wings," and the prevalence of poverty.

—N.Y. N&L Committee

**Philadelphia** (Aug. 4) —Thousands of activists, predominantly young people, converged on Philadelphia this week to challenge the undemocracy of both the Republicans and the Democrats. The city deployed an overwhelming force of city, county, and state police, occupying every block of the downtown area.

A broad coalition of grassroots organizations named Unity 2000 led a legal mass march and rally through the streets of Philadelphia on Sunday, July 30. Marchers of all ages and races included those from the U.S. labor movement, the anti-globalization movement demanding an end to third world sweatshops, the anti-war, women's rights, and environmental movements, along with a bold and vocal group calling for an end to racism, police brutality, and to free Mumia Abu-Jamal from Death Row.

On Tuesday, thousands of activists joined forces against the criminal injustice system, demanding an end to the death penalty and the prison industrial complex. In spite of the overwhelming police state situation here, at least a thousand mostly youth activists, including many teenagers successfully disrupted the

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## Are we close to losing *Roe v. Wade*?

**New York**—At a rally in front of Manhattan federal court July 6, feminists protested recent threats to women's right to control our bodies. The women and men at the rally demanded that abortion remain legal, become accessible, and that non-surgical methods of abortion be made available.

Sponsored by the National Organization for Women, the protest came a week after the U.S. Supreme Court, by one vote, struck down a 1997 Nebraska law aimed at outlawing third trimester abortions. The 5-4 decision shows how close we are to losing the right to abortion altogether. The infamous Justice Clarence Thomas wrote the dissenting opinion, arguing that the states should not be required to permit abortion at all. If one of the majority judges changes his or her position, or a new anti-choice judge comes on the court, the next decision could completely reverse *Roe v. Wade*, the 1972 case that legalized abortion.

The abortion case decided June 28, *Stenberg v. Carhart*, cannot be seen as even a temporary affirmation of free choice, because the court has upheld many other state laws imposing obstacles to abortion over the years. Anti-choice forces have admitted that piecemeal laws to restrict reproductive rights are part of their overall strategy to outlaw all abortion. Moreover, Stenberg's grounds for invalidating the Nebraska law are narrow and specific. The court cited the law's imprecision—it could be used to prosecute doctors for performing some first and second trimester abortions as well as third—and its failure to provide exceptions in instances where the woman's health is in danger.

In other words, the Supreme Court has made women's right to control our bodies so precarious that the government may almost always restrict it, unless a woman can prove the pregnancy endangers her health.

## Gender challenge at 'Girls Convention'

**Louisville, Ky.**—The annual Southern Girls Convention was held July 7-9 in Louisville, Ky. The schedule of workshops ranged from "Ethical Sluthood" to "Punk Parenting" to "Sexercises."

I attended a workshop about Marxism and the Women's Movement, geared towards discussing the role Marx's theories played in feminism, and how feminism pertained to the class struggle. The presenter, Terry Moon, maintained that feminism and class struggle cannot be understood without each other. I found this important because of the work I do against sweatshop labor, where many people "forget" that a vast majority of sweatshop workers are women.

I then attended the Men and Sexism workshop, for men only. Being a transgendered boy (born female, now male-identified) I was concerned that I would not be accepted, but there was not even a question or comment.

Saturday there was a caucus called "Sexism in the Movement." When we arrived, we were told that men were to travel to a separate room to discuss the issues. Then we would all meet together and have large group discussion. This posed a problem for all of us who do not identify as strictly "male" or "female."

When the groups separated, I met the eyes of the people who had raised their voices in concern. We felt that at a feminist conference, there should be a space for those that do not identify as only male or female, or better yet, they should not divide the genders at all.

We began our own caucus. We called it "Genderism in the Movement" to address the trans-phobia and hatred/fear of people that do not fit into the male or female gender category within the women's movement. We had 30 participants at a conference of about 125. Our caucus was not only transgendered folk; we all were fed up with the perpetration of an oppressive gender system that fuels, not only fear and hatred of the "opposite" sex, but also propels many to self-hatred. Eating disorders, ageism, racism, fear/hatred of the disabled, and many other oppressions stem from the fascism of "what does a woman/man look like?" We get our images from the media whose sole concern is to make profits.

When we met back together, each group read the notes from their discussions. We were given a lot of support. Many agreed that the separation of the groups was a mistake, but some women stood fast to their belief that women are safer when men are not present. Unfortunately, I sometimes believe this is true, because sexism is so ingrained in all of our minds, actions, and social codes. But I believe the answer to erasing sexism within the movement is to let us work in solidarity, not to divide us further.

—Simon F., Gender Activist



News & Letters

A New York City councilwoman said at the rally, "The recent attacks in Central Park on 59 women are not so surprising, when the courts and Congress are saying ...that other people can control women's bodies."

The Nebraska law was aimed at the "partial birth" method, an hysterical name repeated endlessly by the anti-choice movement. Its correct name is D&X (dilation and extraction), and it is the only type of abortion that can be performed late in pregnancy. Only a tiny number are performed each year. Under the invalidated law, doctors could be jailed for 20 years for performing "partial birth abortion," which could have been interpreted to prosecute doctors for another method of abortion that is commonly performed in the second trimester, D&E (dilation and evacuation).

Erica Pelletrau, political director of National Abortion Rights Action League/N.Y., pointed out that the legal right to abortion is meaningless without access. "Ninety-two percent of rural counties have no identifiable abortion provider," she said.

She continued, "Currently, 32 states have parental consent laws. Thirty-one states prohibit Medicaid funding of abortion for poor women, except in cases of life endangerment, reported rape, or incest. In most states, Medicaid has eliminated birth control coverage." Another speaker revealed that New York City often assigns welfare recipients to HMOs that do not permit abortions.

Another focus of the rally was the federal government's refusal to allow the "abortion pill" mifepristone (RU-486) to come on the market. Even with a pro-choice president in the White House, the FDA has held up the sale of the drug for four years since declaring it safe and effective. The continuing blockage is obviously due to right-wing pressures. Now the FDA proposes to allow sale of RU-486 only under greater restrictions than surgical abortions—when the drug was supposed to allow any doctor to administer it.

The pill has been available in France since 1988, when its creator, Etienne Beaulieu, declared it to be "the moral property of women." In the early 1990s, the Feminist Majority gathered 700,000 petitions from U.S. women demanding the drug be made available, but the Bush administration stopped it, just as George W. vows to do.

On the 30th anniversary of New York's 50,000-strong women's rights demonstration, we are fighting just to keep the rights we thought we had won. This should teach us a lot about the need for a thoroughgoing revolution, rather than relying on laws or courts.

—Anne Jaclard

## Historic women's march thirty years later

by Terry Moon

It may have been a coincidence that the Southern Girls Convention (SGC) in Louisville took place just a few weeks before the 30th anniversary of the Aug. 26, 1970, historic march of 50,000 women down New York's Fifth Avenue. I don't think anyone there even knew about that march. Yet, it was not only the largest women's march in U.S. history up to 1970; it marked, as one participant told me, "the moment when you could see that women's liberation had moved from an idea to a movement."

That march, called in celebration of the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage, was stunning in its militancy and power. Right before it the National Organization for Women founder, Betty Friedan, ordered her members to start relating to the Women's Liberation Movement if they wanted to remain relevant. She was right because what those largely white middle-class women encountered were women in the anti-Vietnam War movement, Puerto Rican women from the Young Lords, and Black women activists demanding, not equality, not a piece of the rotten American pie, but FREE ABORTION ON DEMAND, NO FORCED STERILIZATION! WOMEN'S LIBERATION! and FREEDOM NOW!

That's why it was disturbing to discover at the SGC in a workshop on "Envisioning a Tidal Wave: 2nd and 3rd Waves Looking Toward the Future" how little today's feminists know of our history. They viewed the WLM as if it was all middle-class white women who only cared about working outside the home and were opposed to marriage. There was not a whiff of the multi-dimensional or revolutionary character of the movement.

Furthermore, there is a difficulty in breaking the feminist movement into "2nd" and "3rd" waves. It is not only that many of us are still in the struggle alongside our younger sisters; it is that all our self-limitations, all the contradictions of that movement, are also marching in step with the younger generation. What

## 'Women on the Row'

*Women on the Row: Revelations from Both Sides of the Bars*, by Kathleen O'Shea, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Firebrand Books, 2000).

Last year Kathleen O'Shea published *Women and the Death Penalty in the United States, 1900-1998*, for which she contacted every woman on death row in the U.S. As she says in the Preface to *Women on the Row*, "by the time *Women and the Death Penalty* was published, the women I wrote about were people to me."

In her new book, O'Shea juxtaposes the story of her life with paragraphs from her correspondence with women on death row. In many instances, the juxtaposition shows how very different their lives were. In most, the author is trying to show the similarities. What underlies the comparisons is a sense that within the wide diversity of experiences, there is a common humanity. She answers the question "how did you get this involved?" by saying "It's because I saw my face on a woman on death row."

*Women on the Row* re-affirmed my reasons for working with women prisoners. Women in prison experience such depth of inhumanity that they are forced to answer the question of what makes us human, a question for everyone who wants to create a human society beyond capitalism. The concrete work calls forth the most profound theoretical challenge. In answer to some feminist theorists who abhor any universals, this book proclaims that diversity can make sense only in the context of what connects it.

—Urszula Wislanka

## Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Some 20 years after the overthrow of the dictator Anastasio Somoza, women in Nicaragua are still fighting for their lives. Women's organizations, including the Nicaraguan Network of Women against Violence, are battling the Catholic and Evangelical Protestant churches to preserve a clause in the government's proposed Penal Code which would allow therapeutic abortions to protect the life of the mother. While the leader of the so-called "Yes to Life" Foundation characterized therapeutic abortion as "no longer medically relevant," women's groups condemned the loss of life due to botched illegal abortions, especially among poor women and young girls.

More than 1,000 mainly women workers occupied the Thai Kriang Durable Textile plant in Thailand at the end of May after management refused to continue collective bargaining negotiations. The workers, most of whom have worked there for more than 15 years, are seeking wage increases, improved working conditions and welfare benefits. At least three different times in June, hundreds of hired thugs attempted to attack the women and 26 workers were injured.

both generations of feminists need to confront is the necessity to have a total view.

The concerns of the young women at the SGC do reveal that they, too, are reaching for a deeper concept of freedom. They are concerned that the movement not be all white and middle-class; that sexism in the movement be confronted; that labor organizing not be in a separate compartment from what else they are doing. And the demonstrations in Seattle and D.C. against globalization have broadened their concept of what they wanted and what they could accomplish. I think what some were reaching for

## Woman as Reason

was to have a total view.

Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism, believed that the Women's Liberation Movement's "most serious error"—the one that caused us to reject such a total view—was that we helped "reduce Marx to a single discipline, be that as economist, philosopher, anthropologist, or political strategist." We did this not only because we thought that Marx was simply not relevant—supposedly a theorist who only cared about workers. It was also that we wanted to be originals. We were going to come up with something new, unique to women's liberation. It was that attitude—an attitude that is also in the young feminist movement—that caused many to reject out of hand, without ever reading it for ourselves, Marx's total philosophy of revolution.

Older women's liberationists need to take responsibility for our history. Not only the highpoints, like that 1970 march, but also the history that has us fighting 25 years of retrogression. Young feminists need to know how limiting the idea of being "an original" is, if it means rejecting out of hand the thoughts of those who have tried to transform our world before. The re-creation of Marxism for our age can surely be the kind of challenge that young women would want to take on, especially if it is clear that the failure of the Women's Liberation Movement to do so has led to some of the impasses we face today.

## Mass California hospital strike

**Oakland, Cal.**—Health care workers staged a 24-hour mass strike in the San Francisco Bay Area, the most widespread health care strike in U.S. history. The one-day strike on July 6 at ten hospitals was initiated by over 4,000 members of Local 250 SEIU and included vocational nurses, nursing assistants, technicians, housekeepers and food service and laundry workers. They were joined by thousands of registered nurses of the California Nurses Association (CNA).

The strike took place while another strike by 1,700 nurses was still in effect against Stanford University Hospital. A concern in all these workers' actions is staffing levels that are inadequate to provide quality health care. Workers have been pushed to the limit over a decade of health care restructuring, where health care resources have been swallowed up by predatory investment interests.

The mass strike at ten different hospitals included Catholic Healthcare West and Sutter Health, the corporate giant that recently acquired Summit and merged it with Alta Bates. The purpose of the new consolidated virtual corporations is to increase profits by sucking even more resources out of front-line health

care, especially out of the workers. As one Eden Medical Center surgical technician put it: "We're constantly doing the work of two and three people."

One management spokesman had the gall to accuse workers fighting unsafe staffing levels of demanding "lifetime job security." Aside from the fact that there is nothing wrong with demanding job security, we know that inadequate staffing profoundly diminishes the well-being of the patient as well as the health worker.

What has fired the imagination of those of us in front-line health care is the realization through strikes like this that we do have the power to bring quality back into patient care. We know concretely that it is the ideology of value production, that treats both patients and workers as objects, which is wreaking havoc on the whole health care industry in this country.

Health care's increasing status as a commodity unifies health care workers against speed-up and toward the general notion of regaining control of one's own work activity on the shop floor. As health care capital becomes more and more centralized in the hands of fewer corporate giants, it is becoming more evident in strikes like these that the worker, at the center of this vortex, holds the key to whether there will be a new direction in health care.

The July 6 strike, and the two-day strike at eight hospitals Aug. 2-3, follow CNA's wave of short strikes in 1997-98 which ended in a landmark contract with Kaiser providing nurses a say in staffing levels and the quality of care. Crucial to that victory was CNA's steadfast refusal to participate in the top down "strategic partnership" with management initiated by the AFL-CIO.

Will the unfolding workers' movement in health care realize workers' aspirations to control their own work? Will this movement be met with a concept of workers' own activity as the determinant for the future through their full and free development?

