

EDITORIAL Stop Bush's war on Iraq, support Iraqi people!

The current anti-war movement has been notable for its size and the unexpected speed with which it has been "organized." Demonstrations against President George W. Bush's threatened war in Iraq have been held across the U.S. and have been echoed around the world.

The devastating terrorist attack upon the international tourist town of Kuta in Bali, an atrocity on a level with the World Trade Center attack, is a challenge to this movement. The attack probably wasn't timed to coincide with the 50,000-strong march in Melbourne,

Australia against a U.S. war on Iraq, but it was during that march that word spread through the crowds of Australians who were killed along with other tourists and Balinese workers in the Sari nightclub bombing.

This bombing showed what Timothy McVeigh and Osama bin Laden had already proven: weapons of mass destruction are much more likely to be used by terrorists (or state powers like the U.S.) than by a weakened and closely monitored Saddam Hussein. This bloody spit-in-the-eye, whether by Al Qaeda or its like-minded

counterpart in Indonesia, also shows the utter disregard they have for the internationalism and humanism that give birth to anti-war movements. (Hopefully certain leftist pundits will spare us their explanations of "why the world hates" the Australians or Balinese.)

IMPACT OF PEACE MOVEMENT

This new anti-war movement, which has to be distinguished from the small segment of the Left that refused

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NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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WORKSHOP TALKS

Youth to pay price

by Htun Lin

We live in a world that robs from its own future generations. Fanatical mullahs and presidents tell the young to strap bombs on their own bodies or carry an M-16 rifle to go off to kill the young of the "enemy."

When schools or nurseries are destroyed by bombs intended for Saddam or bin Laden, we call it "collateral damage." So what if such collateral damage outnumbers the intended target by 100,000 to one? We fret and wring our hands over the drive-by shootings committed by our young, but what about mass atrocities committed by our leaders?

We rob from the young in other ways. In 1986, we hospital workers fought management's introduction of a two-tier wage by striking for eight weeks. The union officials settled behind our backs. We were stuck with a 15%, two-tier wage structure but a bonus for existing employees. That's how bosses get us to rob from future generations of workers. They bribe us.

When they're successful, it begins the slow but certain process of robbing from the future ranks of our union membership. Not only enthusiasm but also the raw numbers of union membership begin to decline. Workers begin to ask, especially young ones, "Why do I have to pay union dues?"

Why should the youth be excited about joining a union which has robbed from their future? The AFL-

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BLACK/RED VIEW

Blacks don't buy war

by John Alan

Many Americans know that Barbara Lee, an African-American member of Congress from Oakland, California, took a courageous stand in October 2001 when she was the lone voice of opposition in the House of Representatives voting against a use-of-force resolution that gave President Bush the go-ahead to bomb Afghanistan (see Nov. 2001 *News & Letters*). However, not as many people may know that now the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) announced that it "oppose[s] a unilateral first-strike action by the United States without a clearly demonstrated and imminent threat of attack on the United States."

The CBC's statement also read: "A unilateral first-strike would undermine the moral authority of the United States, result in substantial loss of life, destabilize the Mideast region and undermine the ability of our nation to address unmet domestic priorities."

OPPOSITION TO BUSH

This Congressional political opposition to President Bush's pre-emptive war doctrine by the CBC and other members of Congress has helped force Bush to tone down some of his bellicosity, without stopping his preparations both in the political and military areas to invade and occupy Iraq or any other nation that fits his description of a potential enemy.

The Bush Administration has asked Congress to raise the military budget by 45 billion dollars a year by 2003. This money would be used to create new weapons of destruction and train soldiers to fight a high-tech and aggressive war everywhere in the world. Of course, the

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West coast dock struggle at front line of war on labor

by Ron Brokmeyer

No recent experience demonstrates the power of labor in today's globalized capitalism more than the hundreds of cargo-laden ships waiting the outside west coast ports on Oct. 8, the eleventh day of a lockout of the dockworkers of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). The employers' group, Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), started the lockout after dockworkers decided to strictly enforce contractually agreed upon safety regulations in the face of a deadly speed-up. The lockout caused serious dislocation in the U.S. and world economy.

"Just in time" delivery meant rotting perishables, lost retail sales, and shut down manufacturing plants like giant NUMMI motors in Fremont, Cal. and as far away as Mitsubishi in Normal, Ill. With losses escalating, PMA got what they wanted all along—the power of the U.S. government to help them subdue workers on the job. In fact, just before negotiations collapsed, the solicitor general of the Department of Labor, Eugene Scalia, got the ILWU to agree to a 30-day contract extension, but PMA refused, holding out for government intervention. President Bush promptly obliged as he went to court to get a Taft-Hartley injunction, opening the ports under supervision of the U.S. courts. U.S. District Judge William Alsup ordered dockworkers to return and perform at a "normal and reasonable rate of speed."

The Taft-Hartley Act, called by the labor movement the "slave labor act," had not been used since 1978 and never in a lockout. Furthermore Bush's secretary of war, Donald Rumsfeld, put his own imperious stamp on the injunction, saying the shutdown interfered with the effort "to prosecute the global war on terrorism." Two weeks later PMA claimed returned dockworkers were working at a 20% to 25% reduced pace and were preparing to ask Judge Alsup to use his extraordinary powers under Taft-Hartley to fine the ILWU and even jail its leaders.

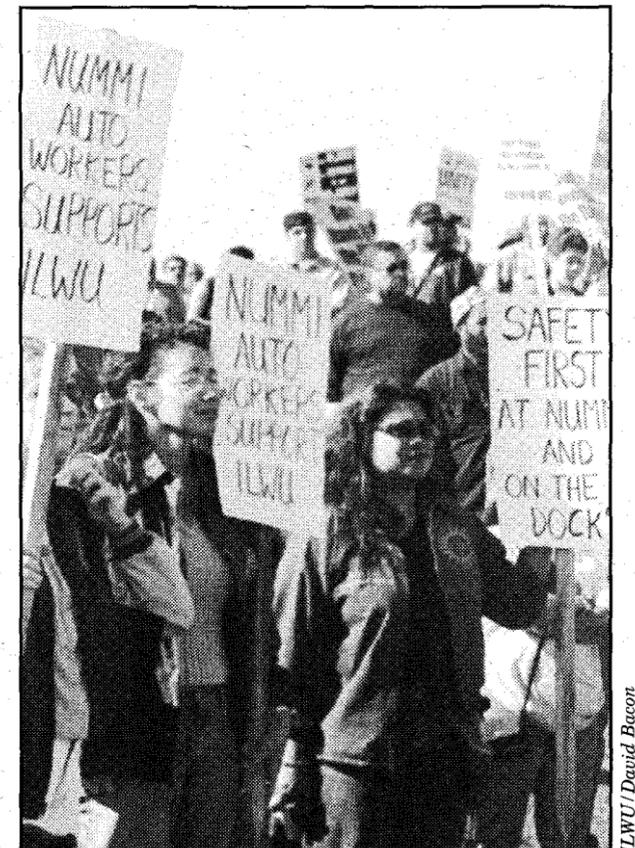
ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT

The contract for the 10,500 dockworkers at 29 west coast ports expired July 1 and had been renewed during negotiations up until Sept. 1. A life-threatening speed-up on the docks was the turning point. On Sept. 13, a rank-and-file newsletter, *Maritime Worker Monitor*, cited the "Mechanization and Modernization Fund Agreement of 1960" and asked, "Why is it we continue to work at near record paces in violation of safety rules... So far during the course of the 1999-2002 period there have been nine fatalities." The escalation of the speed-up is reflected in the fact that five of those nine deaths were in the previous seven months alone. The lockout ensued soon after the *Maritime Worker Monitor* called for "rank-and-file job action" to enforce safety regulations.

PMA's singular fixation has been to increase productivity at all costs. In order to obscure the real point of contention in this dispute, and try to turn other workers against the dockworkers, PMA has flooded the media with exaggerated claims about the dockworkers' high pay. However attempting to buy the workers off with more money is exactly PMA's strategy.

All the issues over compensation and benefits have been settled and the sticking point is PMA's insistence on introducing new technology aimed at replacing up to 600 clerical dockworkers with computers connected to devices that will track containers with scanners. The ILWU has even agreed to the introduction of the new technology as long as the remaining work of managing cargo information is done by its members. Yet the PMA refused to accept this proposal. The whole purpose of the new technology for them is to extend their control over the work flow on the docks.

Another reason the business community is out to get—and maybe even destroy—the ILWU is the willingness of ILWU workers to go beyond bread and butter



ILWU/David Bacon

Nummi autoworkers back embattled longshore workers in San Francisco.

issues affecting themselves and use their power, for example, to actively support those fighting authoritarian regimes that rule through terror. These are regimes like apartheid South Africa and Chile under Pinochet, regimes with which global capitalism found great affinity. The current president of South Korea, Kim Dae Jung, may owe his life to the ILWU, which supported him as a dissident in the 1980s when he was under threat of execution.

ILWU workers staged a job action to support the movement against global capitalism as it emerged in the massive anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle in November 1999. They were in the forefront of labor's support for civil rights in this country and most recently led the successful fight to free the Charleston Five—east coast picketers of a mostly African-American local of the International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) who were put under house arrest.

The ILWU workers' active solidarity with other workers and social movements has brought out many supporters, locally and internationally, on their behalf at rallies at the docks in Oakland, Cal. Ken Oakes, president of Charleston ILA Local 1422, came to Oakland to speak at a solidarity rally for west coast dock workers. On Oct. 10 a group of activists from "environmental and social justice organizations" locked PMA out of their corporate offices downtown "as a gesture of solidarity with the ILWU." Activists from several local unions joined the Port Worker Solidarity Committee in planning, along with ILWU Local 10, a National Labor Conference

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ON THE INSIDE

FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA—
MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES •
1962 Cuba Missile Crisis Page 4
PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE • Kovel's *Enemy of Nature, ecosocialism, and dialectics* Page 5
Oneida Nation fights eviction Page 9

WOMAN AS REASON

Rape in war epidemic, intensified by AIDS

by Terry Moon

"Wherever people are struggling against subjection, the specific subjection of women, through our location in a female body, from now on has to be addressed. The necessity to go on speaking of it, refusing to let the discussion go on as before, speaking where silence has been advised and enforced, not just about our subjection, but about our active presence and practice as women."

—Adrienne Rich, *Arts of the Possible*

Starting before, but becoming organized and militant with the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the global Women's Liberation Movement has singled out and fought against the "specific subjection" that women experience in war—especially all experiences of sexual violence. In the Balkans war this included women within Serbia and Croatia who formed Women in Black chapters and challenged the war crimes of their own governments. It is only because of the persistence of this movement that any change has occurred. Nevertheless, mass rapes of women in war and "ethnic cleansing" situations continue, each with its own way of imposing this torture.

RAPE IN CONGO, INDIA, BURMA

- In Democratic Republic of Congo, while women

and girls are routinely raped as part of attacks on the villages where they live, they are also kidnapped, used as beasts of burden to carry supplies or contraband through the bush, used as domestic labor, raped repeatedly, and kept in bases in the forest for months. A Congolese counselor who works with women said: "This [sexual violence] is a whole war within the war—another kind of attack on the Congolese people." When one raped woman asked her torturer why he made others suffer, he responded: "That is the job of a soldier."

- In Gujarat, India, during the riots in February and March where Hindus murdered Muslims as the state looked on, at least 250 women and girls were gang-raped and burned alive. Shabnam Hashmi, who fights for secularism in India, contends that: "These mobs were trained in rape. Why else would the same pattern of brutality be repeated everywhere? Groups of women were stripped naked and then made to run for miles, before being gang-raped and burned alive."

- As the Burmese army forcibly relocates—"ethnically cleanses"—states bordering Thailand, human rights activists report: "Rape and sexual assault have served as two of the Burmese army's key weapons against the civilian population of ethnic minority women in Burma." Rape is used as a weapon of war: 83% of the rapes are by military officers in front of their troops;

women and girls are brutally beaten and often mutilated; 25% are killed; 61% are gang-raped.

AIDS brings another dimension of horror. In Rwanda, where the 1994 genocide and rapes—some 250,000—have been well documented, President Paul Kagame said, "We knew that the government was bringing AIDS patients out of the hospitals specifically to form battalions of rapists." Rwandan women will be dying from these rapes for decades.

The horror is spreading to Congo, where an estimated 60% of those fighting are infected with HIV/AIDS. The UN reported: "Armed conflicts increasingly serve as vectors for the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which follows closely on the heels of armed troops."

While these rapes and murders of civilian women, children and men create ever deeper levels of abject misery, the UN congratulates itself because it **finally** in 1994—only after the genocide in Bosnia—identified "systematic rape" as a weapon of war. But only in 2000 did the war crimes tribunal open the first ever UN trial focused exclusively on widespread sexual crimes against women during wartime. The UN's glacial speed is seen in that the trial is for rapes done in Bosnia in 1992.

WOMEN FIGHT BACK

Women refused to wait for any such delayed and criminally insufficient action. It was the worldwide women's movement that brought the rapes in Bosnia to the world's attention and demanded action. In Congo, in the midst of war, every International Women's Day since 1999 women's groups there have fought against the raping of women and girls. Their leaflet last year read in part: "Women say NO to sexual violence used as a weapon of war...The rape of women and girls, without distinction of age, by armed men in our villages must be punished as a crime against humanity. We have never wished nor planned the war in our country...Why do we have to be the first victims?"

"The necessity to go on speaking" of these atrocities is the challenge raped women are taking up in their societies where to be raped is often considered to be dishonored, dirtied, and cast off. The worldwide Women's Liberation Movement has succeeded in "refusing to let the discussion go on as before, speaking where silence has been advised and enforced." But that is only the first step. Now that the category has been made, the atrocity named and rejected in thought, it must also be made unthinkable and undoable in reality.

New York health aides win contract

New York—After a two year struggle, and the imminent threat of the first declared home health aide

strike in the country, over 3,000 Local 1199 SEIU home health aides—most of them African-American and Hispanic women—won a union contract from Premier Home Health Services. These minimum wage workers, living in one of the most expensive cities in the U.S., won a 20% increase to a guaranteed minimum wage of \$6.55 an hour.

They also won employer-paid healthcare benefits; one week paid days off—either as sick days or vacation. Clearly the real victory was that the union won the election and now forced Premier to the bargaining table. The gains won are guaranteed and cannot be altered; workers can no longer be fired on a boss' whim, and workers have the right to file grievances.



The president of Local 1199 SEIU, Dennis Rivera, acknowledged the humble nature of the victory: "While

the gains of this contract are very modest, they finally have a union. And we are coming back for more in 15 months." The "more" that Rivera talks of will have to be considerable, especially when you realize that in Memphis, for a family of three to raise themselves out of poverty a living wage would be about \$17 an hour, and how much more it costs to live in New York City.

Any victory for labor, especially when it is some of the lowest paid women in the country, opens the door for others to follow. There are over 15,000 other home health aides with NY agencies. They too have voted in the union and can only be heartened by this initial victory.

—Union supporter

Afghan women debate country's future

New York—The conference "Afghan Women Report: Achievements and Challenges One Year After Bonn," sponsored by Women for Afghan Women at Barnard College Oct. 19, brought together a remarkable group of Afghan, Afghan-American, and U.S. women, whose efforts to improve conditions for women in that devastated country put them in conflict with their own governments. Most Afghan women have seen no improvement since the U.S. military installed a new Afghan government last year. Women are still afraid to leave home without wearing a head-to-toe burqa, only a small percent of girls attend schools, and recently eight girls' schools were bombed, burnt down or closed by fundamentalist warlords.

The loudest criticism at the conference was aimed at the warlords—who rule most of the country with guns—and at the U.S. for maintaining the status quo of war, oppression of women, and poverty by bombing civilians, funding the warlords and not funding reconstruction, education or means of survival.

Several women came from Afghanistan including the first woman in government, Dr. Sima Samar, who was made minister of women's affairs last year. "No one knew or cared what the ministry would do, and it had no funds," she said. "I had no office for two months; then I got an office, a desk and one chair, but there was no electricity. Having a ministry doesn't mean women have rights.... Yet women's voices are the loudest ones for peace and security."

Samar is now human rights commissioner, another position without funds or power. Her aim is to establish a radio station so women, most of whom are illiterate, can learn they have legal rights such as the vote. Most women do not have identity cards and so are not even counted as citizens. Another wish of hers is to investigate the mass graves that dot the country after 24 years of warfare.

Belquis Ahmadi, a founder of the Afghan Women's Network in Kabul and Peshawar, described one remote area where there are no buildings except mud huts, no electricity nor any other form of light such as candles, and so little food that people eat poisonous berries. It is ruled by a warlord who takes women for slaves. The suicide rate for women in such areas is high.

U.S. FALSE CLAIMS REFUTED

A state department employee spoke, making a number of false claims about the success of the democratic process in Afghanistan, and when pressed about including warlords in the government, she actually said,

"Wouldn't you rather have them in the government than fighting against it?" The Afghan women exclaimed no! and insisted that if the U.S. stopped funding them, the warlords would lose their power.

Eleanor Smeal, head of the Feminist Majority, claimed that our government's interest in Afghanistan is to secure an oil pipeline, which it can accomplish by bribing local warlords more easily than by building up a strong central government. Smeal, playwright Eve Ensler, and many of the Afghan-Americans present denounced the U.S. government for claiming it was "liberating Afghan women." The U.S. and other countries have promised much less aid than is necessary to rebuild the country, several speakers explained, and the money that does come in goes for the military and for cash and arms to war and drug lords. One warlord recently received \$400,000 in U.S. "aid."

Helena Malikyar argued that the best way to help women is to fund the reconstruction of the infrastructure and the state. She said life is getting worse every day, with much of the country having no water or crops and suffering deforestation. Other women argued for immediate aid directly to women.

RAWA KEPT OUT OF U.S.

RAWA (Revolutionary Association of Women of Afghanistan) had been invited to the conference, but the U.S. refused to give its representative a visa. I missed hearing RAWA's principled stand that only a secular government can establish women's rights. Since all the Afghan speakers had either advocated a moderate Islamic government, avoided the issue, or assumed that was the best one could hope for, I asked the speakers to address the issue of a secular government. The idea was dismissed as impossible "because people won't accept it" by Fatima Gailani, who had been the spokesperson for the Mujahadeen (religious army) when it was fighting the Soviet Union, and who only recently became active in women's rights.

Several speakers mentioned movements within Islam that hold progressive interpretations of religious law and they urged women to enter into the religious discourse. But they had no answer to the question raised by Masuda Sultan, a young Afghan-American: "How do we convince the mullahs to interpret Muslim law the right way?" One influential Afghan woman who lives in the U.S. told me privately that she thinks only a secular government could assure that fundamentalism does not dominate the treatment of women.

—Anne Jaclard

THE POWER OF NEGATIVITY

Poet, essayist and activist Adrienne Rich has this to say about the The Power of Negativity:

"The introduction by Peter Hudis and Kevin Anderson is a fine essay—so lucid and explicit yet sacrificing no complexity. It should be accessible to a range of people—students, or people recently stimulated to think about the nature of capitalism and the requirements of a different society, as well as longtime socialists who need the 'placing' of Raya's thought as it's provided here."

To order...
The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx; by Raya Dunayevskaya

... see page 7.

WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey

With the blessing of the Bush administration, House Republicans passed a bill, Sept. 25, allowing hospitals and other health care providers to get away with refusing to perform or pay for abortions without the threat of losing their federal funding. Opponents criticized the bill as a further assault on already dwindling abortion rights.

In further misogynist actions, in October Bush chose Dr. W. David Hager to head the Food and Drug Administration's Health Drugs Advisory Committee which advises the FDA on drugs used in obstetrics, gynecology and related reproductive health care. A practicing obstetrician/gynecologist, Hager refuses to prescribe contraceptives to unmarried women, and advises women with pre-menstrual syndrome to read the Bible and pray.

Chilean women have finally won formal legal access to emergency contraception in cases of rape, unprotected sex or contraceptive failure. The victory followed a long battle between women's groups and the Institute of Public Health against the Catholic Church and the conservative Right who had originally banned such contraception as a form of abortion.

Palestinian women prisoners went on a hunger strike in August to protest Israel's treatment of Palestinian political prisoners. It was reported that as waste water flooded the prison cells, guards unleashed tear gas grenades on the women prisoners.

Disney discards women workers

New York—About 80 people demonstrated at Disney's Fifth Avenue store for the abolition of sweatshops and child labor. Three young women spoke, two of whom had worked for the Shah Makhdum factory in Bangladesh producing garments for Disney. They represented a larger group of women workers who dared to publicly denounce conditions and demand their rights. Disney's response was to pull all production and fire the workers. These fired workers are now on a national tour.

—Sheila G.

Chicago—The Bangladeshi women workers spoke as well in Chicago:

Mahamuda: In Bangladesh, where I work at MNC producing garments for Wal-Mart, there is no sick leave, holidays, or benefits. We work seven days a week and never get a day off. Maybe we will get one day off a month.

They keep two sets of time cards, one that is real and one that they show to the buyers. The phony one shows less hours and shows days off.

We sometimes have to work all night. I make around 17 cents an hour. I live in a small room with three other women who are my co-workers. I have to buy food and pay rent from my small salary. I can't get a fan or a television, or a sleeping platform. I can't send money to my family. I can't ever have any fun.

Two months ago, one woman got sick but she wasn't allowed to leave work. She died. We were afraid to protest because if we raise our voices we might lose our jobs and not be able to feed ourselves or our families.

The Wal-Mart buyers only visit the factory from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. They don't see us working overnight or overtime. We are made by our bosses to lie to the buyers about this.

We are insulted if they don't think we are working fast enough. They call you "whore" and "prostitute,"

they say "Your parents are prostitutes!"

Lisa: I am 19 years old. I had to start working when I was ten. I come from a poor family. After working in factories for five years, I have worked in the Shah Makhdum Disney factory for the last three years.

They set a heavy pace. We have to turn out 20 garments per hour. If we don't, they slap us and curse us. The supervisors use the buyers' name to force us to hurry up. They say, "This is a rush order for Disney!"

The bathroom is filthy. We have to drink water from it, and so we get diarrhea. We have one lunch break and another ten-minute break for dinner in the evening. Even if we aren't finished eating, we have to go back to work. In my neighborhood 100 people have to share one outhouse and one stove with four burners.

If we even ask for leave or benefits we are fired. When a woman reaches age 35, she is fired with no benefits. I make less than 14 cents an hour. I have no fun in my life. I can't even watch a movie or ride a bicycle. If I could make only 37 cents an hour, I feel that I could live in greater dignity with my family.

We want Disney to return to the factory with jobs, but we also want respect. We want to be treated like human beings.

Sheikh Nazma: There are around 1.6 million workers in garment factories in Bangladesh. Most of them are young women. Despite adverse and harsh conditions there is not a single functioning union in Bangladesh. It is very difficult to organize garment workers, because you can't see them very often.

Disney was here for years, but when the workers finally raised their voices, Disney pulled out. Disney never listened. All we wanted was one day off per week and national holidays off, not to be cheated of wages, and voluntary rather than forced overtime.

We want Disney there, we need the jobs, but they should respect the workers as human. With your help we can win back our rights. If we win this campaign with Wal-Mart and Disney it will affect all other workers, as well, because these are the big ones.