—Kaiser rank-and-filer

## Court backs papers

**Detroit**—A demonstration of hundreds of Detroit newspaper strikers and their supporters on July 13 marked the fifth anniversary of the long and bitter labor dispute between the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* and their six unions.

It also marked an anti-union, anti-working people decision by a three judge panel on the 12th Circuit Court in Washington, D.C., overturning two unanimous decisions by the National Labor Relations Board that had declared the strike an unfair labor practices strike. The judges, all Reagan appointees, overlooked the evidence and expert opinion of the NLRB and voted unanimously in favor of the company. Money and power rule!

Their decision was a crushing blow to the union after our long struggle in Detroit. It relieved the company of all back pay and benefit obligations to the strikers, reported to be nearly \$100 million.

The six unions, two of which have settled for drastically altered and inferior contracts, plan to appeal to the full court in D.C. The three right-wing jurors who ruled against the workers also sit on the full panel, which will make it difficult for the unions to get a fair hearing. One of the judges was on the panel that granted Gannett and Knight-Ridder the Joint Operating Agreement in 1989 that allowed the *News* and *Free Press* to combine operations, thus effectively limiting competition in Detroit.

This decision shows us, in dramatic form, that union and working people in general, in most cases, can't rely on the court system to win their fair share of the wealth they create. We are fighting very large and powerful adversaries who feel no loyalty to their employees. Their only concern is to increase profits to keep their top executives making gluttonous salaries.

I think we have the power to stop this. We all have to come together, put aside our differences and realize that we are all in the fight together. This strike could have been won in Detroit if production had been stopped, if all working people had stopped buying the papers and if we had elected a government that truly represented working and poor people. All of us have to realize that truly, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

The company talks about wanting contracts but refuses to negotiate. The papers have lost 40% or more circulation and are putting out an inferior product. There is a possibility of one paper closing. These owners are willing to destroy the lives of employees and their families, as well as their own product, to satisfy their lust for power and profits.

Stopping these anti-labor company practices will not happen unless we all band together and stop it. We, the people, have the power to do it. We need to get busy before more of our hard fought gains are stolen.

—Armand Nevers

Detroit Typographical Union #18 retiree

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## Overnite exposed

**Memphis, Tenn.**—There was an article in *The New York Times* about Overnite last month that helped strikers' morale a lot. One of the guys who has been crossing picket lines to drive for Overnite came forward and told how the company was paying him to tear up their own vehicles and lie about it to get two strikers fired.

He told the National Labor Relations Board how they gave him \$10,000 initially, then \$12,500 more. Now Overnite claims they loaned it to him because he's in bad shape—\$22,500 and he's only been working for the company for three years. He's got no special talents, or anything more than the rest of us. We've had people who've had to resign in order to get their 401(k) money.

I think there may even be a follow-up story because we heard they put the last \$12,500 in his sister's account. That makes it even more suspicious — loaning a person money and putting it in his sister's account!

In Memphis, Overnite closed all the entrances on Brooks Road where there was a lot of traffic and people could see our picket line. Now the trucks go in and out on a little side street. The union has had to move our tent twice.

But we're fighting back. We've been in Detroit working with the UAW trying to get Overnite kicked out of some of those automobile plants. We got a pretty good reception there. We've got Overnite completely eliminated in Canada, now we're working on Detroit, and there will be demonstrations in Chicago too.

There's a lot going on in Memphis and across the nation. It's a long hard fight and all kinds of things are developing.

—Black Overnite worker

## Laundry workers stop Five Star sham union



Five Star laundry workers and their supporters rally in Chicago on July 27.

**Chicago**—When the management of Five Star Laundry in Chicago learned that their largely Latino immigrant workforce was ready to have UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees) turn in cards demonstrating their desire to have a union election, they began calling the workers into the office two by two. They told them that they were no longer employees of Five Star, but had become employees of United Temporary Services.

They were also told to sign cards saying that they were members of Local 707 of the Manufacturing Workers Union. Local 707 is well known in Chicago for making "sweetheart deals" with employers, milking the workers for dues money while maintaining them at extremely low wage scales with no benefits. Most people consider them to be a "business" run by organized crime.

But management did not expect that the workers by and large would simply walk out of these meetings without signing onto United Temps or onto Local 707. Instead, they chose to strike and UNITE chose to call on the community to rally behind the workers in various ways. There was a rally attended by a number of unions, representatives of community organizations and coalitions like Jobs with Justice who told the workers that the underhanded tactics of management were not going to stand.

Since the laundry had the major hotels in Chicago as its major clients, the union with its supporters picketed and rallied in front of those establishments on July 4 to celebrate the American revolution with the tourists who populate the hotels. The workers in these actions were animated and noisy. The tourists were sympathetic. The hotels threatened legal action, but more than likely put pressure on Five Star to settle with the real union and relieve them of this headache.

The levels of corruption of this story go into social functions of Chicago's elite and are amusing in themselves, but the essence of the story involves the demand of immigrant workers for respect and dignity on the job here in the United States. Management thought it could intimidate them, but it could not. Through its own intransigence, the Five Star management lost the battle to maintain dictatorial control over the workers. Now it not only has to deal with the union contract, but has to follow through with its newly signed contract with United Temps. Bourgeois pride has its costs.

—Dennis Dixon

## Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

Miss., was found by his father hanging from a noose in a pecan tree in front of his home. Even before an autopsy was performed, the authorities ruled it a suicide.

Everyone in the community who knew Raynard said he was a well-liked young man who was talented, smart, and loved people regardless of the color of their skin. It was a known fact that he had dated white girls whose relatives did not approve of those relationships. One of the relatives is the Marion County sheriff. No one I know believes it was suicide.

It's a tragedy felt across the state, and it is what workers are talking about in catfish plants where we struggle with racism everyday. One worker at Delta Pride Catfish told me how angry she was, thinking about how we have been beaten and hung for even thinking about crossing interracial boundaries in relationships. She said that it all reminded her of the Emmett Till murder, even though that happened more than 40 years ago. It meant a lot to workers to see Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Till Mobley, come down to Kokomo from Chicago and march with Jesse Jackson.

Another worker, from Leland in the center of the Mississippi Delta, told about a case that has not been on national TV. It's the story of Dyrayhl Buchanan, who was pulled over on Jan. 4 by a white state trooper on a rural road in the Delta. The trooper said that Buchanan appeared to be driving drunk. And he claimed that several minutes after pulling him over, Buchanan fled into the woods, leaving his wallet and everything in the car. He has never been seen again by anyone.

Could it be just a coincidence that the white trooper has a Black wife who had been Buchanan's girlfriend? Workers I talked to who knew him are convinced that this is the real motive. People say that Moore is known as a racist bully. There is a \$7,300 reward for information, but no trace of Dyrayhl Buchanan has been found.

In Holly Springs, Miss., George Hunsucker, a white man, was just allowed to plead guilty to a reduced charge of aggravated assault for the June 1999 kidnapping and near-murder of a Black handyman, Willie Roy Foster. Hunsucker accused Foster of taking his chainsaw, and dragged Foster behind his vehicle for over a mile. Foster suffered irreversible brain damage and is now in a nursing home.

The white judge, Henry Lackey, released Hunsucker to go home until he was sentenced. The NAACP objected and said that Judge Lackey is always more lenient with white defendants. He gives Blacks six years for the same crime that whites get six months for.

This is the face of racism in Mississippi today. Why does it seem like it has become so open and vicious again? We are attacked by the system every day, whether it's police, welfare, or at our slave wage jobs. In the 1980s and 1990s many Black workers organized themselves in Mississippi. We fought for unions, we rose up and demanded to make a change. I believe that the people in power were frightened by the movement.

They waited until things cooled down a little, and then they brought out racism full and strong. One way we see it in the catfish plants is when they have brought in hundreds of workers straight from Mexico, put them in houses on company property, and set them up to compete against Black workers. The owners act like they favor the Mexican worker over the Black worker, because they can oppress the Mexicans even more. They want to use this kind of racism to break the union.

Many workers feel like the murders of Black men are part of this same vicious racism. They are telling Black men and women in Mississippi: you will never get freedom. But I know that change comes from a society that wants to change. Mississippi has been the center of racism for over a hundred years. If we don't take every step to change it, Mississippi's racism will continue to be the measure of America. It will swallow up humanity and justice.

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

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

As part of our ongoing effort to spur new discussion on the relation of philosophy and organization, we republish excerpts of a speech given by Dunayevskaya on Jan. 1, 1983 to the National Editorial Board of *News & Letters*. The introduction and first part of the presentation appear here. Unless otherwise indicated, footnotes are by the author. The original can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 7639.

**Introduction:**

**Where and How to Begin Anew?**

The reason that we begin, not objectively as usual, but subjectively, is that the "here and now" demands a deeper probing into the creative mind of Marx.

The warp and woof of the Marxian dialectic, the unchained Hegelian dialectic, the dialectic of the revolutionary transformation is, after all, true objectively and subjectively. Yet Part III of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* begins the probing of Marx before he fully broke with bourgeois society, when he worked on his doctoral thesis "On the Difference between Democritus and Epicurus." Thus began his very first critique of Hegel, in 1841, as it appeared in the Notes that were known only to himself. What did appear in the doctoral thesis itself was what pervaded those Notes, i.e., the question: How to begin anew?

The reason that question reappears here is not to emphasize how it antedated Marx's discovery of a whole new continent of thought and revolution, but rather because it reappeared in its true profundity in Marx's own greatest work, *Capital* (I'm referring to the definitive French edition, 1875) as well as in the very last decade of his life, in what we now call Marx's "new moments" of discovery.

Let me rephrase this. The crucial truth is that the question: How to begin anew? informed the whole of his dialectic methodology—even after his discovery of a whole new continent of thought, even after the publication of the first edition of *Capital* as well as the 1875 edition, after the Paris Commune, when he took issue with Mikhailovsky who had written what turned out to be what all post-Marx Marxists likewise accepted as the climax of the work, that is, the "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" as a universal. Marx, on the other hand, held that that summation of Western capitalist development was just that—the particular development of capitalism—which need not be the universal path of human development. Here we have the unique way Marx practiced summation as a new beginning.

The concept of totality as new beginning was true also on the organizational question: How to begin a new organization when it is to express a whole philosophy of revolution. Marx answered that question in his letter to Bracke, in which he enclosed what he modestly called "Marginal Notes" to the "Program of the German Workers' Party." That was the letter in which he noted also that finally the French edition [of *Capital*] was out and he was sending it to Bracke. The fact that no post-Marx Marxists saw that inseparable relationship of organization to philosophy of revolution is the more remarkable when you consider that Marx's closest collaborator, Frederick Engels, was not only still alive but worked with Marx very closely in sending letters to the various so-called Marxist leaders as Marx tried to stop the unification of the Eisenachists and Lassalleans on the basis of the Gotha program. Beyond the peradventure of a doubt, the *Critique of the Gotha Program* formulated a totally different basis for the establishment of a Marxist "Party."

It becomes necessary once again to emphasize that year, 1875, as not only the year in which both the French edition of *Capital* was completed and the *Critique of the Gotha Program* was written. That year also predates by two years the letter Marx wrote on Mikhailovsky (but never sent), criticizing his concept of the "historical tendency" as a universal, insisting that it was the summation of capitalist development in Western Europe and that "the Russians" could "find a path of development for their country different from that which Western Europe pursued and still pursues"—and that, in fact, if Russia didn't find that different path "she will lose the finest chance ever offered by history to a people and undergo all the fatal vicissitudes of the capitalist regime."

Think again about the question of how faithful Engels was to the Gotha Program critique, not only in the letters written when Marx was alive, but in the fact that he kept at the German Social-Democrats for a full 15 years after the Party did not publish that criticism, and only in 1891 did get it published.

The tragic truth is that it didn't make any difference when they did publish it. It didn't become ground for the new openly Social-Democratic organization. Nor was any parallel drawn by anyone, including Frederick Engels, between organization and Marx's whole philosophy, though clearly, definitively, this was what Marx's Critique aimed at. And just as clearly, [Marx's] covering letter warned against the unification because there was to be "no bargaining about principles." Quite the

# Marx's unchaining of the dialectic

contrary, he "and Engels would make clear" that they had "nothing in common with it" (the Gotha Program).

In a word, it wasn't only the Eisenachists and Lassalleans who knew how to misuse the fact that Karl Marx and Frederick Engels didn't make public their break with the Gotha Program and the German Workers' Party. The truth is that the German Social-Democrats, who did consider themselves "orthodox" under its leading "Marxist" theoretician, Karl Kautsky, did the very same thing later. This time the reason rested in the claim that, since they adhered to Marx's "theories," their Party was the organization of vanguard socialism. They succeeded in so twisting the very concept of vanguardism that they made "the Party" read "the vanguard Party." That was not Marx's concept, as we shall see in a moment as we turn to the third new moment in Marx on organization. It is high time for Marxist-Humanists to concretize "Where and how to begin anew" for our age by looking at those "new moments" in Marx as the trail to the 1980s.

## The Four New Moments in Marx

The first new moment that was not grasped by the first post-Marx Marxist generation was due not merely to the fact that Engels had omitted the paragraph from the French edition of *Capital*, which had been definitively edited by Marx, when Engels transferred Marx's additions to the German.<sup>1</sup> Marx's point in that omitted paragraph on further industrialization (as it covered the whole nation) and, with it, the predomination of foreign over internal trade, was that although the world market annexed "vast lands in the New World, in Asia, in Australia," that wouldn't abate the general crisis of capitalism. On the contrary. The new development in capitalism meant that the ten-year cycle he had originally cited as the crisis that regularly follows capitalism's growth would occur more often.