Boycott ASSI Market



Los Angeles—Assi Supermarket fired 60 immigrant workers, both Latino and Korean, on the pretext that Social Security numbers to double-check their security numbers. In actuality those who were fired were primarily supporters of the ongoing union organizing drive. Workers are maintaining a daily picketline with active workers as well as the fired workers and their supporters.

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Fred's keeps water, contract out of reach

Memphis, Tenn.—The way you are punished at the Fred's warehouse is according to who you are. Does it have something to do with supporting the union? I believe so.

Office people are allowed up to 12 or 13 occurrences before they are disciplined. They're in the air-conditioned offices. But the warehouse people that are sweated out there busting our butts every day, we're only allowed to get four before we're put on probation, and five before we're terminated.

There have been times that I needed to leave early and the supervisor would tell me that I would get penalized one whole occurrence even after working half the day. Other people may not get an occurrence at all.

There's a lot of discrimination. The Latinos may work five hours before getting a break. They work them just relentlessly. They might tell them that they're not going to get a lunch break, to go ahead and finish the work.

After we started organizing the union, management started tampering with the time clocks to try to make people late. They know people set their watches to the time clocks and hang out until it's time to come in. In a few instances, the time clock was moved up five or six minutes and everybody noticed. If you're one minute late, that is one whole occurrence. There's no such thing as a grace period.

In the summertime, if it's 80 degrees outside, it's 95 inside the warehouse. They removed a water fountain so that the order pickers had to leave their work areas just to get water. Every work area is supposed to have water. They say you can't have your own water jugs on the floor, then they tell you that you can't leave your work area to get water. It's a Catch-22.

The people who have been terminated, we are all union advocates. In my case they say they fired me for production—unsatisfactory job performance. I've been doing the same job for two years as a forklift operator in the put away department.

I've never seen in the handbook where we have a production standard. I don't even know if there is a production standard. Now all of a sudden you're going to fire me for production? It was only because I was an outspoken union advocate

—Black warehouse worker

Rally for full rights

Los Angeles—Some 2,000 Latino immigrants marched and rallied in Los Angeles, a city with one of the largest immigrant populations in the U.S., for, as one sign stated, "the full rights of undocumented workers." Immigrants were marching for amnesty, the right to drivers' licenses and an end to racial profiling and INS raids.

The demonstration was co-sponsored by the AFL-CIO, Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Association of Residency and Citizenship of America and others. It was a protest against the ongoing war on immigrants. A recent INS raid targeting Latino workers at four Southern California airports was met by a protest at L.A. International Airport.

The L.A. march was also against Governor Davis vetoing a bill to allow drivers' licenses for undocumented immigrants, many of whom depend on the automobile to be able to work. Before the veto, 20,000 Latino immigrants had marched through downtown L.A. for their right to a driver's license.

The Green Party campaign with Peter Camejo as candidate for governor is allowing itself to be used by Bush's choice, the right-wing fundamentalist Republican Simon. Davis would not allow Camejo in a recent debate after Davis had invited him to participate. Camejo could act as a spoiler and put the even more anti-immigrant Simon in office.

According to a spokeswoman for the Center for Human Rights, former President Clinton signed a bill granting amnesty before leaving office, but the 350,000 immigrants who have applied still have not been granted amnesty under the Bush administration.

—Basho

Free the Liaoyang 4!

Chicago—Hundreds of demonstrators, protesting China's violent suppression of the religious movement Falun Gong and its denial of Tibetan autonomy, greeted Chinese president Jiang Zemin on Oct. 22 when he stopped in Chicago en route to George W. Bush's ranch.

Jiang has the reactionary credentials for his uneasy partnership with Bush—he gained the top national titles of party, state and army in 1989 when as a local official he butchered Shanghai workers after the June 4 Tiananmen Square massacre.

Now, 13 years later as Jiang is scheduled to give up those titles in retirement, the Chinese working class remains the adversary of China's rulers. The Liaoyang 4—Yao Fuxin, Xiao Yunliang, Pang Qingxiang and Wang Zhaoming—have been jailed as leaders of laid-off state workers in China's Northeast for, more than seven months without charges.

China Labour Bulletin (PO Box 11362 GPO, Hong Kong) is spearheading a campaign for their release by appealing to the rule of law. While the WTO insists on "rule of law" to protect capital, we need equal solidarity to free the Liaoyang 4.

—Bob McGuire

WORKSHOP TALKS

(Continued from page 1)

CIO national organization likes to brag about the way of life of the American family, "brought to you by unions." While that is certainly true, what the AFL-CIO has done in the last few decades supports that "lifestyle" by directly helping the bosses rob from the health and welfare of the young and future workers.

It shouldn't come as a surprise that the majority of the 40 million uninsured workers in America are either female or Black, or both, but most definitely young. This is our nation's collateral damage.

After a two-tier system was established in my shop in 1986, more and more new recruits were added to the lower tier of the company's payroll—many of them hired from subcontracting agencies. The employer also gradually let go us older workers on the higher tier by re-engineering the workplace.

You can't even call us a union shop, because of all the animosity and alienation from young workers. Our company and union bosses tell us daily to smile and provide "excellent service," because we're in a partnership. They're in partnership with each other, not us.

Our world is not just two-tier, but worse—a permanent three-tier society. The first tier consists of vested workers with full benefits and higher wages. The second tier consists of lower-paid workers without benefits that management likes to call casuals. The third tier exists outside the shop, within the ranks of the chronically unemployed, who may have given up looking for a job and are dropped from unemployment statistics. Marx called this capital's "reserve army." Permanently left out, they will also be capital's future engineers.

Marx wrote in *Capital* that, after the employer has paid for his machines, supplies, and living labor, so that the worker can come back to work another day, everything else is surplus value that the employer keeps as profit. Marx said the boss keeps more of that surplus value by keeping the cost of living labor low.

This he can do either by stretching the length of the workday or by trimming the existing workforce while keeping production high at the pace set by the machines. In other words, we (living labor) must be constantly dominated by "dead labor" (machines).

Workers call this speed-up. It's deadly because we workers pay for it with our lives. Hundreds of health-care workers die each year from AIDS, hepatitis, and other diseases contracted on the job. Thousands more are disabled by back injuries, needle-sticks, patient assaults, or mental and physical breakdown from constant overwork and speed-up.

Some union officials cheapen our lives when they use this issue only as a "corporate campaign" slogan, as a ploy during contract bargaining. But this life and death issue is real for us, not just political.

We can no longer tolerate our union leaders claiming success when they trade away the future of our union just to get us a little more money. All value in the world is created by us workers. No one should take credit for giving some of it back to us. Especially not by robbing from the next generation of workers.

Most important, we can no longer allow them to give away our job security for mor eloot. We ultimately pay with our lives and limbs when the bosses speed us up to recover that loot. It is high time we workers reminded our officials that without us, the workers, there is no union. And, without the youth, there is no future.

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's Note

This fall the world remembers the 40th anniversary of the moment when, in October 1962, life as we know it almost ended. In the Cuban Missile Crisis, John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. With many of the ingredients for the analysis then having been recast for today—including nuclear politics and a part of the Left that's lost its critical capacities—we reprint excerpts of Raya Dunayevskaya's "Weekly Political Letter" of Oct. 25, 1962. It was titled, "Marxist-Humanism vs. the U.S. Blockade of Cuba, the Russian Missile Bases There, Fidel Castro's 'Selective' Party, All Playing With Nuclear Holocaust."

Footnotes by the editor have been added. The letter can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 3082-3087.

October 29, 1962

My preliminary (Oct. 23, 1962) statement on the newly created brink-of-war situation as a result of President John F. Kennedy's blockade of Cuba, Nikita Khrushchev's missile bases there, and the impotence of the UN the minute the two nuclear titans decide to unleash a war holocaust, correctly stressed the following: "In opposing war, we make it clear that we are opposed to **both** nuclear giants: Russia and the U.S. Under no circumstances do we get ourselves maneuvered into a position where we, for a single moment, sound so much against either one of them that we appear to be for the other. ABOVE ALL WE OPPOSE WAR NOT ONLY AS "AGAINSTERS" BUT PRIMARILY BECAUSE WE ARE FOR A TOTALLY NEW SOCIETY, ON NEW, ON HUMAN BEGINNINGS, FREE FROM EXPLOITATION AND DISCRIMINATION, WHERE THE POPULATION TO A MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD HAS THE DESTINY IN THEIR OWN HANDS, BEGINNING WITH THE WORKERS AT THE POINT OF PRODUCTION.

Here I wish to develop this position on two levels: 1. the objective situation and nearness of war; and 2. ramifications of this crisis for our existence both as an organization and as a body of ideas, both on the question of continuous activity and writings, beginning with the next issue of the paper [*News & Letters*].

I. BEFORE THE BLOCKADE

A good deal of illumination on both these factors can be gained if we take it out of the present moment of crisis and see that which was inherent in it the day before....Four days before the announcement of the blockade of Cuba, I stressed that what was wrong with people who pretend that Russia is not in Cuba is that they thereby cover up the fact that Russia is the greatest exporter of counter-revolution. It is easy to see counter-revolution when it is as direct as it is in the outright squashing of a revolution, as the Russian destruction of the Hungarian Revolution. It is not easy to see counter-revolution when it is a question of **planned exploitation of the proletariat in his daily life**. Yet these Russian "technicians" have been sent there, among other reasons, in order to compel the Cuban working people, **who are resisting anti-labor laws, fighting the diversion of the Cuban Revolution from its announced humanism to state-capitalist channels**, to compel them to produce more and more for less and less, and at the same time leave their political destiny to "the party and its leader."

Finally, those who can't get away from the spurious ground for argument established by Communists for the special benefit of the liberals, to the effect that if the U.S. has a "right" to bases in Europe, Russia has a "right" to one in Cuba, fail to see that the Russian arms imported into Cuba are not one-tenth of the threat to the U.S. **THAT THEY ARE TO THE CUBAN PEOPLE**. Small Cuba, even when armed by Russia, is no match for the U.S. might, but it is a power against the unarmed revolutionary underground, **AND IT IS FOR THIS PURPOSE PRECISELY THAT THEY ARE INTENDED**.

II. THE BLOCKADE AND THE MOVEMENTS OPPOSED TO IT

Out of the clear blue, a few short days after he himself argued against Republican opponents who urged a blockade, J.F. Kennedy made the shocking, unilateral, war-like pronouncement of blockade. Outside of Khrushchev's break-up of the summit as a result of the U-2 plane spy incident,(1) when the two nuclear giants were pitted against each other with no intermediaries, the people of the world were never closer to the brink of nuclear holocaust. The present confrontation is not limited to verbal threats and busted summits. It is now clear beyond a peradventure of a doubt that both Kennedy and Khrushchev are mad enough to plunge the world into thermonuclear war. If a summit meeting should result and stave off the day, it clearly will be only a delaying action. It is likewise clear that Cuba has become the possible locale of the outburst, as Berlin has been and remains to this day another focal point, **BUT WHAT IS INVOLVED IS THE U.S.-RUSSIAN COMPETITION FOR DOMINATION OF THE WORLD**.

1962 Cuban Missile Crisis tested anti-war Left

It is at this point that the movements opposing war show their own negative character. The falling into a trap is inevitable when one does not view positively what they are fighting for, instead of only what they are fighting against. Thus though the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (and Committee of 100) are supposed to be for banning the bomb, they had not a word to say against its spread to yet another country, in this case Cuba. Obviously, the Trotskyites, along with the Communists, are not the only ones who think of "good" bombs (Russian) and "bad" bombs (American). The professional nuclear disarmament people have now discovered that, in Cuban hands (or at least on Cuban soil for these are not really in Cuban, but in Russian, hands), it inspires them to the following slogan, "Viva Fidel, Kennedy to Hell."

OK, let's take up Fidel. Even without a bomb, he has moved so far away from the revolution he led that it is hard to see what he is making of Cuba other than a satellite of Russia, and I don't mean it only as a storer of missile bases, but as an outpost of single party state-capitalism. In the misnamed speech, "Marxism-Leninism," delivered on Dec. 2, 1961—nearly a year ago, that is—Fidel expounded his conception of why an "integrated revolutionary organization," that is to say, a single party in which the Communists and what was left of the

July 26th movement, merged.(2) From urging his comrades "to overcome (their) scorn for military academies" through his love of The Plan ("I always had a plan") as against the "anarchism" represented by opposition to him ("I am not going to ask what Manolo Fernandez represented,(3) because I believe he represented trash; he was a 'mad anarchist'" to his glorification of Khrushchev ("one has only to read Khrushchev's report to the 22nd Congress... The building of socialism follows a well-beaten path by now"), this petty-bourgeois sees the truly independent third road—against both U.S. and Russia—and for a new humanist society, as an incursion of the "strict standard of selection" which must characterize "a party of leadership." Now if only the workers will continue to work, only harder, and agree that "The Ideal System of Government is the Party System," he can continue to lead "collectively"—a la Khrushchev in Russia.

Any one can—though it must be admitted that Fidel doesn't do it very well—repeat generalizations of Marxism on the role of the working class. The proof, **the only proof**, that it is a way of life, not a mere weapon of propaganda, is its **realization in life**. No such thing is true in Fidel's Cuba where not a single organ—from the trade unions to the peasant unions, from the state to the party—is any longer controlled by the working people. Nevertheless, because so many in the nuclear disarmament movement have been forged as "againsters" rather than as proponents of a totally new society, the Communists can set so fatal a trap for them that they forget what their very reason for existence is—opposition to nuclear armament—and shout "Viva Fidel."

On this life-and-death question, at this life-and-death moment, we can under no circumstances allow ourselves to be swallowed up by this curious movement. If nothing else can be left unsullied, let's at least make sure that our Marxist-Humanist ideas remain the beacon for future generations as they are for ours. Therefore we must unfurl our banner, and proceed with our opposition to both poles of world capital, putting in its rightly subor-

minate place those who "follow the leader," be that Khrushchev or Kennedy.

III. THE TESTING POINT

At the same time, we cannot minimize the totality of the crisis by considering that Kennedy has finally exposed himself as no different from the Republicans—who had urged blockade before and now urge invasion—things will be in any way easier for the building of a Marxist-Humanist movement. It is not only the Birchers that will take upon themselves the role of extra "enforcers."(4) The hysteria created by the administration is much more ominous than that by Sen. Joseph McCarthy who had no such power as Kennedy. Whenever a political position was proven wrong, there were those among the Marxists who tried to misuse a Marxist statement about the whip of the counter-revolution helping the revolutionary development. Its ultimate tragedy was Stalin's idiotic statement, "After Hitler, us." First, the statement about the whip of the counter-revolution referred to it urging the revolution on **WHEN IT IS ALREADY IN PROCESS BUT HAS NOT YET REACHED FULL FRUITION**, as say, between February and before October 1917 when the Kornilov episode exposed Kerensky and allowed the full development of the revolution.(5) In a non-revolutionary period, the problems confronting Marxist-Humanism are made harder, not lessened, by the blockade, for the man who has the means to start a nuclear holocaust does not forget for a moment his power to press down upon the opposition to his war-provoking policy.

Take even the minor question of Kennedy's timing his announcement of nuclear bases in Cuba to when it would be most useful to the Democrats

running for election. Two percent one way or the other may win him the election of a governor or a congressman. Once won—or lost—however, he has to be concerned not with a 2% margin but with the fact that **over 60% of the American people are opposed to an invasion of Cuba**. As the capitalist ruler he is, he then turns the power against his own people. Everyone who is not for his suicidal policy becomes "the enemy."

Of course, we increase our activity, not lessen it. Of course, we know the universal opposition to war and can build on that. Of course, we build our organization along with developing our ideas comprehensively, but we can do so only by being fully conscious of all the obstacles in the way. This is why the preliminary statement emphasized that:

"[W]e have no power other than those of ideas even as the working people have no arms other than those of their labor power. Therefore it would be folly to act as if by opposition we mean the kind of arms that only the bourgeoisie has. **THEY**—both Kennedy and Khrushchev—have arms and ships and missiles and prisons and jet bombers. They can afford to play games as to who is the 'aggressor' and 'deceiver' and who is the violated and deceived while they jockey for the best position to attack. We refuse to get into any such arguments...Our position must be as unique as it is, neither 'popular frontism' nor pretense to power'...

Everything we now do—whether that be a front-pager, a pamphlet, an educational, activity in a strike or picket line—must bear the positive stamp of Marxist-Humanism and the totally new foundations for a truly human society...We must learn to express our ideas clearly, **in 25 words or less**, that is to say, with full consciousness that our time is not unlimited.

While we are under no illusion that times of such heightened crises are propitious for building a mass organization, we are sure that the new sense of urgency is just the impulse needed to intensify our activity in a way that the meeting of the movement from theory with that from practice will not be left to chance. It is a time of testing of individuals as well as ideas and organization.

NOTES

1. On May 1, 1960, a U.S. U-2 spy plane piloted by Francis Gary Powers was shot down over Russian air space, causing the breakup of a U.S.-Russia summit on disarmament.
2. The July 26 Movement was a revolutionary group organized to overthrow Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. Fidel Castro came to be its leader.
3. Manolo Fernandez was a Cuban union leader who was ousted by the government shortly after Castro took power.
4. The John Birch Society is a far-right organization founded in 1958 that vehemently opposed the Civil Rights Movement and promotes homophobia, sexism, and anti-Semitism under the guise of anti-Communism. Still in existence today, it has links with Religious Right groups such as the Christian Coalition and Eagle Forum, as well as with Pat Buchanan.
5. Kerensky was a leader of the Provisional government overthrown by the Bolsheviks. Kornilov was a reactionary general who earlier tried to overthrow Kerensky.



"No war over Cuba" protest at the UN, 1962.

Independent Media Center

Youth in the Marxist- Humanist Archives...

"In 1965, there arose a new great mass anti-Vietnam War youth movement. The mass movements, of youth especially, in 1968—be it in the so called Cultural Revolution in China, or in Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, or the Columbia occupation in New York—came to a climax in May 1968 in Paris; but still without a total philosophy."

—From Volume VI: "1964-1968—As against Decadent Capitalism on the Rampage, New Stages of Mass Revolt."

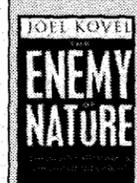
For a library holding a copy of The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection nearest you, contact us. See page 3.

To order a Guide to the collection, see page 7.

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE **Toward a dialectical humanist ecology**

by Joe Swoboda

There are a number of reasons why I am excited by the release of Joel Kovel's new book *The Enemy of Nature*. The first stems from my long-held belief that Marx's humanism contains an implicit (if not explicit) ecological dimension. Shortly after my "conversion" to Marxist-Humanism in the late 1980s, which was largely the result of my reading Marx's *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, it occurred to me that though Marx had done a wonderful job of describing man's/woman's alienation from his/her labor, from the product of his/her labor and from other men and women under capitalism, Marx had hinted at, but did not develop, the theory of alienation as it related to the splitting of men/women from this thing we have come to call "Nature."



The Enemy of Nature: The End of Capitalism or the End of the World by Joel Kovel (Zed Press, 2002)

I felt the *1844 Manuscripts* (and other of Marx's most important works) were ripe for an ecological interpretation. I feel Kovel has finally taken up this project, and I would argue that chapters 3, 5 and 6 of *The Enemy of Nature* are the best attempts at connecting Marx's humanism with an ecological vision.

My second interest in Kovel's book derives from my hope that it might provide some philosophic vision to the green movement. Like Kovel, I am a member of

the green movement and the Green Party. I joined the Green Party in the Summer of 2001 because I saw that many young people and people who had not otherwise been involved in left activism were being drawn to this new political movement. When I discovered there was a Green Party local active in the Latino immigrant community in which I live, I was also excited by the potential for community-based organizing around issues like housing, gentrification, and immigrants rights.

However I joined with strong reservations. Most prominent among them was my awareness that the Green Party was a reformist organization aimed at working mostly within the confines of the established political process and was therefore self-limiting. I was well aware of the fact that the Green Party could easily become as much a part of the problem as had European social democracy, especially without a more revolutionary vision. This had already happened with the Greens in Europe.

THE NEED FOR PHILOSOPHY

Kovel has tried to provide the green movement with a philosophy of revolution that points beyond purely electoral green politics. Chapters 7, 8 and 9 of the work address this issue most particularly.

There is another reason that a work like Kovel's is important at the current moment. There are two grim possibilities facing us currently and two potentially great movements that have arisen in response to this situation. The push toward complete corporate world domination (i.e. globalization) has been met with an exciting, if poorly named, anti-globalization movement. Likewise, a new stage of permanent warfare seems to be the likely outcome of the current "war on terrorism." This has been met with a renewed anti-war movement. Both of these movements suffer from a serious lack of theoretical perspective and humanist principals.

With the anti-globalization movement, the problem lies in its pragmatism. A broad-based movement involving every shade of the left from the labor bureaucracy to youth anarchists, it has generally avoided developing any kind of philosophic perspective. The only serious attempt at an anti-globalist philosophy has been Hardt and Negri's *Empire*—a great book with serious flaws. Kovel's work does a better job addressing many of the issues Hardt and Negri neglect—the reality of state-capitalism and the failure of so-called 20th century "communism" being one of the most important.

In the case of the anti-war movement it is more a dearth of any humanist vision. The most unprincipled and reactionary of left political ideas have seemed to find their home in this movement. What Kovel attempts to offer us is a much-needed philosophy of revolution, and one grounded in the fertile soil of ecosocialism.

THE LOGIC OF CAPITAL

Kovel wishes to prove that capitalism is inherently anti-ecological. He tries to make the case that capitalism is the "efficient cause" of the present ecological crisis. Kovel's primary argument is that it is in capital's nature to "grow or die" and that this endless process of self-expansion pushes beyond the ecological limits that are necessary for stable ecosystems. He also argues that at the root of this crisis is the domination of exchange over use-value and the transformation of human beings and other elements of nature into exchangeable commodities. He writes in chapter 3 (pp. 39-40) that capital represents that regime in which exchange-value predominates over use-value in the production of commodities—and the problem with capital is that, once installed, this process becomes self-perpetuating and self-expanding.

The process entails a twofold degradation. In the first place, "We have the commodification of nature, which includes human beings, and their bodies," Kovel writes. "However... nature simply does not work in this way. No matter what capital's ideologues say, the actual laws of nature never include monetization; they exist, rather, in

the context of ecosystems whose internal relations are violated by conversion to the money-form. Thus the ceaseless rendering into commodities, with its monetization and exchange, breaks down the specificity and intricacy of ecosystems. To this is added the devaluation, or basic lack of caring, which attends what is left over and unprofitable. Here arise the so-called 'externalities' that become repositories of pollution."

Kovel's argument that capitalist self-expansion is ecologically unsustainable is easily made. As he points out, even bourgeois ecologists have called for "limits to growth," seemingly uncomprehending that limits are anathema to capital and that capital will always extend commodity production past any limitations in order to survive.

He uses a couple of eco-catastrophes to illustrate this.

The most important is the 1984 tragedy at the Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India. Kovel does an admirable job of explaining how this "industrial accident," which resulted in the death of over 8,000 people, was ultimately a product of the logic of capital and not just an isolated incident.

He also points out that the plant's very existence in Bhopal was the result of the ecologically devastating "green revolution" of the 1970's, which foisted dependence on pesticides upon the developing world.

The case is perhaps better made by his critique of the culture of "automobilia." Kovel describes how automobile production has created a situation where its "limitation" or lack of growth as an industry would create a global economic crisis but its continual expansion creates massive ecological devastation worldwide. He also points out how the production of this single commodity results in and feeds on the warping of human needs/desires while deepening the process of alienation.