What wasn't grasped by a less creative mind than Marx's was that, far from the climactic "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" signifying universality for all technological development, it characterized only Western Europe while "the Russians" could choose a different path. Post-Marx Marxists failed to grasp this because they separated economic laws from the dialectics of revolution. For Marx, on the other hand, it was just this concept of revolution which changed everything, including economic laws. He rejected the fact of Western capitalist development as a universal for all, delved into the latest anthropological studies, and then wrote to Vera Zasulich stressing the possibility for revolution to erupt in a technologically backward country like Russia "ahead of the West." In this letter to Zasulich he had made direct reference to the "American" (he was referring to [Henry Lewis] Morgan's *Ancient Society*) whose studies of pre-capitalist societies, Marx thought, further proved that the peasant commune form of development could lead Russia, if the historic conditions were ripe and it was working with West Europe, as well, to initiate revolution.

To make sure that none misunderstood his concept of revolution and the prediction of revolution in the "East" ahead of the "West," he (this time with Engels) had written a new Introduction to the Russian edition of nothing less important than his *Communist Manifesto*. There he publicly spelled out that prediction. That was 1882!

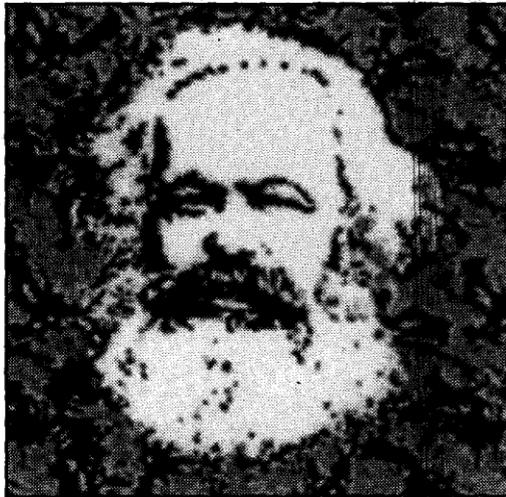
This was not the only new moment Marx discovered which post-Marx Marxists didn't grasp. The second new moment again related to theory. This time it was a new interpretation of the dialectic itself in two crucial areas in the transformation of reality. Everyone knows the 1850 Address [to the Communist League], which ended with the call for "revolution in permanence," though hardly anyone has related it to Marx's continuing concretization of the dialectic of negativity, as the dialectics of revolution. None seem to have even begun to grapple with what it meant for Marx, as he was already completing economic analysis of capitalism (and pre-capitalist societies) in the *Grundrisse* in 1857, to have so fully integrated the dialectic and the economics as to articulate that the socialism that would follow the bourgeois form of production signified "the absolute movement of becoming."<sup>2</sup> What an Hegelian expression to use to describe that full development of all the talents of the individual that would mark the new socialist society!

That the question of individual self-development and

1. This refers to the paragraph, added to chapter 25 of the French edition of *Capital*, in which Marx refers to how "the world market had successively annexed extensive areas of the New World, Asia and Australia..." Left out of the fourth German edition by Engels, it appears as a footnote to p. 786 of the Ben Fowkes translation of *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 78.—Ed.  
 2. Marx was rereading Hegel's *Logic* as he worked on the *Grundrisse* and wrote to Engels [on January 16, 1858], that this chance rereading was a great help to him in creating a new form for presenting his economic studies. That "new form" of integrating dialectics and economics further[more] led Marx to reworking the first draft, *Grundrisse*, into the final form, *Capital*.

social, revolutionary, historical development would thus become one manifests itself in the *Grundrisse*. It is no accident that it was there where Marx stopped speaking of only three universal forms of human development—slave, feudal and capitalist—and included a fourth universal form: the "Asiatic mode of production." That post-Marx Marxists failed to have that as ground for working out the reality of their age and thus anticipate what we now call a whole new Third World is exactly what this age is still suffering from.

The third new moment—that on organization—was not only not grasped, but actually rejected. Post-Marx Marxists were always "proving" that, because Marx had not worked out a "theory" of organization, while Lassalle knew how to build a mass party, he left them no model to practice. The First International, they said, had included so many contradictory tendencies that Karl Marx was forced to "consign it to die in the U.S." Indeed, all of them were quick to twist the whole concept of "vanguardism" as if it meant, simply and only, "the party." Neither "Leninists" nor opponents of Lenin have been willing to acknowledge that the ground for [Lenin's] *What Is To Be Done?* was, precisely, the ground of the German Social-Democracy. And that includes Rosa Luxemburg, despite all her great achievements on the actuality of spontaneity. While



Lenin rejected any type of "half-way dialectic" on the National Question, he did not see that same type of "half-way dialectic" in himself on the question of the "vanguard party."

The whole truth is—and that is first and foremost—Marx never separated organization forms from his total philosophy of revolution. Indeed, as was shown when we kept stressing the year, 1875, Marx had worked out his whole theory of human development in *Capital* and in the organizational document, *The Critique of the Gotha Program*—because his principle, a philosophy of revolution, was the

ground also of organization. In a word, it was not only the state which Marx held must be destroyed, totally uprooted. He showed that the proletarian organization likewise changed form. Thus, the First International, Marx said, "was no longer realizable in its first historical form" (*Critique of the Gotha Program*).

This, history shows, was not understood by the first post-Marx Marxists. It would take nothing short of the German Social-Democracy's betrayal at the outbreak of World War I before Lenin totally broke with them, and first saw Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* as most relevant for his day. It was then also that he spelled out most concretely how revolutionaries could not just "take over" the bourgeois state machinery. That had to be smashed to smithereens. Lenin made that revolutionary message both more concrete and more comprehensive—a true concrete Universal—when he saw, as inseparable, Marx's theory of revolution and his theory of human development, concluding, "The whole theory of Marx is an application of the theory of development." Yet, as we know, Lenin still left the concept of the vanguard party in its old (though modified) form.

A new historic age was needed to work out all the ramifications. A new movement from practice as a form of theory had to emerge and be recognized before a new attitude could be worked out, and that meant, far from freeing the movement from theory of its responsibilities, the movement from practice was demanding that theory, too, undergo self-development so that it could concretize for a new age Marx's revolutionary dialectical philosophy, which he had called a "new Humanism."

By the time, in 1956, that the Hungarian Revolution brought Marx's philosophy onto the historic stage, we had developed that new Humanism in the U.S. By 1960, the Third World theorist Frantz Fanon had developed his liberation philosophy and called it "a new Humanism." By the 1970s Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* were finally transcribed so that Marx's Marxism could be seen as a totality. It is this which Rosa Luxemburg,

(Continued on page 11)

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## Essay Article

by Kevin Anderson  
author of *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism*

This year, the 100th anniversary of Erich Fromm's birth, we have witnessed a number of publications and symposia devoted to the life and work of this great psychologist and socialist humanist. Notable among the new publications is Fromm's Rainer Funk's *Erich Fromm. His Life and Ideas. An Illustrated Biography* (Continuum Books, 2000, \$29.95). Funk covers all aspects of Fromm's development, from his early interest in Jewish theology to his discovery of Marx and Freud in crisis-ridden pre-Hitler Germany.

Funk offers a new account of the disputes between Fromm and the other leading members of the Frankfurt School, especially Theodor Adorno, who opposed the type of critique Fromm was making of Freud's biologism. When Fromm wrote in the late 1930s that "Freud has wrongly based psychology totally on natural factors" (p. 94), Adorno countered: "This time I did not like Fromm at all—he put me into the paradoxical situation of defending Freud" (p. 97). While Funk is clearly partial to Fromm, one does not need to accept the former's entire argument to recognize that the frequent attempts by Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, and many of their followers to portray Fromm as somehow more conservative has distorted the history of the Left.

### MARX AND FREUD

None deny, however, that it was Fromm who first introduced the Frankfurt School to a form of Freudian Marxism that was at the root of all of their subsequent efforts to theorize the types of "authoritarian personalities" drawn most frequently from the lower middle classes and who—from Hitler's recruits to Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh to the typical foreman in a capitalist factory—combine masochistic reverence and obedience to higher authority with sadistic urges to dominate those less powerful. (Recall that Sergeant McVeigh had been a model and compliant soldier in the eyes of his superiors, while those under his command, especially Blacks, reported that he was cruel and vindictive.) Fromm summed up these issues in *Escape from Freedom* (1941), a pioneering analysis of the appeal of fascism to those living under the uncertainties of capitalism.

Few are aware that Fromm began his attempt to unite Marxian class analysis with psychoanalysis not in the study of fascism but in a critique of the criminal justice system. Writing in Germany in 1930, he noted in one of his earliest published articles that the criminal justice system continues its harsh, punitive practices despite numerous studies by liberal reformers proving that prison and capital punishment are completely ineffective in protecting society from crime.

Pointing to "hidden functions" of the criminal justice system, Fromm wrote that whether in punishing or in showing mercy, "the state imposes itself as a father image on the unconscious of the masses," working to bind them to the rulers, even against their own economic interests. A second hidden function of the system is to divert the anger of the masses over their own oppressive social conditions away from the rulers and onto the criminal. This allows the masses to express their pent-up anger "in a manner that is harmless for the state." Fromm added: "Part of the function of war lies in the same direction." (See Fromm, "The State as Educator," in *Erich Fromm and Critical Criminology*, edited by Kevin Anderson and Richard Quinney, University of Illinois Press, 2000, p. 126.) One need not accept Fromm's Freudian framework to recognize that he had put his finger on how the whole issue of crime has ideological dimensions that legitimate the capitalist order.

Most commentators regard Fromm's early writings as more steeped in Marx than his later ones. This is another indication of the extent to which the pro-Adorno interpretation has become dominant on the Left. In fact, the opposite is true. Fromm's most important contributions to Marxism came after World War II, when he championed a specifically Marxist humanist standpoint. As the radical psychologist Joel Kovel has noted, Fromm's move away from orthodox Freudianism led to "the introduction of Marx's humanism—the humanism of the 1844 Manuscripts—in place of Freudian instinct theory," something that "distinguishes him from the other psychoanalytic Marxists of the time." (See Kovel's introduction to *The Erich Fromm Reader*, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1994.)

### THE UNPUBLISHED DISCUSSION OF TROTSKY

One indication of Fromm's renewed interest in Marxism during the 1950s is his decision to write a review of *Trotsky's Diary in Exile*, published in 1958 by Harvard University Press. (Fromm's review was never published, but it can be found in the Erich Fromm Archives in Tübingen, Germany.) In his review, Fromm deplored the "general habit of considering Stalinism and present-day Communism as identical with, or at least a continuation of revolutionary Marxism," especially the attempt to link "Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky" to "the vengeful killer Stalin, and to the opportunistic conservative Khrushchev." He added:

"They were men with an uncompromising sense of truth penetrating to the very essence of reality, and never taken in by the deceptive surface; of an unquenchable courage and integrity; of deep concern and devotion to man and his future; unselfish and with

# On the 100th anniversary of his birth: Erich Fromm's Marxist dimension

little vanity or lust for power."

Fromm concluded that "just as was the case with Marx..., the concern, understanding and sharing of a deeply loving man...shines through Trotsky's diary." Fromm strongly objected to one aspect of the publication of Trotsky's diary, however, a passage in the publicity copy from Harvard referring to Trotsky's alleged "underlying fanaticism and selfishness." I am aware of no similar defense of the life and work of the great revolutionaries Lenin and Trotsky in the writings of other members of the Frankfurt School.

### MARX'S HUMANISM

With his book *Marx's Concept of Man* (1961), Fromm probably did more than any other individual to introduce Marx's now famous *1844 Essays* to the American public. Marcuse had discussed them more profoundly in his *Reason and Revolution* (1941) and Raya Dunayevskaya had deepened the discussion in her *Marxism and Freedom* (1958), a volume that also included the first published English translation of two of the most important of Marx's *1844 Essays*, "Private Property and Communism" and "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic." *Marx's Concept of Man* consisted of a 90-page discussion by Fromm, Tom Bottomore's translation of 110 pages from Marx's *1844 Essays*, plus 60 pages of other texts by Marx and those who knew him.

Fromm's stature as a public intellectual helped to spark a far wider discussion of the *1844 Essays*, not only within the broad intellectual public, but also in mass media. *Newsweek*, for example, was forced to concede that "Marxian scholars have long known that there is an amazing world of difference between the mythical Marx and the real man."

The best part of Fromm's contribution to *Marx's Concept of Man* was his attack on what he termed "the falsification of Marx's concepts" in the mass media and even among intellectuals. He added that "this ignorance and distortion of Marx are more to be found in the United States than in any other Western country" (p. 1). Too often, Marx was portrayed as a crude materialist who "neglected the importance of the individual" (p. 2). Fromm set the record straight, writing that "the very aim of Marx is to liberate man from the pressure of economic needs, so that he can be fully human" (p. 5).

A second falsification of Marx, this one carried out by both Western intellectuals and Communist ideologues, was the forced identification of Marx with the single-party totalitarianism of the Soviet Union and Maoist China. During the Cold War, this had led intellectuals to take sides with either the West (for example, Sidney Hook) or Communism (for example, Jean-Paul Sartre) as the lesser evil. Fromm would have none of this. Instead, he posed a sharp demarcation between "Marxist humanist socialism," on the one hand, and "totalitarian socialism" on the other (p. viii), writing that the latter was really "a system of conservative state capitalism" (p. vii).

However, Fromm sometimes erred by imposing his own more eclectic form of humanism on Marx himself. For example, he wrote that "Marx's philosophy constitutes a spiritual existentialism in secular language" or that Marx's concept of socialism is rooted in "prophetic Messianism" (p. 5). Cold War American liberals seized upon these weaknesses to attack Fromm, whom they already resented for his critiques of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. They tried to counter the whole new view of Marx as a revolutionary humanist that he had presented, with both the *1844 Essays* and later works such as *Capital* as expressions of that underlying humanism.

In a review of *Marx's Concept of Man*, the young philosopher Richard Bernstein, later a follower of Jürgen Habermas, referred dismissively to the *1844 Manuscripts* as "a series of jottings." In language prefiguring later postmodernist attacks on Marx and the dialectic, Bernstein also warned that Fromm's talk of human "self-realization" in Marx was a "dangerous" form of "absolute humanism" that "as history has taught us... can by subtle gradations turn into an absolute totalitarianism" (*New Leader*, Oct. 2, 1961).

The ex-Marxist Sidney Hook, an originator of the "Hegel and fascism" school who had virtually ignored Marx's *1844 Essays* in his supposed masterpiece *From Hegel to Marx* (1936), seemed to feel the ground shifting under him. He pontificated: "To seek what was distinctive and characteristic about Marx in a period when he was still in Hegelian swaddling clothes... is to violate every accepted and tested canon of historical scholarship" (*New Leader*, Dec. 11, 1961). Such attacks from intellectuals who also ridiculed student protestors as spoiled brats only served to increase the interest of radical youth in Marx's humanism.

### DUNAYEVSKAYA-FROMM CORRESPONDENCE

It was while putting together *Marx's Concept of Man* that Fromm began his 30 years of correspondence with

Dunayevskaya. In his book, Fromm called Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* "a significant addition to Marxist-humanist thought" (p. 74). Their correspondence documents the process by which Dunayevskaya contributed an essay to *Socialist Humanism*, the 1965 international symposium which Fromm edited, and Fromm's assistance in obtaining publishers for her 1973 book, *Philosophy and Revolution*. He did so not only for the American edition, but also for the Spanish and the German translations of that work, contributing a preface for the latter. (Dunayevskaya placed much of their correspondence in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, while the remainder is held by the Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund in Chicago. A full set can also be found in the Erich Fromm Archives in Germany.)

Although Fromm had praised her *Marxism and Freedom*, this did not deter Dunayevskaya from offering some criticisms of Fromm's book in her next letter to him (RD to EF 10/11/61). Her main criticism was that Fromm's discussion of Marx's humanist essays lacked the concreteness "of what Marx called the 'abolition' of philosophy through its 'realization,' that is to say by putting an end to the division between life and philosophy, work and life." Fromm responded politely that he "cannot offer any argument" against her critique of the abstract character of his essay.

On the issue of Hegel, however, the correspondence is more one-sided, with Dunayevskaya sometimes writing to Fromm on Hegel, but getting little direct response. However, it was in a letter apologizing for not being able to respond directly on Hegel that Fromm invited her to contribute to *Socialist Humanism*.

Once Dunayevskaya submitted her essay, "Marx's Humanism Today," she and Fromm had an extended dialogue, mainly over his desire for her to avoid "expressions which are aggressive" (EF to RD 4/15/64) toward existing Communist regimes so as not to endanger the East European participants. But Fromm also asked her to expand her points on commodity fetishism and on the relationship of the Paris Commune to Marx's *Capital*.

Later, in 1974, Fromm asked Dunayevskaya for source material from Marx for his book-in-progress *To Have or to Be?*, published in 1976. They exchanged a number of letters on this issue. While the book as a whole attempted a synthesis comprising such disparate elements as Marx, Christian mysticism, and Zen Buddhism, there are also passages that show some affinity to Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism. For example, the longest quote from Marx that Fromm includes in this book (almost a full page) is none other than the one from Vol. III of *Capital* where Marx writes of the new society as one where there exists a "human power which is its own end," also quoted on the masthead of this newspaper (p. 156).

Other letters include some pungent critiques by both Dunayevskaya and Fromm of Frankfurt School members Marcuse, Adorno, and Max Horkheimer, but I cannot go into them here.

### LUXEMBURG AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Dunayevskaya first brought up women's liberation in their correspondence in 1974, when she sent Fromm an article of hers on this topic. Fromm responded most enthusiastically, writing that if the Women's Liberation Movement "would know Marx they would find that they had their greatest ally in him" (EF to RD 3/26/74). Some of these letters trace the early stages of the development of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, published two and half years after Fromm's death, in 1982.

In a letter of July 15, 1976, Dunayevskaya referred to the "lack of camaraderie between Luxemburg, Lenin, and Trotsky." She asked: "Could there have been, if not outright male chauvinism, at least some looking down on her theoretical work, because she was a woman?"

On October 27, 1977, Fromm responds to these and other points raised by Dunayevskaya: "I feel that the male Social Democrats never could understand Rosa Luxemburg, nor could she acquire the influence for which she had the potential because she was a woman; and the men could not become full revolutionaries because they did not emancipate themselves from their male, patriarchal, and hence dominating, character structure." This moving letter was his last to Dunayevskaya, who published it in her *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* (1985).

Fromm's life and work centered on the problem of how people could realize their full humanity, not only in psychological terms, but also politically and philosophically. Always searching for a pathway out of the alienated world of capitalism, he played a major role in creating awareness that Marx's humanism could be the foundation for a new human society.



## HEALTH AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF LIFE

When Marx said that "bourgeois society has for the second time experienced its 16th century," he was talking about the self-expansion of capital into a globalized world market. He did not say that capitalism was repeating any kind of historic "cycle." Likewise when the Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives [July *N&L*] refers to "capitalism's new 16th century," it is referring to a new stage of globalization, the globalized labor market. This is in no way a progressive development; the relocation of industries to the Third World and into the U.S. prison-industrial complex to find workers to whom they can pay pennies a day is also impoverishing the Third World.

A.P.  
Michigan

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The commodification of human life and science which we experience in the U.S. is unimaginably worse in Africa, as the Draft for Perspective illustrates by discussing not only the devastation of HIV/AIDS there but the more preventable and treatable diseases wreaking havoc on the people. The health crisis in Africa is only a part of the conditions described so comprehensively in the June 2000 lead article "The challenge of Africa in crisis." Yet as author Lou Turner reminds us, despite overwhelming obstacles the African people continue to creatively resist all forms of oppression. They not only have much to teach us about the AIDS issue; they are a vital link for all movements resisting global capital.

Susan van Gelder  
Detroit

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The section on "Human life and the commodification of science" in the Draft for Perspectives is a very new and interesting objective critique, yet this is one area of the Perspectives of which I am more critical than others. That is so because the health worker seems to have dropped out of the picture in spite of their creating such an important new arena of opposition to what this section calls "restructured state-capitalism."

Ron Brokmeyer  
Oakland

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Capitalism has made psychotherapy an industry of smoke and mirrors, which finds fault with the suffering individual and not with the system. It steers you to self-help because no one else is going to help you. But there is a deeper social cause of social ills!

## LABOR, CAPITAL, AND DIALECTICS OF ORGANIZATION: A RESPONSE TO THE 'DRAFT FOR MARXIST-HUMANIST PERSPECTIVES'

Your "Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives (July *N&L*) is an impressive piece of work with some very strong points. Part I contains a good description of the power relations in the world and the danger of nuclear conflicts. Perhaps it would not have hurt to give a little more attention to the role of Europe.

Subsection B to part I, on "Human life and the commodification of science," is very good, because it expresses health care and AIDS treatment, biotechnology and genetic manipulation as forms of domination of capital. In this sense I would like to cite something Raya Dunayevskaya says in *Marxism and Freedom* (p. 93):

"This develops into the absolute contradiction between the nature of machine industry and the value-form of its operation. Technological writing had analyzed the few main fundamental motions. There it stopped. It could go no further because there is no such thing as an abstract, remote, classless development of machinery. Technology is an integral part of the development of the productive forces. To exclude from it the greatest productive force—living labor—cripples and emasculates science itself."

I know of no Marxist in 1957 (!) or earlier, except Marx, who did speak so explicitly of the class nature of science and technology. I therefore have to say I disagree with what I read in Wang Roushui's Preface to the Chinese edition of *Marxism and Freedom* (*N&L*, March 2000):

"But we who have experienced the

Although I feel *N&L*'s emphasis on abstract philosophy has created an intellectual "vanguard," I recognize many similarities to my own views and appreciate the inclusion of more personal testimony in the paper. When each issue arrives I go through it and find myself wishing it were longer.

Returning reader  
Michigan

## DEFENDING MUMIA ABU-JAMAL



I am writing this as a rebuttal to an article written in *Time* magazine's July 31 issue by Steve Lopez. He tries to convince us he's on the Left by saying death penalty opponents have a good cause but picked the wrong guy as a "poster boy" in Mumia Abu-Jamal.

I say, if you are a foe of the death penalty, you don't fight on any one cause or even a lead cause. You fight on the basis that it is barbaric and racially and economically biased. The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is "political." He spoke out long before his arrest on the issue of police brutality in Philadelphia and everywhere.

Putting Officer Faulkner's widow in the forefront for emotional value is wrong. Issue number one is his guilt or innocence. Issue number two is the death penalty. The facts are that the judge who presided over his case is an honorary member of the Fraternal Order of Police, his public defender never tried a "capital" case, his "confession" was "remembered" two months later, and no ballistic match to the murder weapon was ever made.

Ron  
Chicago

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Why is the mainstream press, like *Time* magazine and the *Chicago Tribune*, suddenly coming out with articles saying that while it's okay to be against the death penalty it's a mistake to support Mumia Abu-Jamal? It's because the powers-that-be are worried about the growing movement against the criminal injustice system, and they'd like to coopt it into safe channels. A militant, uncompromising, revolutionary figure like Mumia Abu-Jamal stands in the way of them doing so. The more they complain against our support for

technological revolution and entered the information age can easily see that the author did not highly enough estimate the progressive role of intellectuals and the revolutionary implications of automation."

I think this is not correct. My opinion is quite the reverse, namely, that Dunayevskaya's conception is as good and fruitful a starting point to analyze contemporary developments in science, technology and automation precisely because of their class nature.

The contribution of Todd C. Morrison in the May issue of *N&L* is useful in this context, as he points to Marx's concept of commodity fetishism. He thinks that the root cause of today's social maladies will not be found without Marx's concept of commodity fetishism. He is right. This conception of Marx is for our time and cannot be overestimated!

As for part II of the Draft, we indeed see a lot of movements in the world, but they are not very unified. For example, the protest movements against globalization and against the criminal justice system, which have not come together. The same is the case with the movements opposing globalization outside the U.S..

I think we see this problem worldwide. Everywhere in the world there are movements against the maladies of capitalism. But the point is do the members of these movements see these maladies as having their cause in capitalism? Even seeing that is not enough. You have to analyze and know what capitalism is.

## Readers' Views

Mumia, the more we show our real strength.

Peter Wermuth  
Illinois

## ELECTIONS 2000: DESCENT INTO BARBARISM?

As usual, the Editorial Board's document was right on target. Neither Bush nor Gore offer anything new, profound or commanding. Bush is the ver., Goldwater, Nixon, Reagan and the other legendary demagogues, anti-Black, anti-gay, anti-women, and anti-labor. The rest of the "presidential field" is appalling—Buchanan, Nader, etc. We Blacks are in a dilemma this November. We have fought and died for the right to vote in this country. Yet, I wonder what real political choice do we have this November when state-capitalists dominate the ballot box.

Eric L. Smith  
Pennsylvania

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One of the most disgusting aspects surrounding the Republican National Convention was the way the TV reports "contrasted" the elder George Bush's use of the Willie Horton ads in his race against Dukakis to the way his son is now supposedly going in the opposite direction by courting Black and Latino voters. They don't mention that whereas the elder Bush used racist propaganda to win elections, the younger Bush uses actual racist executions to win them. He's executed over 130 inmates in five years in Texas. You mean to tell me that's an improvement?

Disgusted  
Chicago

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In my research I've gotten to know a lot of murderers. Not one of them, even serial killers, match the cold-blooded willingness to profit from killing someone that is exhibited by these politicians like George W. Bush who advance their careers by pushing executions.

Criminologist  
Tennessee

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The choices for president aren't appealing. Bush stands for the death penalty. Gore stands for the Clinton record. Some might fool themselves into believing Clinton has better social views than Bush, but putting 100,000 more police on the streets and building a lot of prisons isn't very social. You don't hear either of the major party candidates

Capitalism, as the word already nearly says, is the dominance of capital. Grasping that brings us to where we have to ask, what is capital? It is totally correct for the Draft for Perspectives to state, as did Dunayevskaya, that the abolition of capital hinges upon the abolition of alienated labor. For this to be achieved, what is needed is the conscious activity of the laborers themselves.

In this sense the question of assuming organizational responsibility for a philosophy of liberation assumes importance. Only such a philosophy can be a real contribution to unifying the anti-capitalist movements. The question is then how such an organizational responsibility operates, can operate, or has to operate. It is clear we have historical knowledge and experience, as we do not have to start from zero.

From what I read in part III, section B of the Draft for Perspectives, to create an alternative society we need an organizational form which practices anti-value production—a form of organization practicing solidarity, the unity of mental and physical activity, no separation or segregation of activists from theoreticians, etc.

The closing subsection C of part III of the Perspectives reads very well. As Todd Morrison says in his May article, we have to establish a "language of revolution" that speaks to all and our primary strategy has to be "taking it to the enemy."

Karel Ludenhoff  
The Netherlands

talking about putting 100,000 computers into schools, or opening 100,000 community centers.

Dominican-American woman  
Chicago



## NADER: ALTERNATIVE OR ALBATROSS?

The Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives mentions Ralph Nader who "has held several friendly meetings with Buchanan over the past year." With such a profoundly wide scope, is it not possible for the Perspectives to say anything on Nader except this brief reference? This is not meant as a promotion of Nader or the Greens but listening to the voices from below.

As I engage in conversation, particularly with younger people, I have heard much enthusiasm for Nader. He is a vehement opponent of the evils of mergers, conglomerates, corporations, etc. Excitement is expressed for his belief in "massive citizen mobilization for change." Paying attention to this would give us a wider opportunity for projecting a deeper look at the philosophy, theory and practice of Marxist-Humanism.

Sheila G.  
New York

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Before embracing Nader as the new alternative, I suggest reading his speech at the Green Party Convention in June, where he reached out to conservatives: "Conservative goals can help shape the world's course to one of justice and peace. Don't conservatives, in contrast to corporationists, want movement toward a safe environment, toward ending corporate welfare and the commercialization of childhood? Let us not in this campaign prejudice any voters, for Green values are majoritarian values."