Unfortunately, Kovel's historical case examples could be stronger. Other ecologists and ecological historians—William Cronon is one who comes to mind—have done a better job of capturing how commodity production transforms human and "natural" communities. Indeed, Kovel's "science" is at times a bit too simplistic, as when he explains that his interest in global warming was originally sparked by one exceptionally hot summer in which his home garden was laid to waste.

The strength of Kovel's work is not in its description of the impact of capital on ecosystems. Instead, its brilliance is in understanding how alienation is at the root of capitalism's eco-destructive character and that only by overcoming this alienation in its multifaceted forms can a society of ecological "sufficiency" be achieved.

ECOSOCIALISM & DIALECTICAL HUMANISM

What makes Kovel's ecosocialist vision so exciting is that it is firmly grounded in Marx's humanist philosophy and dialectics—which Marx himself described as a "fully-developed naturalism" and a "resolution of the antagonism between man/woman and nature" in the *1844 Manuscripts*. This is evident early on in the work, when Kovel explains why his philosophy is based on an ecological and not environmental perspective:

"The environment is by definition a set of things outside us, with no essential structure, while an ecology is a whole defined by internal relations. Environments can be listed and numerically evaluated. Ecologies offer no such packaging and the boundaries between them are sites of active transformation, without a fixed line between inside and outside. In particular, the boundary between humanity and nature becomes highly dynamic, and a matter to be understood historically and transformed politically" (p. 17). Though the focus of much of the work is on the "grow or die" nature of capitalism, Kovel is careful to avoid a narrow "economistic" interpretation of this phenomenon. For Kovel, the imperative to self-expansion is inherently linked to alienated labor, the heart of the capitalist production system:

"It follows that the ecological crisis is not simply a manifestation of the macro-economic effects of capital, but also reveals the extension of capitalist alienation into the ecosphere. And as this alienation, and the whole structure of the system, is grounded in the relation between capital and labor, it also follows that the ecological crisis and capital's exploitation of labor are two aspects of the same phenomenon" (p. 132).

Kovel continually points out that "Separation/alienation/splitting is the fundamental gesture of capital" and that "the phenomenon of separation expresses the core gesture of eco-disintegration" (pp. 131-32). Indeed, the concept of nature as a static, quantifiable other, separated from humanity, is a part of this alienation and at the core of our society's anti-ecological character.

Such a notion of the environment even infects "ecophilosophies" such as deep ecology and bioregionalism. Kovel argues that only in overcoming this alienation can ecosocialism be achieved:

"Recognition of ourselves in nature and nature in ourselves, in other words subjective as well as objective

participation in ecosystems, is the essential condition for overcoming the domination of nature, and its pathologies of instrumental production and addictive consumption" (p. 209).

Central to this alienation is what Kovel refers to as the "gendered bifurcation of nature." In chapter 6, he develops a sort of anthropology of man's estrangement from nature, in many ways similar to the ideas of the social ecologist Murray Bookchin. Kovel points out that male domination is integrally related not only to the development of the concepts of property and production relations in human history, but also to the identifying of nature as an Other to be manipulated and subjugated—a female other (p. 121).

This aspect of Kovel's analysis is particularly interesting and insightful and I praise him for making



women's exploitation, a central component of his ecophilosophy. However it also presents an almost essentialist notion of men as the violent victimizers and women as passive victims lacking full subjectivity.

Interestingly, Kovel attacks Bookchin's similar anthropology of estrangement for focusing too much on the issue of hierarchy as the fundamental moment in the process. I find Bookchin's description of humanity's struggle to overcome its domination by natural forces, which leads to humanity's domination of nature, somewhat more consistent and historically grounded than Kovel's. Indeed, I was interested to hear more of Kovel's critique of the philosophy of social ecology, but the few pages he devotes to the subject in chapter 7 focus too much on the supposed short-

comings of Bookchin the person rather than the movement itself.

I find myself disagreeing with Kovel when he places social ecology alongside neo-Smithians under the rubric of community-based economics, and in his claim that critiques of hierarchy and the state don't deserve the central importance they are given by social ecologists and the anarchist tradition.

THE WORK'S GREATEST WEAKNESS

This brings me to what is the most important weakness in Kovel's work. He attempts to apply Marx's brilliant dialectical methodology to the understanding of the current ecological crisis. For the most part, he is quite successful, particularly when illustrating how alienation is at its root. But Marx's dialectical vision captured not only the crisis and process of domination, but also focused on the subjects of revolt, the forces of freedom, that inevitably arose from this same process.

Kovel has not developed this side of the dialectic fully. Though he makes it quite clear that the domination of nature is integrally related to the alienation of labor and the subjugation of women, he does not fully investigate how these human subjects become agents of the new struggle for freedom.

Many readers I have spoken to feel that the weakest chapters of Kovel's book are the final two. Often they are referred to as a laundry list or a wish list, or as overly formulaic or utopian. I agree and would argue that this stems from a lack of an organic relationship in the book between the objective crisis and the subjects of revolt.

Others have pointed out that Kovel has little discussion about the environmental justice movement that has arisen in many African-American and Latino working class communities in recent years. Perhaps if Kovel had spent more time examining these movements, the subjective side of the dialectic would have been more fully grasped and a more thoroughly revolutionary outlook could have been provided in the last chapters.

A philosophy of revolution is not the same as a blueprint for revolution, and when intellectuals are not firmly connected to the masses in revolt, what often results are utopian schemes rather than revolutionary vision.

The big question remains, does *The Enemy of Nature* represent a breakthrough for an ecologically grounded philosophy of revolution that can inform not only the green movement, but also other key social movements in the current period?

I would have to conclude that it is certainly a major step in the right direction. Kovel's development of the ecological potential of Marx's humanist dialectics is brilliant and long overdue. It represents a philosophic perspective that has been seriously lacking in green politics, though his analysis of how to integrate the two is less than satisfactory. I would be very interested to see a dialogue between Kovel, *News & Letters* and the social ecologists, as I think each could offer the others great insights on developing a more complete revolutionary philosophy. But certainly the greatest challenge and the greatest test will be how well Kovel's work resonates with the needs, hopes, and ideas of those who will ultimately rise up to challenge capitalism's eco-suicide.

FIGHTING AGAINST WAR AND FOR A NEW SOCIETY WITH THE IDEA OF FREEDOM

The October 2002 *N&L* Lead on "Bush's war against Iraq threatens global disaster" is the most informative analysis I have read or heard about Bush's permanent war. It hits the nail on the head when it points out that focusing a critique solely on U.S. oppression/war leaves one unprepared to deal with the betrayal of the mass of people seeking freedom within the countries oppressed by dictators. History is littered with the betrayal of those fighting for freedom in the "third world."

Longtime subscriber
Kansas

The October Lead mentioned the "quick defeat of the Taliban." Bush considers this a success. But aside from the military defeat, what exactly was successful about the mission in Afghanistan? I wonder how the people there feel about his "success."

Anti-war youth
Memphis

We are deeply alarmed that the most powerful nations in the world continue to rely on military force to achieve their global political and economic goals—while eroding the standard of living, the environment and the security of people throughout the world.

Military action against Iraq would first and foremost affect the long-suffering civilian population. Since the 1991 Gulf War, an estimated 1.5 million Iraqis have died as a result of shortages of food and medicine under sanctions.

The world cannot be made safe from weapons of mass destruction by countries that possess vast arsenals of such weaponry, bombing other nations for allegedly pursuing the same weaponry. Bombing sites that could contain nuclear, chemical or biological weapons hold the potential for a global human and environmental catastrophe.

Alarmed
Canada

In your October Lead you state that the UN is providing no opposition to Bush's drive to war with Iraq. I believe they have provided some opposition, but it is both weak and, in the end, non-viable. This is because the other big powers, Russia and China in particular, want to take advantage of the U.S. doctrine of a pre-emptive strike and "war against terrorism" to use against their own opposition at home. In the end they will no doubt capitulate to the U.S. after they "negotiate," but so far they haven't. And what about pre-emptive strikes from India or Pakistan? Or Israel? Or who knows what others will arise? Bush is playing with fire—nuclear, biological and chemical—in his drive to U.S. world-imperialist domination.

Activist
Oregon

In thinking of the costs of invading Iraq, I decided to calculate the cost to each person in the U.S. If the total costs of war and reconstruction comes to \$150 billion and we use the 2000 census figure of 281,421,906 as the population of the U.S., the average cost to each of us is \$533.01. If Americans are not already convinced morally against an unnecessary war with Iraq, maybe they could be convinced on a personal level.

Chris
Detroit

I was a little concerned about the Editorial in the October issue calling 9/11

the "largest terrorist attack in history." Is that really true? If you call terrorism attacks on non-combatants, there's a lot of that in recent history, especially Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yes, it was in a war, but it was directed against non-combatants.

David Mizuno'Oto
Oakland, Calif.

The shamelessness of the administration's doublespeak is amazing. They plan to invade a country, conquer it and impose military rule—and justify it as maintaining "peace!"

Confounded
Memphis

I read the report from British intelligence upon which Tony Blair based his support for the U.S. It gives good information on Iraq but does not support what Blair says. It shows that for a while Saddam has extended his missile range but has a damaged infrastructure for building nuclear weapons. In other words, nothing is imminent. So why is Bush raising such a sense of urgency and why there? Saddam attack the U.S.? He can't! It was September 11 that enabled Bush to push for this war. But it won't reduce the threat of terrorism.

Radical lawyer
Flint, Mich.

I feel the most important thing for us to do as citizens of this country is to oppose U.S. imperialism. It means fighting your own government. I know the U.S. betrayed the Iraqi people when the Kurds rose up against Saddam after the Gulf War and many Iraqis had to flee. It's hard to disassociate U.S. imperialism from reactionary regimes everywhere. It's why I think the best thing to help the people of Iraq is to stop U.S. imperialism.

Anti-war youth
Chicago

The Marxist-Humanist category of "two worlds in every country" is important for the anti-war movement. The administration has the illusion that everyone will fall behind them because of September 11. But our demonstrations here are getting a lot of support, especially from women, Blacks, and young truck drivers. We may not hear much in the media about the second world in each country, but the fear of rebellious masses determines a lot of policy. Iraq, Turkey and Iran are all worried about the Kurds' drive for self-determination. Recognizing the category of "two worlds" can help us build the movement.

Activist
Memphis

COMPOUNDED BALI HORROR

In recoiling at the horror of the bombing on Bali and the terrible pictures of burned and bloodied tourists, many are unaware that up to 40% of the victims were local Balinese. For them the horror is compounded because, unlike the international victims taken to the best medical care Australia has to offer, the Balinese victims were left with the chaotic conditions of the overstretched hospitals in the capital, Denpasar.

Almost none have any medical insurance or government support to help them recover. Nor will there be any help for the thousands whose livelihoods were destroyed. They are desperate for help even for such simple things as antibiotics and burn creams. A relief effort has been started by TAPOL, the Indonesian Human Rights Organization that can be reached through tapol@gn.apc.org. We have to try

READERS' VIEWS

to counterbalance the unspoken racism that has rendered nearly half of the victims of this tragedy effectively invisible.

Human rights activist
New York



CLOSE
DOWN
THE
SCHOOL
OF
ASSASSINS

It's time to consider going with us to Ft. Benning, Ga., for the Nov. 15-18 weekend vigil to close down the notorious School of the Americas (SOA) that the U.S. Army renamed Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHISC). No matter how vehemently the Army denies its responsibility for the murders of hundreds of thousands of people by its SOA graduates, this institution remains a shameful symbol worldwide of U.S. support for militaries that kill their own people. Those who want information on the protest events can check out the web site at www.soaw.org.