Watching  
Illinois

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I find it incredible that the International Socialist Organization has come out supporting Nader, who has never voiced the slightest support for socialism. As awful as their politics have been, the ISO at least used to project an anti-Stalinist, anti-capitalist position. Their cynical effort to tail-end Nader is further proof of the bankruptcy of what passes for radical ideas.

Fred  
Chicago

## WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Many of the workshops at the Southern Girls Convention led to no real conclusions—on education, second/third wave feminism, and on sexism in the movement. While many of the women are involved in some form of activism, I didn't feel that this was linked coherently to revolution as a whole. The vision of what we want as a new society is still very unclear to me. But, I don't think this was all a failure because many of the women and men I did talk to saw the same issues as a problem.

Kind Lady  
Memphis

## AFRICA IN CRISIS

I was distressed to see that you had not done your homework on the U.S. being behind the invasion of Eritrea. I would advise you to read the background piece at Antiwar.com on the subject. Every claim in that short history of the conflict can be documented by contacting the email address on the article.

Thomas C. Mountain  
U.S.-Eritrean Peoples Friendship  
Association

## CORRECTION

Through an error at the printshop in our last issue the address to send messages of support as well as material aid to women in Zimbabwe was dropped. The Musasa Project can be reached at: Guide Dube (chair) 794983/734381/725881 musasa@telco.co.zw Musasa Project, 64 Selous Avenue/cnr 7th Street, Harare, Zimbabwe.

**CONTRADICTIONS IN ANTI-GLOBALIZATION FIGHT**

It appears that Blacks are disconnected from these demonstrations against globalization. I don't know why. It would make a big difference if Blacks were more involved. If we can bring Blacks and Latinos to the table it will be a different world and it won't take long to change the situation.

**Retired Black worker  
Tennessee**

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One hundred years ago when the U.S. was going on the imperialist path big time the only serious opposition was Blacks and the Black press. It's strange now to see an anti-imperialist movement that doesn't have a lot of Blacks in it. People could smell the racism in imperialism because the ideologues talked of the "superior white race." Now, the most obvious racism comes from the Buchananites and collaborating with them could create barriers between the anti-globalization movement and Blacks. There is a danger of working too closely with someone like Buchanan and letting that influence the direction of the movement.

**Environmental justice activist  
Memphis**

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There is at least one unifying thread between the anti-globalization movements and the organizations arising spontaneously against the racist injustice system in the U.S. A Marxist-Humanist view of the global economy sees an unviable system that turns to higher technology and higher labor exploitation, inspiring new layers of revolt. Modern capitalism's socialization of labor has also appeared in different ways, whether as trade unions of 12-year-old carpet weavers in Pakistan or Mississippi catfish processors, or whether as urban women-led organizations against police brutality.

Racism is an impediment to labor and anti-globalization movements because it holds back a part of the struggle, but the direction for transcending that division comes from those who have an idea about freedom from experiencing those conditions. That's why *N&L* has fostered a dia-

logue between prisoners and workers, though their paths to revolution may be different.

**Jim Mills  
Chicago**

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There is a lot of new activity going on, with young people wanting to fight capitalism but most of them don't really know what it is. There hasn't been even the most basic level of discussion yet about what really drives capitalism and what it's all about. It's great to hear that you focus so much on Marx's *Capital*—it's terribly important to deal with.

**New reader  
Pennsylvania**

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I hope *N&L* will devote more attention to a discussion and critique of anarchism. A lot of young people are getting involved in anarchist groups and projects. It's a mixed bag—some of it is genuinely leftist, some of it is just knee-jerk activism. But regardless, you have to do more to communicate your ideas to this audience.

**New subscriber  
New Jersey**

**THE DIALECTIC AS REVOLUTIONARY**



Raya Dunayevskaya's column on the "Revolutionary dynamic of Hegel's thought" (July *N&L*), which is on the relationship of philosophy and organization, speaks, I thought, to the form/content of *News & Letters*. It's where she talks of how we don't try to "derive" a Universal from the Individual. And yet, Individual, as concrete, does not mean the concrete everyday kind of facts, but rather what we would call the self-developing subject."

Isn't the Marxist-Humanist principle of people speaking for themselves so that the Universal inherent in the individual can hear itself speak? It's what happens when someone tells a story about their struggle on the job,

for example, and when they see their own words in *N&L* they are often amazed at the power of their own thoughts and words. They recognize themselves as a "social entity," a player in the objective world of ideas and actions.

**F. D.  
Memphis**

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Dunayevskaya's discussion of Hegel's dialectic shows that for Hegel concepts are not subjective tools to be applied to objective reality but are also part of the real world. This has a great deal to say about the concept of organization. If we treat organization merely empirically, we get no further than focusing on the form of organization. An organization that has absorbed the dialectic would be something else—one that would be taking responsibility for developing the idea of freedom which inheres within reality.

**Anne Jaclard  
New York**



**U.S. ARMS IN COLOMBIA**

Congress has appropriated \$1 billion for the drug war in Colombia. Lawmakers used the term drug war instead of "war on drugs," which is fitting. Drug war implies drug lords fighting over territory. And that is what we have, corporate America vs. the Colombian cartels. To justify this war, the U.S. will target bases of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, or FARC, as these Colombian leftists are supposedly the main target. The tragic part of this is that young Americans will be dying in Colombia's jungles so that young Americans can continue to die on U.S. streets.

**Dan Dolt  
El Paso, Texas**

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The massacre of dozens of villagers in Colombia last month by right-wing death squads got hardly any attention in the U.S. press—even though it occurred just around the time Congress voted over \$1 billion in aid to the Colombian government, which has close links to the death squads. Suddenly, we hear no more talk of "humanitarian" interventions.

Instead, we are being drawn into a prolonged military engagement with one of the strongest guerrilla movements in the world.

**Scott  
Illinois**

**PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX**

Overall, I'm totally against prisons. With today's technology (particularly electronic monitors and satellite tracking systems), at least 90% of prisoners could be released and become productive citizens rather than a drain upon other citizens. But then that wouldn't serve the prisoncrats who are getting rich off prisoners and their slave labor. Although many prisons are built with and supported by taxes, the prisons do make a lot of money. This money is certainly going somewhere, and it's not back to the tax payers!

**Prisoner  
Beaumont, Texas**

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We the inmates have become up-to-date slave on a plantation, working for \$15 a month, something like 50 cents a day. It's the same old lie they tell the people outside these walls—that we, the prisoners on those plantations, are living too well. A lot of clergymen, law enforcement officers, and politicians use that to make more money and build more slave labor camps across this state. In fact, the whole country is following that lead. Society somehow has been fooled into believing that all this will really stop the shooting of the children in those schools. People have no idea how their tax dollars are being misused.

**Prisoner  
Menard, Ill.**

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How many tyrannies to stifle our voice? How many rulers have sought to reduce their subjects to simple, unthinking instruments of profit and gain? They steal the life and loves of the people, and they seek to steal our spirit too. Ultimately and inevitably, they will fail.

**Prisoner  
Saginaw, Mich.**

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## Black/Red View

by John Alan

In July the NAACP invited Texas Republican Governor George W. Bush, Vice President Al Gore and the Green Party's Ralph Nader to speak at its annual convention in Baltimore.

Bush, the so-called "compassionate conservative," spoke first and, for once, uttered an historic truth: "For our nation, there is no denying the truth that slavery is a blight on our history and that racism, despite all progress, still exists today." He promised that he would make the "enforcement of civil rights laws [the] top priority of his presidency."

No one took Bush's pledge to fight racism seriously. He has no record to show that he ever forcefully opposed racism in Texas. He declined to show up at the 1998 funeral of James Byrd Jr., the African American who was chained to a truck and dragged to his death by white racists. He said that he didn't want to turn the funeral into a political circus.

### LITTLE FOR THOSE IN POVERTY

Bush also told the NAACP delegates that he "believed in private property so strongly [that he] wanted everyone to have some." He didn't tell the delegates that the property rights he had in mind were the rights of big business, especially big oil, and that he has done little to help the great numbers of African Americans and Latinos living in poverty in Texas.

Governor Bush, who has the power to determine whether a person on Death Row lives or dies, did not stop the recent execution of Shaka Sankofa, a young Black man who spent all of his short adult life on Death Row. Sankofa's state-appointed lawyer was incompetent, and the evidence against him was flimsy, but since he was poor and Black, he was sentenced to death. Bush's "compassionate conservatism" is a ploy to hide the inherent racism in his conservative politics.

When Vice President Al Gore addressed the NAACP convention, he began by saying, "I am home"—meaning that he was speaking to his presumed constituents. He told the delegates that he had supported a federal

## Defend Damien Williams

*Los Angeles*—A number of community people and activists from the L.A. 4+ Defense Committee, including Georgiana Williams, the mother of Damien Williams, called a press conference in front of the 77th Street police station on July 23. They warned of the virtual lynching of Damien Williams by the police and the L.A. media.

Damien Williams is one of four Black men alleged to have participated in the beating of white truck driver Reginald Denny during the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion. For two days this July the local media repeatedly replayed helicopter shots of Florence and Normandie from April 29, 1992 while alleging, wrongly, that Damien Williams had been arrested on murder charges.

The reporters at the press conference were informed that Damien had been charged only with a parole violation, which was itself trumped up. Protesters then went into the police station and demanded to know why key witnesses who had vouched for Damien's innocence were not being interviewed. The detectives on the case were hostile and evasive for the most part.

After the meeting, one long-time activist, Molly Bell, scolded reporters for representing all Black and Brown men as crack addicts and all homes in South Central as drug houses. She pleaded with them to check the facts before making their reports. The day after the press conference the *Los Angeles Times* did run a story written by Ed Boyer, a reporter who has a history of careful and more responsible reporting.

On July 20 Damien Williams was visiting friends in the home of a family who had lived down the street from him a number of years ago. A man came through the front door with a gun, and Damien asked, "What is going on here?" The man pointed the gun at Damien's forehead. Damien knocked the gun out of his hand and ran from the house. He was not in the house when another man was shot. When the police came, the family mentioned that Damien had been there, but the sister of the murdered man told everyone that Damien did not shoot anyone. The LAPD issued a warrant for Damien's arrest on violation of his parole. Police claim that he was in a "known drug house."

Since his parole in 1997, Damien has been continuously harassed by the police. He was picked up a week after his release for talking to a young man police claimed was a "known gang member." At the parole hearing two young men who lived in Damien's old neighborhood testified that 77th Street police had told them, "We know Damien is getting out, and we will violate him." Damien spent 45 days in jail before the hearing officer released him.

Since that time Damien has been stopped six times within the 77th Street jurisdiction. Each time he has been searched, his car has been searched, and he has been berated and then released. No traffic citation was ever issued. All of this is done to harass Damien, as the police do all the time in South Central. If you are Black or Latino or young, you will be harassed. Two people on a corner is a gang. When will they stop? The next rebellion will not end so easily.

—Judy Tristan

## Compassionate racism

hate crimes bill, an increase in the minimum wage and the continuation of affirmative action.

Gore didn't tell them that he had also proposed a "victims' rights" amendment to the Constitution. This amendment appears innocent, but has a racist dimension; any "tough on crime" measure means filling prisons with more African Americans. Nor did Gore remind the NAACP delegates that Bill Clinton during his first campaign for president made getting tough on Black crime a major plank in his platform.

Ralph Nader, the last presidential candidate to speak, emphasized that there is a growing gap between rich and poor, "a badge of shame for the richest country in the world." However, Nader addressed only half of the NAACP delegates and received little support. The general opinion was that he "is not going to get as many votes as the big boys" and voting for him would be throwing a vote away. Many people are wondering what specifically has he ever had to say about racism.

What does this presidential campaign mean to African Americans after more than a generation of struggle to keep a portion of the political and economic gains they won during the Civil Rights Movement? One thing they're quite sure of is that the Civil Rights Movement did not uproot racism in this nation. It remains a powerful force in the hands of politicians.

Take a look at the political history of the man Governor Bush has selected as his vice presidential running mate, Richard Cheney. Cheney is not only a holdover from Bush's father's administration, during which he served as secretary of defense. He is also an ultra-conservative holdover from Ronald Reagan's "white backlash" administration.

### REAL, COLD-HEARTED CONSERVATISM

When Cheney was a congressman from Wyoming, he supported Reagan's agenda more than any other member of Congress. He voted for a constitutional amendment to ban busing for school desegregation. He voted against strengthening laws prohibiting housing segregation and against Head Start, the federal preschool program for poor children. He also voted against imposing economic sanctions on apartheid South Africa and against a resolution calling for the release of Nelson Mandela from prison.

Richard Cheney is on record as being opposed to any law or constitutional amendment that would guarantee equal rights to women. He worked for an oil monopoly and was an unwavering supporter of deep tax cuts, more money for the military and less money for social programs. Thus, Cheney is the real, cold-hearted face of Governor Bush's "compassionate conservatism."

African Americans must, collectively and critically, examine the nature of capitalist politics and work out an alternative that goes beyond mere reform of the system, which is inherently racist. Today's anti-racist movements against police brutality, against prison growth and for environmental justice must not spend themselves in lobbying politicians and passing new laws. Otherwise we shall be engaged in an unending battle just to maintain our political freedom instead of realizing freedom in our everyday lives.

## Black World

(Continued from page 1)

MOVE members' home that set off a fire that burned down a whole block of homes in the Black community while the fire department stood by and watched. And of course Mumia Abu-Jamal was unjustly convicted of murdering a police officer who had been viciously beating his brother. Mumia Abu-Jamal awaits execution on Pennsylvania's Death Row. In a politically charged case that has motivated a mass movement worldwide for his release, Mumia has been an American political prisoner of war for the last 18 years.

Just because the cops were Black and the suspect they beat was Black does not excuse the racism that exists in the very structure of America's so-called justice system, where the very color Black as identity reflects suppression in fear of revolt against the state. When apartheid existed in South Africa as law, 40 million Blacks were suppressed by three million whites. How was this possible without the help of Blacks enforcing the laws of apartheid upon themselves and the Black majority population?

Racism is not alone a Black and white issue, clear-cut with no shades of gray, but reflects a form of thought that contaminates even the victims of the abuse. The ones who carry out the abuse in a baptism of racism are the Black cops and sellout politicians who destroy themselves in spirit when they endorse capital and accept the white racist structure of separation and inequality.

The attempt to adapt to racism is a form of self-combustion for the Black community. The whole point is to destroy racism in a creative process of winning freedom as a movement, a self-movement, toward identity. What revolutionary theory attempts to do is to confront the reality in which practice alone cannot transcend the mind of the oppressed. But the combined force of theory and practice plants a seed that takes root and has the strength to crack the foundation of a rotted system of mental and physical oppression. As Fanon wrote: "If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process:

—primarily economic;

## Kokomo march

Kokomo, Miss.—Well over 1500 people marched on July 9 in 99-degree heat to the tree where 17-year-old Raynard Johnson was found hanging in his parents' front yard. We marched because we don't think his death was a suicide, but that he was murdered because he dared to date whites and have white friends.

The way the tree branches were, it would have been impossible for Raynard to get up on that limb and hang himself. Where did he get the belt that he was hung with? It didn't belong to him or anyone in his family. The authorities tried to bury him before his family



Kenneth Bradshaw

could do a second autopsy. People speculate that he was hit from behind and that killed him, and then he was hung on the tree, because there were no signs on his body of a struggle. The information I had heard on the news we were hearing firsthand from Raynard's mother.

This was the most emotional march I have ever participated in and the most tiring, because we marched seven miles in terrible heat. There was a white lady there with a picture of her child that the Mississippi police had murdered two years ago. She said she had to put her cause in with ours because she experienced the same corruption of the police. Raynard's classmates marched with us, white and Black. People from all over Mississippi came and started showing pictures of loved ones who had been missing two or three months, one year, two years, five years. It wasn't just Raynard Johnson.

Jesse Jackson stopped at a poor-looking house where this group of elderly white men were standing on the front porch. He approached them. You couldn't believe anyone would live in a house like that. One of the men told Jackson that if he didn't have heart trouble, he'd be marching with us, because the sheriff's department killed that boy.

The FBI was everywhere, and the local police were trying to say that the FBI had no jurisdiction; this was their investigation. Jesse Jackson was saying, we don't want the state of Mississippi to investigate anything; it should be out of their hands.

There were threats on our lives. Someone had threatened to throw dynamite in the middle of the march. Six white boys were arrested with .38s. Most of the time we had there was very emotional, but you could see the drive in the community for support from both Black and white.

—Doris Bradshaw

—subsequently, the internalization—or, better, the epidermalization—of this inferiority" (*Black Skin, White Masks*, 1967, p. 13).

I see philosophy in the historic sense as a movement of human consciousness. The mind is a spirit which haunts reality. Conditions as they exist tend to put limitations upon a vision beyond capital's oppressive existence. To reach beyond the present, i.e., beyond what is, a concept of Black mind must be made explicit as a force for liberation, unseparated from the practical everyday struggles of the masses.

We can see that the greatness of a Fanon, Marx, Hegel, and Dunayevskaya is their concept of philosophy as internal to reality, as a fluid, revolutionary activity. Philosophy's method is dialectical motion as a weapon to uproot class society as an alienating force that suppresses the mind. That drive to become human, to destroy the division between mental and manual labor, characterizes capitalist society at the point of production most explicitly. But its repercussions are reflected throughout the whole of society, from the employed laborers to the permanent unemployed army that can be seen in the mass number of gang members and overflow of two million behind prison walls.

American civilization continues to be put on trial and found guilty by way of a history of revolt, by an ongoing Black mass movement. The incriminating evidence against the USA as oppressor can be seen in this, that while the U.S. has 5% of the world's population, it holds 25% of the world's prison population. The mind of the Black population hungers for a vision, philosophical in nature as a spirit, which reaches beyond the reality of what is. American civilization has only progressed through the vanguard nature of the Black dimension, the most oppressed. When the bottom rises up all others in society stand upon our shoulders.

As Fanon wrote: "There is no white world, there is no white ethic, any more than there is a white intelligence. There are in every part of the world men who search. I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny. I should constantly remind myself that the real leap consists in introducing inventions into existence. In the world through which I travel I am endlessly creating myself" (*BSWM*, p. 229).

## Editorial

## Racism continues to define U.S. society

American "civilization" was recently confronted with a graphic image many had hoped was confined to a bygone era—a time depicted in the ongoing exhibit of photographs of the lynching of Blacks at the New York Historical Society titled "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America" or in the lyrics of Abel Meeropol's song "Strange Fruit," made famous by Billy Holiday's performances of it.

That not-so-long-ago time has revisited us in a horrifying way in the form of the tragic death of Raynard Johnson, 17, who was found hanging from a tree in the front yard of his family's home in the southern Mississippi town of Kokomo on the night of June 16. Raynard's body was discovered by his father, who did not recognize the belt fastened around his son's neck. The Johnson family members immediately feared that a lynching had claimed the life of their son and brother.

The results of the investigation by local law enforcement officials were both hasty and unwelcome. They concluded that no foul play was involved and that Raynard—an honors student with everything to live for—had taken his own life.

Raynard's family members and the 1,500 who joined them in a march that took place in Kokomo on July 8 to show their solidarity—including Mamie Till Mobley, the mother of Emmett Till, a Black Chicago youth viciously murdered during a 1955 visit to Mississippi—suspected that a cover-up was being perpetrated. They believe that racist objections to Raynard's friendship with two young white women neighbors were behind his death. "We reject the suicide theory," was their rallying cry.

While Jesse Jackson has marshaled his organization, the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, to offer a reward for information in the case and has steered the Johnson

family toward placing expectation in Attorney General Janet Reno for intervention, the South—and the country as a whole—still needs to undergo as profound a change on the question of racism as the one which gathered steam after the time of Emmett Till's murder to emerge as the Civil Rights Movement.

Any number of things can be pointed to as evidence of this necessity:

- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Chairwoman Ida L. Castro reported to the recent convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People that 20 racial harassment lawsuits involving nooses in the workplace are either pending or have been recently settled. She also noted that charges of racial harassment filed with the commission have increased nearly fivefold from the decade of the 1980s, to represent 6% of all charges filed.

- Questions linger over a series of 46 suspicious deaths which took place in jails in Mississippi during the years 1987-1993, 24 of which involved Black inmates. All of the deaths were ruled suicides by hanging.

- Violence by police officers persists as an increasingly prevalent reality of life in the Black community.

- The bloated institution which has come to be called the prison industrial complex continues to warehouse disproportionately large numbers of Black men and women. Living conditions inside these prisons are becoming increasingly harsh, with access to recreational and educational facilities diminishing.

- The death penalty remains the ultimate representation of American racism. Numerous studies have shown that the criterion of race—specifically the race of the victim—plays an enormous role in the imposition of the death penalty. Capital punishment has become, in the words of recently-executed Shaka

Sankofa, "legal lynching in America."

These retrogressive features of U.S. society define the scope of its existence. The ruling class of this country has realized that it cannot shape the world outside its borders entirely to its liking, but it is intent on ensuring that its will is unchallenged at home. Racism, the prison system and the death penalty are integral to this effort. Even a defeat for Texas governor George W. Bush in November may not be enough to prevent the conditions of mass incarceration and assembly line-style executions which prevail in his home state from setting the norm for the entire country.

The recent mass protests against the official adoption of Southern state governments of the Confederate flag as a symbol of resistance to equality for Black citizens and the local labor organizing efforts in Mississippi, chronicled in the pages of *News & Letters*, *News & Letters* have the defeat of the still-prevailing "plantation mentality" as an aim. Alongside these, the 1,500-strong anti-lynching march in Kokomo may represent a development towards a much-needed movement for a South—and an entire country—"without sanctuary" for the forces of racism, in its state and "private sector" forms.

## America's rush to kill

Illinois Governor George Ryan, in his moratorium on death decisions, stated, "I cannot support a system which, in its administration, has proven so fraught with error and has come so close to... the state's taking of an innocent life." In the midst of Ryan's decision and the exposure that at least 80 Death Row prisoners have been exonerated nationwide—with the most being in Governor Jeb Bush's state of Florida—the state of Tennessee executed its first prisoner in 40 years. The executed man, Robert Glen Coe, was always shown on TV bound and gagged, an indication that he was mentally impaired or in disagreement with the way the justice process was being applied to him.

In the case of the second candidate for execution in Tennessee, Philip Workman, evidence has come to light which may prove his innocence. But neither the governor of Tennessee nor the state's native-son presidential hopeful, Al Gore, is prepared to question the possibility that innocents can be murdered by the state in its effort to enact "justice" for the people of Tennessee.

The most notable thing about Coe and Workman is that both are white. One might ask, "What does this have to do with race, especially since the overall majority of prisoners on Death Row in the country are Black or members of other disenfranchised groups?" The answer would be simply: it has everything to do with race.

If a state had a moratorium on killing prisoners for as long as Tennessee, then decided—in a presidential election year where it has a native son as a candidate—that it has a moral obligation to exact the ultimate punishment, it would stand to reason that a minority would not be the first victim. Politicians know such an action could alienate them in minority voting districts.

Even barring election year realities, how would a state with Tennessee's record on civil rights choose which minority prisoner would be the first to die? First, he—or she—could not have been convicted of killing a white person. Additionally, there could be no appearance of prosecutorial or police misconduct, nor could there be any racial disparity with regard to the trial jury—factors which would probably negate a large majority of Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, or Indians who might be on Death Row.

In Tennessee's choices, we have two white male prisoners convicted of crimes which would not invoke much sympathy. Like Karla Faye Tucker in Texas, those Tennessee candidates allow the state to say, "See, we do not discriminate when it comes to who we are willing to kill for the sake of justice," thus opening the door for the unfettered execution of minorities.

It should be no surprise that George W. Bush told Larry King that he was satisfied that "everybody who has been put to death in Texas has been granted full access to the law," and no one during his governorship had been wrongly executed. That would surprise Death Row prisoners in Texas since it has been disproven. An independent investigation confirmed that, in at least one year, Bush's Pardon and Parole Board did not conduct one single inquiry into a clemency appeal, which, in itself, casts doubt on his spurious claim.

In New York City, Memphis, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Miami, Detroit, and other cities, Black men have been targeted as candidates for death, while their killers walk free, as long as it was in the performance of a "police function." Never mind that the Diallo killing in New York—where the officers were acquitted—expended enough ammunition to invade a small country.

No murder, regardless of the allegations of moral legality, is justified. If a government feels it has the moral responsibility to exact the ultimate punishment in the name of its citizens, then it should begin by policing its own house, starting with those sworn to "preserve and protect." If a government wishes to instill a high sense of virtue in its citizens, then it should have an equitable sense of morality in its actions.

—Robert Taliaferro

## Remembering the Srebrenica massacre

New York—July 11 was the fifth anniversary of the massacre of some 7,000 Muslim men and boys from Srebrenica, Bosnia, during Serbia's war to "ethnically cleanse" that country. While UN troops were supposed to be protecting Srebrenica's population, they allowed Serb troops to round up and take away the men and boys. Most of the bodies have yet to be located, let alone identified. The anniversary of this disgraceful event—the largest massacre in Europe since World War II—was marked by demonstrations in New York, Bosnia, Paris and elsewhere.

In Srebrenica, more than 3,500 people attended a prayer service in a vacant factory. Dozens of buses arrived from Sarajevo, posing a dilemma for the international officials running Bosnia, who had wanted numbers kept down for logistical and security reasons. An arson attack during the night on a

Bosnian Muslim house in Srebrenica, in Bosnia's Serb half, underlined their concerns. Two Muslim families returned to Srebrenica recently, encouraging international officials who are trying to reintegrate a country still deeply divided by the 1992-95 war. Underlying concern over the logistics of a large ceremony are fears of a possible clash between the mourners and local Serbs, some of whom have said there was nothing to commemorate. Families of those missing say more than 10,000 people disappeared.

Here in New York, 150 Bosnian refugees and their supporters called for Serbian war criminals to be brought to justice, for the United Nations to be held accountable, and for the restoration of Srebrenica's widows and other refugees to their homes. Most of the refugees are still living in dire poverty in the countryside, because the city remains under Serbia's control.

To remind the world what happened, we stretched out in a line in front of the public library wearing placards with pictures of three major war criminals: Karadzic, Mladic, and Milosevic who still rules Yugoslavia. To date, only one perpetrator of the massacre has been convicted and one other arrested for trial at the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

Every refugee at the demonstration had a horror story to tell. One man said his wife had lost her father,

two brothers and cousins to the massacre. Many young people attended, vowing not to forget their past. Since only 2% of the disappeared have been exhumed and only 1% identified, some relatives still cling to the false hope that loved ones may be alive somewhere.

One refugee contrasted the Serbian wars against Bosnia

and Kosova. "When the Serbs surrounded Sarajevo, the people fought back for their lives. This taught the Serbs not to surround a city completely, but to leave an opening so that people can flee. This gets the city vacated for them to take over."

Many of the refugees suffered again in exile. A young woman described her family's four years in Germany: "My mother is a doctor, but she was not allowed to practice medicine and was made to do clerical work. The only way she could have practiced medicine was if she married a German. That's how educated people were treated by the Germans; they put you down. My mother became depressed. Then we and other refugees were forced to leave the country on short notice. We explained that we had nowhere to go because our house had been destroyed, but the German government didn't care. They are mean to anyone who isn't German. Remember, they killed millions of Jews in World War II, and they are still unrepentant."

At a rally following the demonstration, Bianca Jagger spoke about the conference she had co-sponsored that day entitled "Is the UN Above the Law?" She emphasized that the UN knew there was going to be a massacre long before it occurred, and did nothing, and has still not accepted responsibility.