Beth Poteet
Chicago

AN ELECTION SURPRISE

Though it is not yet official at the moment I am writing this, the 90% unofficial count shows ex-colonel Lucio Gutierrez leading the presidential race here in Ecuador. In second place for the Nov. 24 runoff is Alvaro Noboa, heir to a banana fortune and the richest person in Ecuador, with no political experience (a la Ross Perot). Gutierrez was the colonel who supported the indigenous uprising in January 2000. The red baiting has already begun but, barring election fraud, I predict he will win the presidency in November. The candidates of the traditional political parties were all clearly rejected.

Correspondent
Ecuador

MARXISTS & ANARCHISTS

I thought Brown Douglas took a cheap shot at anarchists in the Youth column titled "New anti-war movement?" (October *N&L*) when he went from a short quote by one anarchist to say, "throughout there is a lack of a vision of the future, of what could be and the forces that could make it happen." This sounds somewhat vanguardist. Where is the solidarity? Marxists and anarchists must unite to fight the capitalists. There are many types of anarchists and Marxists. I expected more from Marxist-Humanists than this.

Anthony Rayson
Illinois

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

Tom More's "The theory and politics of regression" (October *N&L*) is a profound contribution to understanding religious fundamentalism as a global phenomenon. As he argues, fundamentalism is not simply a reaction to Western imperialism, but a modern reassertion of the opposition to critical and dialectical thinking. Because fundamentalism is about privileging "immediate knowledge of a putative truth immunized from critical scrutiny and stepping back from dialectical thinking" its outcome is terror. Any opposition movement that also steps back from dialectical thinking and does not address the internal contradictions of our societies, cannot fight fundamentalism.

Sheila
Los Angeles

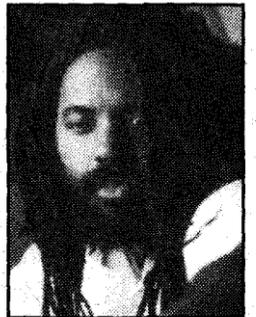
The development of fundamentalism is not about how Islam would have devel-

oped without western intervention. There is no corner of the world left untouched by western intervention, not only military but specifically the logic of commodity production. That broke through all national boundaries. The dialectical approach really focuses on how capitalism infects the mind. I hear Tom More saying that fundamentalism is a thoroughly capitalist phenomenon.

Urszula Wislanka
Oakland, Calif.

The Philosophic Dialogue in the October issue illuminates our current situation. If we see it in the context of "the Christian Right's successful reversal of the emancipatory forward ground" gained by earlier decades' freedom movements, how can the Left fight successfully without establishing its own ground of full freedom? To fight on the enemy's ground is to defeat oneself. The search for shortcuts is one way this happens, whether the shortcuts are reducing imperialism to the actions of conspiracies or the broader "anti-theoretical posture" Tom More mentions. We truly need to begin by negating not only U.S. imperialism but all partial and incomplete efforts to negate it.

Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis



MUMIA'S STRUGGLE CONTINUES

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal has undergone a sea change recently. He has hired completely different lawyers to defend him but they are encountering resistance in the state and federal courts to hear new evidence. That evidence is a set of affidavits that, if true, prove his innocence "beyond the shadow of a doubt." The Chicago Committee to free Mumia Abu-Jamal is taking two important actions to intensify an international effort to free him. One is directed at Amnesty International, asking them to create an Amicus Curiae brief and submit it to the federal and state courts that have Mumia's fate in their hands. A second regards an Amicus Curiae brief filed by two locals of the International Longshoremen's Union, N.A.L.C. Golden Gate, National Union of Journalists of the U.K., and two independent local unions in Ukraine. We are asking everybody to file individual joinders to this brief and have their organizations submit them.

Each joinder is an individual filing and we are prepared to pay for four copies and mailing each joinder returned to us. Those interested in helping us can write to CCFMAJ, Box 112, 2421 W. Pratt, Chicago IL 60645 or e-mail us at organizers@chicagofreemumia.org. Since every document costs about two dollars, contributions for postage and copying will be gratefully accepted.

Mumia supporters
Chicago

BRITISH SCENE

The Conservative Party in the UK, the oldest political party in Europe, is at an all-time low. At the end of its recent annual conference, it was casting to find a role. It still retains a membership of about 250,000 but many of its activists are in their 80s. The drift towards the politics of the Countryside Alliance, which appears to be a rump of some of the most reactionary people in British society, suggests its options for survival are limited. It has been outflanked on the right by the Labour Party. A good time for the Left to grow? Not if the Left continues with the bland old ideas that have proved so untasty in the past.

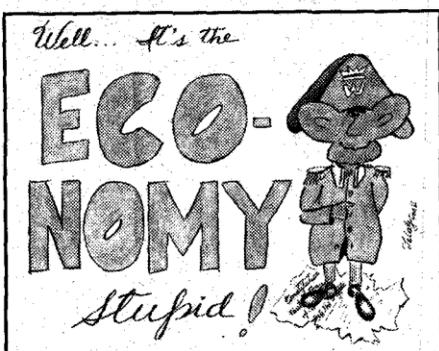
Patrick
England

MARXIST literature catalog

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CAPITALIST ECONOMICS



Depending on whether the Republicans capture both houses of Congress or not, the Bush defacto regime may or may not be able to continue, with no end in sight, its "war without end." No doubt, after all the "rogue states" as now defined are dealt with, new "rogue states" must emerge. Otherwise the structural crisis of capitalism takes over and the whole shooting match enters a fast downfall to its final implosion. So "war is survival." (I'm enclosing a cartoon I drew to express how I see it.)

Ana Lucia Gelabert
Texas

The Left talks about Enron's greed as what is wrong with capitalism. When I challenged some Leftists that it's not just greed but the internal logic of the system, they said it is true but that they can't put that in their papers. I'm glad N&L does.

Iranian revolutionary
Hayward, Calif.

BARBERSHOP

For weeks, the movie "Barbershop" was number one at the box office. The controversy has helped keep the cash-flow going through the roof. The controversy is about lines concerning Ms. Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., which cannot be printed verbatim in any newspapers or magazines, and are censored with a bleep on TV or radio news stations.

Let's compare this controversy in "Barbershop" with the movie "Coming to America" which starred Eddie Murphy and Arsenio Hall, and also has a barber-

shop scene where there is a debate revolving around Mr. Mohammed Ali changing his name from Cassius Clay. I still remember that scene ten years later. But if the controversy over "Barbershop" is remembered at all years from now it will be because of how much money the studio made. To me this movie should be renamed just "BS" and I don't mean "Bachelor of Science."

George Wilfrid Smith Jr.
Chicago

FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S LIBERATION

I liked the way Maya Jhansi began her article on "After 9/11: What kind of future for women?" (October N&L) with a quote from Rosa Luxemburg and ended it with one from Virginia Woolf. That connects us to women's militant anti-war history and reminds us of Luxemburg's powerful voice. In pointing to the way Bush's coalition in the UN with Libya, Algeria, Sudan, and even Iran and Iraq, was to strike down advances for women on reproductive rights, health care, or anything else concerning women's freedoms, the article made its point strongly that the women's movement needs to "move beyond the UN."

Women's Liberationist
Tennessee

The Street Harassment Project has joined NOW-NY in calling for a federal independent investigation of the way the D.A.'s office handled the case that has come to be known as the 1989 Central Part jogger rape case. We have a stake in making sure that real truth-seeking investigations and prosecutions of crimes against women take place, not ones that are hasty, incomplete, media-driven and play on racist stereotypes.

The D.A.'s office should not be investigating itself in its handling of this case. Among the questions that need to be tackled is whether a continuing investigation could have led to an earlier arrest of Matias Reyes, who has confessed to the crime, and thus prevented any of the five other rapes and one rape-murder to which he has also confessed. And how would it have affected the trial of the five youths who were convicted and saved

them from having to spend crucial years of their lives in jail?

The media must also take its share of responsibility for racist stereotyping in this case. Terms denoting animal behavior such as "wolf pack" and "wilding" appeared daily creating an atmosphere of racial hysteria. As women, we want more convictions of rapists, but not those that are career or media driven.

Feminists for justice
New York



VOICES OF REASON FROM WITHIN PRISON WALLS

This year I will turn 65 in prison. But I am not going to retire and receive the social security that was taken out of my pay for over 30 years. The politicians are now going to send some of the big company CEOs to prison. But doesn't the U.S. social security system do the same thing they did when it takes money from me under false pretenses? The government has more crooks in it than the prison does. The truth is the politicians have been our role models. A lot of us are in prison for doing just what the CEOs and the politicians did.

65 but Not Retired
Maine

In January 2000, Illinois' Republican Governor George Ryan, citing what he called "a shameful record" of convicting innocent people and putting them on death row, imposed a moratorium on his state's executions, the first of its kind anywhere. By now there is a growing trend away from this barbarism.

In their book, *Legal Lynching*, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., and Bruce Shapiro present an impassioned argument for doing away with the barbaric practice that offers no social or moral benefits to this country or its citizens. Citing the works of respected academics, historians, theologians and criminologists, they expose the defects of capital punishment. Each chapter advances

convincing arguments against the death penalty with well-researched discussions of ineffective attorneys, factual innocence, vengeance, voyeuristic executions and statistical analyses. The book is important reading for anyone concerned with ending capital punishment.

Roger Hummel
Texas

Inmates here used to be used as slave labor to produce commodities at a sub-standard price. Then Corrections shifted gears. Money was still to be made, but not at the expense of inmate labor. Lengthy sentences began to be handed out like candy and the whole inmate body became the commodity as private prisons were developed. They were placed on the stock exchange and now human suffering is a fast-advancing business as private medical, educational and food service has begun inside of prisons. Did prison conditions improve? Not one iota. Meanwhile, taxes doubled and tripled. Now the uneducated, poor and down-trodden are handed extremely long prison terms in the name of "justice," when in actuality their bodies are nothing more than a commodity like a cow, sheep or pig.

Prisoner
New Mexico

I've been studying your pamphlet *Explorations in Dialectical and Critical Theory*. It is something every young person who is against racism, sexism, and globalism should read, because, as Raya Dunayevskaya is quoted in the Preface, "Without a philosophy of revolution, activism spends itself on mere anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, without ever revealing what it is for."

Prisoner
Michigan

The expanded section of Readers' Views from prisoners in the October issue stood out as a powerful subjectivity, very conscious of how much society's unfreedom is magnified in its prisons.

Retiree
Detroit

Editor's note: Can you contribute to our Donor's Fund, to help send subscriptions and pamphlets to prisoners?

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Indonesia rejects peace in Aceh

Thirty Acehnese and Tibetans demonstrated in front of ExxonMobil gas stations in New York City Oct. 19 to protest ExxonMobil's complicity in human rights abuses around the world. In Aceh, the ExxonMobil refineries are guarded by the Indonesian military (TNI) and give it assistance. The protest was part of a National Day of Action against ExxonMobil held by the Stop ExxonMobil Alliance (www.stopexxonmobil.org).

We protested to stop the continuation of genocide in the company's area of Aceh, where ExxonMobil's private military force has been active for years. "Every day, five to seven innocent civilians are victimized by the company's atrocities," said Munawar Liza Zain, Acehnese protest coordinator. "The refinery facilities also produce a very loud sound which damages the ears of villagers around the ExxonMobil gas field," Zain added.

In Aceh, an American woman, Joy Lee Sadler, 57, and a British woman, Lesley McCulloch, 42, are still in detention after being arrested by the Indonesian police in South Aceh a month ago. They were sexually harassed by the Indonesian police, and only after a lot of pressure from the international community were they even given access to their lawyers. They are charged with visa violations, accused of entering Aceh on tourist visas when they were actually conducting investigations into human rights abuses. Their arrests give a strong signal to the international community that Indonesia will stop people from observing the continuing massive human rights violations in Aceh.