Scott Johnson, a human rights lawyer, discussed the slim possibility of setting up a permanent international court for war criminals. He said of the trials going on in The Hague, "The voices silenced July 11, 1995, are now being heard. It is not enough to say we are sorry; we need to do everything in our power so that it will not happen again."

Of course, it did happen again in Kosova, with the same perpetrator. We are glad that so many people at the demonstration bought *News and Letters* pamphlets about Bosnia and Kosova, and we hope to continue the dialogue with them about how finally to change this uncivilized world.

—Anne Jaclard



New York protest against war criminals.

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# Unrest beneath defeat of single party rule in Mexico

(Continued from page 1)

The Reagan administration rewarded then-president Salinas for his theft with a \$3.5 billion loan so Mexico would not default on its debt payments. The "reforms"—austerity measures—which the PRI then imposed fell entirely on the working class and the poor.

Their living and working conditions were further depressed with the 1994-95 economic crash. At that time, the Clinton administration came to the bail-out. In the wake of the July 2 elections, a computer hacker released a secret list of some 3,300 wealthy and corrupt PRI-connected beneficiaries whose salvaging the Mexican masses will be paying for, for years to come. From the U.S., the new government-elect has received bipartisan support.

## HOST OF ISSUES JOINS HATRED OF PRI

While hatred of the PRI helped to fuel Fox's victory, what else explains this seeming shift to the right? Fox, while a right-winger, is not a hard-core loyalist of the PAN, a minority party founded on the base of northern conservatism, the reactionary church hierarchy, and an anti-land reform and pro-business stance. Fox was also able to appeal to younger, NAFTA-incubated, techno-oriented and expanding segments of the urban middle class, as well as an emergent entrepreneurial sector.

Part of Fox's pitch was also to a number of intellectuals, most tellingly from the Left, who quite willingly bought his anti-PRI "product." Fox, who rose to executive in Coca Cola de Mexico during his tenure there, said that "Like selling Coke, politics is a retail business," and did not hesitate to change his line when necessary. For the Left, he retracted an earlier position supporting the privatization of Pemex, the national oil enterprise.

Fox's program, like his PRI predecessors, is essentially a neoliberal economic course, but with some rough edges rhetorically smoothed over, such as promising investment in infrastructures and services to the poor. In 1997, Fox and a number of left intellectuals and social democratic state heads participated in drafting "A Latin American Alternative," which claimed to project a "third way" in a post-neoliberal world: "We are strongly determined to overcome neoliberal policies that have elevated the status of the market from that of an instrument to that of a religion."

An economic advisor to Fox, Eduardo Sojo, refined this further: "The model we're putting in place is one that believes in the private sector, that believes in markets, that believes in competition...But it is also one that believes in the need for selective and temporary intervention of the government to reduce inequities, that thinks that markets can't do everything." The kinds of state intervention referred to mean "leveling the playing field" for small and middle-sized entrepreneurs who can't compete with big-scale capitalists.

This also explains Fox's take on NAFTA, which he claims to want to expand along the lines of the European Union, a NAFTA free-trade zone stretching "from Alaska to Chiapas" in which not only capital and goods can move without restriction, but "human capital," that is, Mexican workers, as well.

Fox does have a record, as governor of Guanajuato state, from 1995 to 1999. During this period, foreign investment grew over \$2 billion, 50,000 jobs were created, and the state's gross domestic product increased by a breathtaking 21%. However, this stellar capitalist report card did not translate into better conditions for workers.

While Fox started a state technical university to produce graduates with "marketable skills"—exactly the type of capitalist-driven education which UNAM students fought against last year—illiteracy rates in Guanajuato in 1998 ranked the ninth highest in Mexico. School attendance rates for youth aged 6 to 14 were 24th nationally, close to the bottom among the 32 states. Despite economic growth, wages have remained low. The high employment rate masks the unrecorded work of seasonal agricultural laborers, the underemployed, and the "export" of hundreds of thousands of workers who go to the U.S. for jobs.

While NAFTA, established in 1993 under the "third way" Clinton administration, has expanded U.S.-Mexico trade to well over \$300 billion annually, none of this

wealth has benefited the vast majority of Mexicans who are still suffering from the crushing \$100 billion debt incurred after the 1995 peso collapse. The average Mexican's income has stagnated at levels below 1982, while the ruling class is producing billionaires at a remarkable per capita rate. The post-PRI government will not fundamentally alter this status quo.

Of the advisors and future government officials now surrounding Fox, few are hard-core PAN members, and a significant number have been in and out of the PRI and PRD. The rulers-in-waiting are busy trying to salvage relations with the PRD especially, whose support Fox will need as he inherits a huge state bureaucracy, including the PRI-dominated trade unions and rural organizations, owing its existence, if not now its loyalty, to the PRI.

## 'SELF-NEGATING' LEFT

While this kind of political maneuvering is to be expected in a state power transition, a high-profile, ex-Mexican Communist Party intellectual like Jorge Castaneda—who supported Cardenas in 1994 but was among Fox's earliest boosters and reportedly may serve in his cabinet—is more emblematic of what one solidarity activist called the "self-negating left."

Many more leftists totally rejected the "defeat the PRI" bandwagon as they saw it veer sharply to the right. The Mexican feminist Marta Lamas reportedly said (*New York Times Magazine*, July 2) that Fox represented such a danger to the gains of the Women's Liberation Movement there that six more years of the PRI was preferable. Fox's statements during the campaign were thick with misogynistic and homophobic remarks; he is opposed to a woman's right to abortion and is in favor of the Catholic Church whose oppressive privileges, getting tax breaks, and being allowed to form political organizations were broken by the Mexican Revolution.

Whether or not Fox in power turns out to be a nightmare of retrogression, a central question remains: why did so many leftists who opposed the PRI and whose vision was not clouded by the Fox-PAN anti-PRI campaign, allow their energy and theoretic creativity to be hemmed in, nearly exclusively, by the electoral process? It can't be for lack of ongoing movements from practice, be they the women's movement, the fight for independent unions, *campesino* struggles, a growing environmental justice movement, and the ongoing resistance and rebellion in the poorest regions of the south, especially Chiapas.

In Chiapas, Labastida won a 45% plurality, but together the opposition parties took around 55% of the votes. Now in the upcoming Aug. 20 elections for governor, an opposition coalition, the Alliance for Chiapas, seems poised to defeat the PRI, barring total, blatant fraud. Its candidate, Pedro Salazar, was a PRI senator until leaving the party last year, and was also involved in the official peace commission. While Salazar was neutral in the presidential elections, he has been endorsed by both the PRD and PAN. This is the first election for governor since the 1994 Zapatista uprising. The EZLN has taken a hands-off position towards the elections, although it officially views them as meaningless. But defeat of the PRI in Chiapas could make a difference in lifting the army's state of siege.

## ALL EYES STILL ON CHIAPAS, LABOR

During the election campaign, Fox claimed that he could make peace in Chiapas "in 15 minutes," but what that means was never spelled out. One-third of the Mexican army occupies Chiapas, surrounding the EZLN. Fox has stated that his administration will not interfere with the military or call it to account in Chiapas or elsewhere, although they are responsible for arbitrary arrests, rape, torture, executions and other abuses under the pretext of combatting drug traders and guerrillas. The army has maintained a strong repressive force in Guerrero and Oaxaca states as well.

The guns of repression have not stopped grassroots organizing in the south. In Oaxaca, hundreds of women have maintained an encampment for three years, in support of their disappeared husbands and relatives. In Chiapas, indigenous community activists have created 38 autonomous municipalities, involving over 200,000 people in bringing schools, health care, electricity and water into their areas.

While they know that Fox-PAN is no friend of labor, workers and organizers in the independent union movement are seeing a breach in the state-dominated CTM (Confederation of Mexican Workers) after defeat of the PRI. For decades, the CTM was charged with repressing labor unrest and crushing independent unions, while signing contracts beneficial to business behind workers' backs. The weight of PRI-CTM-state control over labor has contributed to the dismal wage level of most Mexican workers. The urban minimum

wage over the last 20 years has actually fallen by two-thirds to below \$4 a day.

The independent union movement begun by FAT (Workers Authentic Front) and other organizing groups has continued and may now expand. Workers at the Duro paper bag maquiladora are in the midst of a struggle to establish an independent union against the CTM, the company and the PAN governor of Tamaulipas state. They are demanding reinstatement of their elected leaders whom the company, a producer for Hallmark and other corporations, fired. The workers were ejected by armed police squads on the first day of their strike. Cross-border solidarity campaigns like the one supporting the Duro workers are also increasing.

Far from the struggles in the maquiladoras, the PRI and PRD have been examining their options in defeat. As one PRD member said, "Vicente Fox seized our banners and left us stunned." Whether that accurately reflects what little the PRD had to distinguish itself against the PRI, the party leadership now seems ready to consider selectively compromising with Fox.

The post-election factionalism within the PRI may also prove fertile ground for Fox to siphon off the support he needs in the legislature. But as the PRI finds its state sources of patronage, cronyism and corruption cut off, it may either splinter into pieces, or "reinvent" itself in a mold similar to Communist Parties in East Europe, claiming to be the pole against globalization.

Even though opposition to the PRI has not delivered for those who continue to struggle for revolutionary change in Mexico, it may bring new openings with an end to the controlling reach of a one-party state. The question of a deeply rooted and far-visited alternative to capitalism, not welded to the party and electoral forms, is still on the agenda.

## Aceh activist missing

The East Timor Action Network (ETAN) Aug. 7 expressed concern about the fate of Jafar Siddiq Hamzah, an Acehese activist from Queens, N.Y. ETAN has often worked with the Aceh-born lawyer on issues of human rights and military violence in Indonesia and East Timor.

Jafar Siddiq, founder and chair of the International Forum for Aceh, a human rights organization, was reported missing while visiting Medan, in Indonesia near Aceh. Relatives said he normally contacted them every two hours, but had not done so since Saturday.

The International Forum for Aceh (IFA) is a non-governmental organization actively campaigning for peace and human rights in Aceh, the rebellious region in northern Indonesia. Through the IFA, Jafar has worked to inform the international community about human rights violations in Aceh.

We are asking all concerned individuals and organizations to demand the U.S. and Indonesian governments to investigate Jafar's whereabouts and insure his safety. For information, see <http://www.etan.org>



Poster of PRI's defeated Labastida and other remains of elections litter the Mexico City garbage dump.

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## Season of unrest in Iran

The summer of 2000 has been full of protests in Iran. On June 28, thousands of women in a shanty town in the southern part of Tehran burned tires and blocked a road to protest the lack of basic living necessities such as clean running water, electricity and gas. The Islamic Republic's police attacked them with batons and tear gas and arrested many participants. A few days later protests took place in the Kurdish city of Piranshahr over the murder of a 15-year-old by the police. The next day there were mass protests in the southern city of Abadan, a city devastated by the Iran-Iraq war and a site of many previous oil workers' strikes. People demanded clean water, threw stones at governmental buildings, overturned buses and burned down government stores and a mosque.

Government troops attacked a gathering of thousands of women, men and children near Tehran University on July 10, the anniversary of the government's brutal attacks on student protesters last year. Hezbollah goons attacked protesters with chains, knives and batons. The reaction of some "reformist" members of the new Iranian parliament to the attacks on the mass protests was to call the acts of the protesters illegal. Furthermore, on July 11, the Iranian courts declared that the 20 police officers arrested for attacking and murdering student protesters in their dormitories last July were innocent. Only one officer was convicted on minor charges. Many students arrested last year are still languishing in jail and have been tortured. They have now started a hunger strike.

As the police were beating demonstrators in Tehran, president Khatami was visiting Germany, where he met with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Iranian dissidents from other parts of Germany and Europe who were trying to attend a protest in Berlin were barred from entering the city. The German government had taken extreme measures to protect him. The offices and homes of some dissidents were searched illegally.

What is also extremely significant in Iran today is the number of workers' strikes over lack of payment of wages. In some cases workers have not been paid for one year. There have been more strikes in the past few months than in any other period in the past 20 years. Clearly the protests are becoming more widespread and confrontational.

At the same time, divisions exist within the reformists. Some are condemning the confrontations and others are supporting them.

## Marx's unchaining of the dialectic

(Continued from page 4)

*Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* is rooted in when it takes a new look at Marx's 1875 *Critique*. The new book devotes a whole chapter to the *Critique*, entitling that chapter: "The Philosopher of Permanent Revolution Creates Ground for Organization." This sums up that third new moment in Karl Marx on organization in his age and in ours.

The fourth new moment which opened with the *Ethnological Notebooks* (finally transcribed in the 1970s) reveals itself equally and even more urgently relevant to our age for Women's Liberation. It is this work which enables us to see with new eyes that Marx's 1844 concept of Man/Woman<sup>3</sup>—far from being something that only the allegedly "utopian" young Marx had articulated—was deepened throughout his life.

Thus, in 1867, as he was preparing the first edition of *Capital* for the press, and Dr. Kugelmann had given him his early essays, Marx wrote to Engels: "We have nothing to be ashamed of." Marx also related these

3. One so-called independent Marxist, Hal Draper, dared to refer to these 1844 Essays as being no more than "the lucubrations of this new-fledged socialist."

## Voices...

(Continued from page 1)

evening rush hour by sitting down and locking arms in major intersections. Over 450 people were arrested. Many have been beaten, kicked, dragged down stairs, and sexually harassed. Organizers have been singled out. John Sellers of the Ruckus Society was being held on \$1 million bail. Later it was lowered to \$100,000.

One 23-year-old lesbian was attacked by officers who had seen her being affectionate with another woman. She has wounds on her head, face, chest and shoulders. Part of this assault was captured on video by the Independent Media Center, a coalition of activists who have taken responsibility for documenting the protests here as an alternative to the corporate media ([www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)).

The dominant tendency of the youth movement against globalization is an eclectic expression of anarchism, decentralized forms of organization, consensus decision-making and a preoccupation with militant street action. One 20-year-old from Oregon said, "When people come to me with their platform and what they're against, I ask them 'What are you for?' This usually stops them in their tracks. I don't believe in achieving a utopia through consensus. It'd be nice to have spontaneous consensus, but when you force consensus you can end up with a kind of totalitarianism."

These youths face the same challenges of past movements. They will have to see that without developing a deeper relationship with Black America, they can never win.

—Tom Parsons

An issue on which many reformists and dissidents alike have been quiet has been the conviction of ten Iranian Jews in Shiraz on sham charges of espionage for Israel. On July 1, they were sentenced to 4 to 13 years in jail after a closed trial in which the only evidence was their forced confession. Outside of Israel, Iran and Turkey are the only two countries of the Middle East which still have Jewish populations of significant size. Iran's Jewish community, which dwindled from 100,000 in 1979 to 30,000 today, is soon to decrease even more as a result of emigration in wake of the latest convictions.

—Sheila Fuller

## U. S. prison protests



July 15 demonstration at Chowchilla, Cal.

On July 15 all over the U.S. family members of prisoners and prison activists held demonstrations as part of a national day of protest. The multi-site demonstration was called by the Prison Reform Unity Project and local groups. California, which just passed Proposition 21, voting to prosecute youth as young as 13 as adults and put them in adult prisons, organized several demonstrations. Bar None, a Humboldt County, Cal. prisoner support/prison abolition group held a protest at Pelican Bay State Prison, the home of the notorious Security Housing Unit. Demonstrations were held in front of San Quentin, prisons in Florida, Arkansas and many other states.

California Coalition for Women Prisoners rallied at the two women's prisons in Chowchilla, Cal. demanding "Human Rights for All Prisoners." Recently yet another doctor was indicted for sexually assaulting prisoners during medical examinations. Clearly, the potential for the movement to exceed the bound of reform exists.

early essays to the 1867 debates around *Capital*, holding that "the feminine ferment" was inherent in revolutions throughout history.

From his activities in the Paris Commune, we know how Marx had laid the ground in establishing the Union des Femmes, following this through by making it a principle that the First International establish autonomous women's organizations. Finally, with his last work, the *Ethnological Notebooks*, he further enshrined this new attitude by showing the revolutionary presence of women throughout history, from the Iroquois women to the Irish women before British imperialism conquered Ireland.

Clearly, all four new moments, in theory and practice, in organization and spelling out "the new passions and new forces" for the reconstruction of society on new, Humanist beginnings—first naming the proletariat as Subject; then working out the revolutionary role of the peasantry, not only as in Engels' *Peasant Wars* but as in the peasant communal form in the 1880s; and always singling out youth and then women as Reason as well as forces of revolution—have laid new paths of revolution...

## Khalfani frame-up

As many of you may know, Khalfani X. Khaldun got his release from Pendleton on July 27. On the same day he was transferred to Laporte County Jail to once again face charges of homicide in the murder of a Michigan City Prison guard in 1964.

Khalfani had mistakenly assumed that an interlocutory appeal filed by his public defender in January of this year had been accepted and the charges had been dismissed because of a violation of the constitutional right to a speedy trial. This attorney has spoken with Khalfani about three times in a year to "represent" him in a what could have been a capital case. All things point to an attempted collusion between Khalfani's attorney Donald Harner and the prosecution for Khalfani to accept a plea bargain rather than face a 50-year sentence.

We feel that it is mandatory that Khalfani receive the benefit of legal assistance that is more concerned with justice than with the political games of Laporte and St. Joseph Counties in Indiana.

Khalfani has asked me to accept any donations toward his legal defense. Checks should be written to the "Leonard McQuay Defense Fund."

Anyone knowing of movement lawyers who may consider a defense of Khalfani and who could accept responsibilities in the state of Indiana, please contact me at (765) 420-8081 or at [ndugux@hotmail.com](mailto:ndugux@hotmail.com).

—Mark Thiel

## Ahmad Shamlou

The Iranian poet Ahmad Shamlou died on July 24, 2000. Born in 1925, Shamlou had been called the most influential Iranian poet of this century. In a land where poetry is considered part of national identity, this was no small accomplishment. He was also a distinguished journalist with a witty and powerful language and humanistic views that brought him enemies as well as many friends.

Shamlou was a secular intellectual and humanist who was an icon for those who believe people deserve better treatment than what they received under the monarchist and the Islamic regimes. A long time ago he wrote: "My fear is to die in a land in which the wages of a grave-digger are more valuable than human freedom." In the tradition of great poets like Pablo Neruda and Nazim Hekmat, Shamlou found his source of inspiration among people's myths and tales.

One of his greatest accomplishments was a monumental encyclopedia of Iranian folklore called *Book of the Street*. This undertaking, which is in tens of volumes, has not been allowed complete publication by the Islamic regime.

Most of Shamlou's poetry evolved around the concepts of humanism, love and freedom, with all the complexity and mysticism love has in Iranian literature. Humanism is a universal concept in his poetry. He wrote poetry about "Vietnam's comrades" and any other human being who fought to be free. He started a project to introduce the most important poets from other countries to the Iranian public, which resulted in a series of audio tapes that popularized the poetry of Langston Hughes, Garcia Lorca and Margot Bigel.

During the years 1953-1973 when the opposition to the Shah was broken and stagnation became the main feature of political life in Iran, Shamlou did not lose his humanistic views. During his years of pessimism, he wrote love poetry for his love Aida. But even the love poems were universal rather than being an individual expression.

His death is mourned by those who value the human soul and emotions because he was the poet of our soul. Tens of thousands in Tehran attended his funeral with red roses in their hands and his poetry on their lips.

—Bahram Teymoorian

# MARXISM AND FREEDOM, from 1776 until Today

NEW EDITION FOR 2000!

by Raya Dunayevskaya



A special burden for those living in an age of counterrevolution is to sustain both hope and clarity of judgment. Where there is injustice and expropriation, rebellion will arise: that is given in the terms of the human condition, and in the endless evils of the world. These uprisings will come due; the real question is, how transformatively will they be developed? There is a magnificence about Raya Dunayevskaya's thought, well illustrated in this, her path-breaking volume, which provides a real ground for hope. It is a ground that remains to be built upon.

—From new Humanity Books foreword by Joel Kovel

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## Our Life and Times

## The Middle East after Camp David

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

When the Camp David peace talks collapsed after two weeks on July 25, the situation was no clearer than before they had begun. On the one hand, the collapse exposed the fact that even the sole remaining superpower, the United States, cannot by fiat get its will everywhere. This is especially true of the Middle East where the large Muslim majority resents decades of U.S. support not only for Israel, but also for so many of its own authoritarian rulers.

On the other hand, despite the failure of these talks between Palestinian Authority President Yasir Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, mediated by U. S. President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, some new ground may have been broken, especially on the explosive issue of Jerusalem.

## Rising anti-Semitism

In Germany, right-wing historian Ernst Nolte, a student of Heidegger who has written that Nazi anti-Semitism had a "rational kernel" due to extensive Jewish involvement in the Marxist movement, was awarded the Adenauer Prize on June 4 by a group of prominent historians. This came despite attacks on Nolte by Jürgen Habermas and other progressive intellectuals.

A few days afterwards, Nolte spoke in France at a conference on totalitarianism organized by conservatives. Some French intellectuals have protested, as a form of "political correctness," the deletion of 20 anti-Semitic pages from a new novel by Renaud Camus. In a debate that has made headlines, prominent leftists such as Claude Lanzmann, director of "Shoah," and the novelist Philippe Sollers, have answered them very sharply. In a country where it is illegal to foment racial or ethnic hatred, the publisher, Editions Fayard, deleted the openly anti-Semitic pages under threat of legal action, but left them blank as a protest.

In Germany, on July 27, anonymous terrorists set off a bomb that wounded nine immigrants, many of them Jews from the former Soviet Union. The victims were crossing a footbridge in Dusseldorf after their daily German language class.

Also in July, France quietly signaled that it would move to end the European Union boycott of Austria. The boycott was launched with strong French support last February after Jorg Haider's neo-fascist party was allowed to join the government. Inside Austria, Haider continues to harass immigrants, as well as his critics such as Professor Anton Pelinka, recently fined \$4,000 plus court costs for "libel," after noting that "Haider has repeatedly made statements which amount to trivializing the Nazis."

## French support Bové

In France, where the government recently announced triumphantly that unemployment had dropped below 10%, anger among the working people is palpable. In July, that anger had a chance to express itself in one of the largest mobilizations since the big strikes of 1995-96. Over 20,000 turned out in the small town of Millau to support José Bové, who was on trial for trashing a McDonald's a year ago, along with nine others, as a protest against globalized capitalism.

An ecologist and a peasant activist, Bové has become a symbol of the new global movement against capitalism. He was a prominent participant in the Seattle protests last November and at other protests since. A verdict is expected in September.

Among Israelis, there is an increasing recognition, in the words of Hebrew University Professor Edith Zertal, that "If we want Jerusalem, we have to share it" (interview on Chicago Public Radio, July 31). At Camp David, Barak reportedly agreed to a U.S. proposal for a limited form of Palestinian political control over parts of East Jerusalem. As minimal as these concessions were, they broke with decades of demagoguery by Israeli politicians, Labor as well as Likud (conservative), to the effect that continuation of sole Israeli control of the whole of Jerusalem was non-negotiable.

Not surprisingly Arafat rejected the American proposal, which reportedly would have kept West Jerusalem in Israeli hands while offering the Palestinians an official headquarters in the Old City of East Jerusalem, some type of control short of sovereignty over some of the surrounding Arab neighborhoods as well as the two major mosques, plus the bizarre idea of "a new bridge allowing Palestinians unhindered access to the Muslim holy places from areas of their control to the east of the city" (*New York Times*, July 28).

After the talks broke down over this too-limited concession on Barak's part, some Palestinians boasted that Arafat had become nothing less than a new Saladin, the general who drove the Crusaders out of

Jerusalem in 1187. Publicly, Arafat promised to hold out for the whole of East Jerusalem, presumably including even Judaism's most revered site, the Wailing Wall. (It abuts the city's prime Muslim religious site, the hill on which stands Al Aksa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.) The normally pro-U.S. Arab leaders of Egypt and Saudi Arabia also publicly applauded Arafat's position.

Offstage, however, there was talk that the negotiations had not ended, but in fact just begun. The Palestinian Authority's top representative in Jerusalem, Faisal Hussein, acknowledged quietly that the Israelis had broken new ground: "The taboo on opening the file on Jerusalem has vanished. This file has been opened, and we hope it will generate more discussion in the Israeli community and that we can reach a solution before Sept. 13. I don't believe this is the end" (*New York Times*, July 26).

Some type of division or sharing of Jerusalem acceptable to both Arabs and Jews would not only be the key factor in an overall settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, it would also undermine the pretensions of terrorist and fundamentalist groups to be fighting for "Holy Jerusalem." An equally thorny issue is some type of settlement for the more than three million Palestinian refugees and their descendants, who are for the most part stateless.

On the Israeli side, the Likud and the religious fanatics are sharpening their knives against Barak for having dared to open up the question of Jerusalem at all. They are also girding to protect the Jewish settlements within the Palestinian territories. The most extreme of these fanatics revere the mass murderer Baruch Goldstein, who violated all notions of human solidarity by murdering 29 Muslims as they peacefully worshipped at a mosque in 1994. One of their number murdered Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 because of his land for peace policies.

On the Arab side, demagogues point to Hezbollah's successful guerrilla war in Lebanon that helped dislodge the small Israeli-occupied zone there as the key to "liberating" Jerusalem as well, also threatening Arafat's life if he compromises over it.

## Gay pride vs. Pope



Gay rights activists march in support of World Pride 2000 in Rome.

In early July, despite vehement protests by Pope John Paul II and the Catholic hierarchy, a massive international lesbian and gay pride event took place in Rome. Even though organizers, short of cancellation, tried to avoid open conflict with the Pope, he refused all compromise and afterwards expressed "bitterness" that people with values different from his own had dared to appear in Rome during the "Jubilee Year 2000." He also barred a French bishop from having a dialogue with the marchers.

Those Italian politicians, like Rome's left of center Mayor Francesco Rutelli, who sought to curry favor with the Pope by withdrawing support from the march, were strongly rebuked. They were reminded that in a secular republic the Church no longer had any legal say on events outside its own enclave of the Vatican City.

And in case anyone needed a reminder of what it was like when Popes exercised more power in Rome, the present Pope announced days before the march his plans to beatify Pope Pius IX. In 1858, that Pope ordered his guards to kidnap a young Jewish boy who had supposedly been secretly baptized by a servant. Despite worldwide protests, the boy was adopted by the Pope and raised as a Catholic.

## Military forms new Fiji government

In May, a coup by a small group of Fijian ethnic chauvinists overthrew the Labor Party government of Mahendra Chaudhry, elected a year ago. The coup was accompanied by what the *Honolulu Advertiser* of July 1 termed a "reign of terror" against the Indian community. By July, the military, which had done nothing to defend the legally elected government, formed a new one composed exclusively of ethnic Fijians. George Speight, the original coup leader, was then arrested after he challenged the military itself.

From 1987 to 1999 the military also ruled directly and, as now, denied all political rights to the ethnic Indians. (Each community comprises around half the population, the Indians having been brought in as sugar workers under British colonialism, with the ethnic Fijians a slight majority.) The Reagan administration and Britain under Margaret Thatcher backed the coup, after the left-leaning Labor government had said it would no longer allow U.S. nuclear ships into Fijian waters.

This time around, there have been tepid calls by the Western powers for the restoration of democracy, but no action. The Australian dockers have expressed their solidarity very concretely, however, refusing to handle any goods from or to Fiji.

## NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

## Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that since its birth has stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and its state property form, as it has historically appeared in state-capitalist regimes calling themselves Communist as in Russia and China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the

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

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

what is, but to reveal and further develop the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The new visions of the future which Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her discovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a new Humanism and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as Marxist-Humanism. This is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987

Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and donated new supplementary volumes to *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." We participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim... to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.