Meanwhile, in the peace negotiating process with the

Free Aceh Movement (GAM), mediated by the Henry Dunant Center (HDC), Indonesia still rejects monitoring by independent international observers. Indonesia wants to block all international intervention in the conflict, while the Acehnese are willing to have international third party mediation to stop all the bloodshed in the region. The peace talks have been occurring for two years without a real cease-fire ever being implemented in the field. Both parties continue to ambush each other; the conflict has killed at least 1,600 innocent people this year alone, mostly in killings by the Indonesian security forces. The Indonesian military and police (POLRI) always target innocent villagers when they conduct a search operation, if they cannot find any GAM members. On Oct. 7, the Indonesian military fired a tank at a grandmother and her grandson in an operation to look for GAM.

The Bali bombing was a shock to everybody, including Indonesians. That huge crime was committed by people who want to play a role in Indonesian and South East Asian politics. The Indonesian security forces tried hard to blame the bomb blast in Bali on the rebel movements in Aceh (GAM) and Papua (OPM), despite the fact that they had interrogated some suspects who included a retired Indonesian air force officer and an army soldier. The Indonesian government just uses lies to appoint a scapegoat responsible for this massacre!

—Radhi Darmansyah

SIRA International Representative
(Aceh Referendum Information Center)

Death penalty crossroad

Chicago—Illinois continued to hold its place as the national center of debate on the death penalty as clemency hearings ordered by Governor George Ryan began on Oct. 15. Members of the state's Prison Review Board reviewed the cases of the 160 Illinois death row inmates, hearing testimony from both the prosecution and the defense. The board will make non-binding recommendations to the governor.

The hearings have intensified debate on the death penalty in Illinois. It is widely expected that Governor Ryan will commute most—if not all—of the death sentences in effect before he leaves office at the end of this year. Ryan imposed a moratorium on executions in January of 2000 after a string of capital sentences involving forced confessions, prosecutorial misconduct, and poor legal defense work were overturned.

A panel appointed by the governor to examine the death penalty turned in a list of recommended reforms to the institution, but did not advocate abolishing it.

Several death row inmates are actively seeking pardons, not simply the commutation of their sentences. Aaron Patterson and a number of other men condemned to die maintain that their confessions were tortured out of them and want to walk out of prison as free men.

—Kevin Michaels

Rethinking 'justice'

This statement was delivered on Oct. 20 at a rally outside the Cook County Jail in Chicago.

I am here on behalf of my husband Richard Flood, who cannot attend this rally today. On March 24, 2001, my husband was arrested for protecting me from harm's way. Last month, he was sentenced to ten years in prison. I am also here to join in the fight against racism, police brutality, and unjust laws that happen to everyone everyday.

This rally is for those who have been violated by our legal system or who have been harassed because of their political beliefs, for the families who have felt the pain of a loved one's misfortune.

There are many people who are suffering because of laws that are not thought through properly, such as the extended-term law. If I remember it correctly, a criminal who is convicted and who has served a prison term is said to have paid his debt to society. But the new extended-term law abolishes that idea. Prisoners are already being punished for their past mistakes; they pay dearly for them with their freedom, the loss of time with their children, their severely damaged marriages. Aren't these hardships enough to satisfy our Justice Department's thirst for empowerment?

It's a well-known fact that the majority of employers do not want to hire ex-convicts. Most families do not survive the prison term, and even if they do, they often suffer irreversible damage. That is more than enough payment to society. It should also be more than enough to satisfy these politicians who are so eager to destroy our families in order to boost their political status.

Consider how hard it is for those who have been imprisoned for a period of time, whether short-term or long-term, to be released back into this society, to regain faith and trust, to begin the healing process for lost time with their children and spouses, and most of all to try to find a place in our society, where forgiveness is rare, and understanding and compassion almost nonexistent. When prisoners are released, they need to find a place where they feel they can fit in, without being pulled back down into the neverending cycle of injustice that has plagued our society for many generations.

We must come together to continue the fight against unjust laws throughout our nation. I thank you all.

—Rebecca Flood

BLACK/RED VIEW

(Continued from page 1)

enormous cost of this new kind of war, as the CBC has alluded to, would mean the end of "unmet domestic priorities." In other words, all things necessary for a good human life will be used up and destroyed by a highly technological war simply because the Bush administration declares another nation a potential enemy.

A recent survey of African-American opinion by Black Entertainment Television found that many African Americans didn't buy Bush's war. BET came to this conclusion by interviewing African Americans in a large barbershop, in the heart of Miami's Black community as well as churchgoers and students at the University of Maryland-College Park. This survey may not be totally scientific but it does indicate that there isn't any great enthusiasm for Bush's war among African Americans. Nor did BET's survey show that there was any support for Saddam Hussein.

WAR AND RACISM

In all major wars this nation has fought, African Americans have discovered a contradiction between the war's aims and their actual condition in this country. Thus, we find that the War of Independence was fought when African Americans were an enslaved people and there was no intention to free them.

The original goal of the Civil War was to preserve the Union and not to liberate African Americans from slavery. It took the pressure of the abolitionists and a general strike of British workers to convince the Lincoln administration that the intrinsic purpose of bloody Civil War was not to save the Union but end slavery.

African Americans opposed U.S. adventurism in the Philippines in 1899, calling attention to the fact that a nation practicing such rabid racism should not be spreading its system to other countries. They founded the original Anti-Imperialist League, which a year later also opposed the U.S.'s use of troops against the Boxer Rebellion in China.

When the U.S. went to war under the banner of "four freedoms" to save Europe from the horrors of Hitler's Nazism, it ignored the lynchings, disenfranchisement, and segregation of African Americans here. The initiative to change these horrible conditions did not come from President Franklin Roosevelt's administration but the African-American masses who organized a "double V" movement, victory against Hitler and victory against racism in America.

HARD PATH TO FREEDOM

Yes, America is much freer from racism than it was

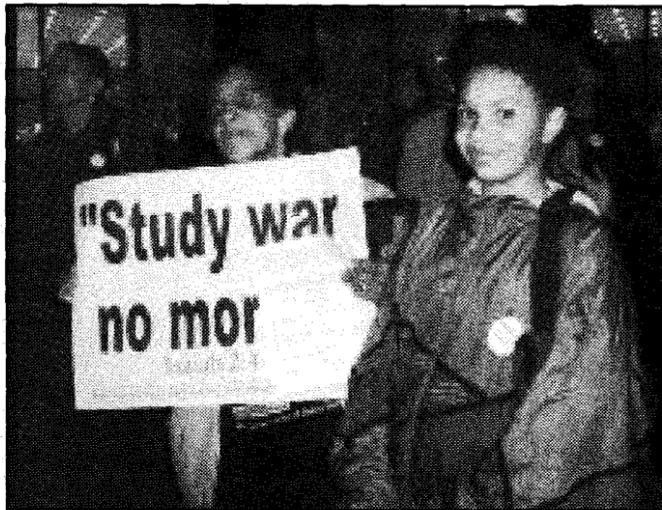
Blacks won't buy war

decades ago. This is largely due to the massive Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, which uprooted the practice of legal race segregation and discrimination in public places, housing, schools and in hiring.

However, there is nothing absolute about the end of legal racism. For example, the September-October issue of the NAACP's *Crisis* carried an article on the firemen in New York City who, even after September 11, 2001, are still fighting for a meaningful recruitment of African Americans. In a city of 11.5 million with 12,000 firefighters, only 300 are African Americans, far less than in the '70s or '80s.

Despite Bush's mantra that "everything has changed" since September 11, 2001, racism persists. It is not unusual, though it seems to baffle some reporters, to see calls to stop police abuse amidst the anti-war demonstrators. In fact, the protest against Bush's appearance in Cincinnati on Oct. 8, saw over a thousand participants (organizers said 5000), many of whom had been organizing since Timothy Thomas was murdered by Cincinnati police in April 2001.

Racism, like classism and warmongering, cannot be purged from a capitalist society. A new social order has to be created, which would transcend race and capitalism. The way to get there leads through the contradictions experienced by African Americans.



Independent Media Center

New York protests police brutality on Oct. 22

New York—The seventh national October 22 Day of Protest Against Police Brutality, Repression and Criminalization of a Generation took place in 30 cities this year. Here, it drew over 500 people to a rally in Union Square, followed by a march to City Hall. Mostly young people, the protesters were of many different colors and ethnicities. A gay and lesbian youth contingent bore a sign that read, "We are not trash." A Black man held up a sign that said simply, "9/11 didn't make me forget 41 bullets-Amadou," referring to the infamous police slaying of the African immigrant Amadou Diallo.

The protest's theme, "Police brutality did not die on September 11," was sadly borne out by the fact that at least 140 people have been killed by law enforcement personnel around the country since then, at least 34 of them in the New York-New Jersey area. In addition, the past year has seen Muslims and Arab-Americans added to Blacks and Latinos as targets of police discrimination and profiling, and immigrants rounded up and jailed without charge.

A young immigrant woman described the six months she was jailed. "We received little food, no clothing and no medical care. The guards taunted us—'How often do you pray?' and called us 'bin Laden.' They used dogs to search and attack us. I lost my home and my job. Yet in the whole year in which thousands have been jailed, only one person has been charged with a terrorist crime."

Several speakers warned that now it is more important than ever to fight against a possible wartime police state. One compared police attacks on youth to U.S. war-mongering, saying, "This country is waging a war

on the whole world, and calling on us to go murder innocent Iraqis." "We are part of an emerging resistance," he said, citing the 30,000 at the Oct. 6 peace rally in New York and the 100,000 throughout the country at recent anti-war activities.

There was a lot of outrage over the recent revelation that the Harlem teenagers convicted in the 1989 "Central Park jogger" case were innocent. When the five were convicted of brutally raping and beating a white woman while "wilding" in the park 13 years ago, the crime established fear of Black youth as a major facet of urban life. Now a single man has confessed to the attack, and the DNA evidence indicates he is telling the truth. The convicted men already served their time, but they are trying to get their convictions overturned.

The rally featured relatives of young men killed by the police: Black, Latino, Asian, and white. Juanita Young, the mother of Malcolm Furgeson, murdered by the police, denounced the massive presence of police at the demonstration, saying, "It hurts that we're here to protest them, and they are supervising us." Christine Blaisdale, the aunt of a white youth, Jason Remillard, killed by New Jersey police March 11, described his killing: he was unarmed, with his arms up and facing a wall—so close that the bullet pushed his head into the wall—yet the cop who killed him was not charged after he claimed to have shot out of fear for his life.

We met an immigrant from Hungary who said he had been harassed by police just for sitting in parks and other public spaces so often in the past year, that he had felt freer in Communist Hungary than in New York.

—NY News and Letters Local participants

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VOICES FROM
THE INSIDE OUT

by Robert Taliaferro

When the State of Colorado decided to transfer Jill Coit to a women's supermax facility outside of Denver, her only sin was to support the cause of women who were getting abused in her former prison.

For several years Jill had been involved in a one-person battle against the warden and staff of the co-ed prison in Canon City, Col., that questioned their treatment of weaker women in the facility. Like other women at the facility, she was serving time for a crime, and attempted to use the means available to her in order to seek justice.

In viewing how she and other women around her were treated, however, she often put her personal safety and limited freedoms in jeopardy to take up the banner for justice in support of those who could not. Her efforts effected quite a bit of change in Canon City, but made quite a few enemies as well. The result was her trying to reach out to the community for help, and resulting in more abuse at the hands of Colorado authorities.

During her stay in Canon City she had been threatened repeatedly by staff and feared for her safety due to other women working in concert with staff who instigated incidents with her. When that did not work, she would be harassed continuously, or spend days and weeks in a cell with a thin blanket to ward off Colorado winters, with little light, and restricted medical attention for problems that she had.

Family visits were often denied or restricted; her mail arrived late, mangled, or not at all; her friends were stricken from visiting lists and her visits or phone calls finally had to be approved by the warden of the facility.

To keep her out of court, she would have to suffer numerous cell searches that would destroy or misplace necessary legal documents, or specifically be designed to punish her by destroying the beautiful beadwork that she would create as small gifts for women prisoners to give to their families during the holidays.

FORCED TO ACT AS SLAVES

Jill Coit is an example of the plight of women prisoners in this country. In women's facilities in Texas, women are often forced to act as slaves to others who have the financial resources (since Texas prisoners do not get prison wages) to share, or to get something as simple as an aspirin.

In Jill's facility, women were often forced to dance naked for staff at the facility, to have sex, or to succumb to incidents of rape if they did not voluntarily agree to sex. Even after investigating the incidents—often raised by Jill—the result was generally a simple slap on the wrist for staff, and more harassment for Jill.

Finally she was transferred to the state supermax facility, and she seems to have disappeared from the face of the planet. Friends that she has kept in contact with for years, and who have written to her diligently, find their letters being returned or disappearing as completely as Jill.

What letters do get through from her show a woman who is afraid of her, and her mind: scared, nearly broken, afraid for her life, and her mind. She asked one time of a friend, "Can they punish me for helping others? Can they punish me for simply trying to help oth-

Illegal Oneida arrest

On Oct. 18, the Oneida Nation Police went to the home of Danielle Patterson and took her into custody without notifying her attorneys, held a private hearing and transported her to Cambria Co. Prison in Ebensburg, Pa., over 300 miles away. The Oneida Nation Social Services also appeared to "check" on Danielle's three children who have been in the custody of her sisters ever since. Last November, Safety Inspector Arthur Pierce threatened to take Danielle's children away from her. Danielle is a single mother.

She was charged with "contempt of court" and faced criminal charges for assaulting a police officer, Nov. 21, 2001 when 22 police officers forcibly entered her home under the authority of a "Beautification Program" by the Oneida Nation of New York. The program is a sham under which homes are inspected, condemned and demolished under the guise of health and safety (see October News & Letters). The videotape clearly shows the assault on Danielle, not on the officers.

On Danielle's court date approximately 50 people protested outside of the court. The nation offered Danielle a "deal." Her "assaulting an officer" charge was dropped and she received time served for the "contempt of court" charge. Danielle would be released from her kidnappers if she vacated her home within 24 hours and made sure no one interfered with its demolition. Danielle complied with the deal. Danielle the trailer was destroyed, MJ Schenandoah, Danielle's niece, was attacked by Nation Police while she led many members of the crowd in traditional Iroquois social songs.

Many attempts have been made to make a peaceful resolution of the issue regarding inspections of homes. It is believed that the Oneida Nation of New York, Inc., only wants to use its accumulated power and wealth to force all people from their aboriginal homelands and utilize the status of the tax-free sovereign land.

—Oneida Nation Territory residents
www.oneidasfordemocracy.org

In search of Jill Coit

ers?" In Colorado, the answer seems to be...Yes!

As a rule of thumb, women prisoners have little external contacts with families or friends. One of the unfortunate aspects of our society is that a woman who commits a crime is often treated as a pariah in a fashion that extends well beyond the treatment of men.

One of the ironies that Jill and others like her have made so plain is that they are often in prison due to some sort of abusive relationship with men, only to be further abused on the inside by other males charged with enforcing the mandates of the law. This enforcement often comes in the form of threats, and a level of treatment that can be equally as brutal—and more often more so—than the abuse that they suffered while in the community.

ABUSE OF WOMEN PRISONERS

Women prisons with male staff are the last bastions of society that seem to allow women to be abused, stripped of dignity, and treated as classless beings with no rights that need to be honored.

Jill Coit, and women like her around this country and around the world, need our help. Letters and e-mails to the Department of Corrections in the State of Colorado, to the governor of Colorado, and to Colorado representatives are starting points that remind those authorities that, as we call upon the world to take the moral high road in such things, the battle begins at home.

Lula wins in Brazil

Workers' Party (PT) candidate Luis Ignácio Lula da Silva won 61% of the vote in the Oct. 27 presidential runoff election in Brazil, defeating José Serra of the currently governing Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), who mustered a meager 39%.

Brazil's currency, the real, has lost 40% of its value over the past five months, partly due to U.S. investors' fears of a Lula presidency. Their attitude towards Brazilians electing a former labor leader who founded the PT in 1980 was expressed by George Soros in an August interview with a Sao Paulo financial magazine: "In the Roman Empire only the Romans (sic) vote. In modern global capitalism, only the Americans (sic) vote. Not the Brazilians."

Lula's astounding margin of victory—no Brazilian president has ever come to power with such a large percentage of the vote—reflects the desire of the masses for radical change. Brazil suffers from some of the most unequal income distribution of any country, and most of its 175 million people have gained little or nothing from the neoliberal policies of the past decade.

The unemployment rate of Sao Paulo (the country's largest city) is over 20%. Over 50 million people are living in abject poverty. Despite being Latin America's economic powerhouse, three times the size of Argentina and four times the population, hunger is rampant in Brazil due to the focus on agribusiness for export.

One schoolteacher expressed a widely-held view that explains the margin of the PT's electoral victory: "It's time to give Lula a chance, because the present approach clearly isn't working."

Lula will be Brazil's first working class president. At age 12 he went to work full time, first in an office and later as a worker in a metallurgical plant. In 1975 he became president of the metalworkers union in Sao Bernardo do Campo. He then became famous in the late 1970s for leading a series of strikes that led to his arrest and imprisonment.

Some of the Brazilian business elite have tried to accommodate themselves to Lula. They furnished him with a running mate, José Alencar, a textile tycoon who has amassed a personal fortune of \$500 million. Lula points out that Alencar is "not just any businessman," he's a good nationalist, well equipped to defend Brazil's interests on the global stage. Alencar, for his part, claims that he is committed to improving the living conditions of workers, the "source of all the wealth that has flowed out of the country" in the past decade.

Lula has told the MST (Landless Workers' Movement), which now exists in 23 of Brazil's 26 states and has some 500,000 families, that illegal land seizures will no longer be permitted once he is in power, as supposedly his land reform will be sufficient to fix the unequal land distribution (only Paraguay's is worse). He denies that the composition of the PT has shifted from its radical working class origins, formed in 1980 on the basis of its slogan "the party without bosses."

Lula says the PT won, not because it has abandoned its principles, but because the Brazilian electorate has become radicalized after two terms of Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration. The coming weeks will put that view to the test.

—Mitch Weerth

Palestine solidarity

Ann Arbor, Mich.—Four hundred people (with over 100 more turned away for lack of space) participated in the second annual National Student Conference on the Palestinian Solidarity Movement Oct. 12-14, sponsored by Students Allied for Freedom and Equality (SAFE).

Despite attempts by right-wing Jewish individuals and organizations to prevent the conference from occurring, the event was a serious open forum which brought together a mix of ideas, theories, analyses and strategies. The primary theme was to pressure universities to divest whose primary goal is to pressure universities to divest of companies doing business in and with Israel, a strategy patterned after the movement of divestment from South Africa in the early 1990s.

Israeli supporters of the South African cause were welcomed and featured. Two South African scholars, Mahdi Bray and Na'eem Jeenah, shared their experiences from the anti-apartheid divestment movement a decade ago. Dr. Ilan Pappé and Diane Buttigave gave the opening keynote.

They joined an array of noted Arab-American and Middle Eastern scholars in presenting theories and lively debates about the historic roots and nature of the Palestinian plight which took up most of the first day. The next day smaller workshops addressed organizing and building a nationwide campus movement for divestment from companies doing business with Israel.

Bush's looming war on Iraq was on the minds of everyone present. Some participants drove 40 miles to Detroit to join a protest against Bush's appearance at a Republican \$1,000 a plate fundraiser before returning to Ann Arbor for the closing lecture by attorney Shamai Liebowitz, a tank gunner in the reserves of the Israeli army and a signer of "Courage to Refuse."

Scholarly research was closely tied to activities in support of the Palestinian people, and speakers and participants seemed open to a variety of ideas, including the very difficult concept in today's climate that solidarity is the idea of Palestinian freedom and self-determination, and not that of mere ethnicity or religion.

If this movement continues to hold fast to this vision of solidarity based on freedom and justice, and refrains from focusing only on divestment, it will be a model for the freedom movements of the 21st century.

—Susan Van Gelder

Historic Kashmir elections

In a truly historic act, the Kashmiri people ousted the corrupt and dynastic National Conference that has ruled the state throughout its history in what are widely reported to be the most democratic and popularly supported elections in decades. The elections issued a clear blow, both to the Islamist terrorism that has hijacked Kashmir's independence movement and to the Hindu fundamentalist politics of the government in New Delhi. The National Conference candidates, who have strong ties to the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led coalition government, and the BJP candidates themselves, were routed by an electorate fed up with violence and betrayal.

At issue in the elections were basic grievances over roads, education and the economy, usually ignored by politicians in their ideological battles over independence versus statehood.

It is significant that the BJP was trounced even in the heavily Hindu region of Jammu, where it has campaigned vociferously by fanning the flames of Hindu/Muslim tension. Most telling is that the final phases of the election took place after the brutal attack on the Akshardham Hindu temple by Islamic militants, which killed over 30 people in the riot-torn state of Gujarat.

But, as has always been the case, South Asian politicians remain several steps behind the people. Because the two parties most likely to form a government in Kashmir, the Congress Party and the People's Democratic Party, cannot decide on who will assume the chief ministership, the state has been placed under the control of the federal government until a coalition can be formed—thereby postponing the mandate of the people.

Praful Bidwai, a leading commentator on Indian politics, put it this way: "It is a cruel, painful, but fateful irony for the people of Jammu and Kashmir that the outcome of the state's landmark assembly elections should instantly become vulnerable to the whims and fancies of narrow and manipulative politics."

If the politicians in Kashmir don't agree on a solution soon, this will become a dark and tragic chapter in the history of the region. The significance of the Kashmiri elections is heightened when seen in the context of the Pakistani elections, which have given unprecedented electoral clout to the most rabidly right-wing Islamic fundamentalist groups. The Kashmir elections are a small opening for democracy in the face of growing fundamentalism on all sides.

The most significant positive development in the region is that India and Pakistan have begun a withdrawal of troops deployed at the border over the past year. Nevertheless, gun battles across the Line of Control in Kashmir continue. Likewise the rise to power of the pro-Taliban Islamic fundamentalist parties in Pakistan is an ominous development in every way. Not only does it lessen the chance of a peaceful resolution to the Kashmir issue, it will also nourish the growth of Islamic fundamentalism's double—Hindu fundamentalism.

—Maya Jhansi



Supporters celebrate PT election victory.

Independent Media Center

West coast dock struggle at front line of war on labor

(Continued from page 1)

Against Taft-Hartley and Union Busting on Dec. 7. They included hotel workers from HERE Local 2, who won (Oct. 18) a contract after a 140-day strike at the Marriott Hotel at Fisherman's Wharf.

What makes the dock workers present fight over life-threatening speed-up and workers' further loss of control over their labor process all the more intense is that, in the world after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the employers sense a chance to really go after the union.

None comprehend this better than ILWU Local 10, a majority African-American local in the San Francisco Bay Area, which voted to oppose a new U.S. war on Iraq. Local 10's secretary-treasurer, Clarence Thomas, declared at a rally Oct. 5 that "as unionists we have an obligation not only to negotiate good wages and work conditions for our members, but we also have a responsibility to propel the issue of economic social justice for all working and oppressed people... The war on terrorism is a war on workers' rights."

Just when Bush pushed Congress to give him a blank check for his war on Iraq, he went to the courts for a Taft-Hartley injunction, making war on labor at home. The ILWU got direct calls from Tom Ridge, director of Homeland Security, pressuring the workers to settle. For the administration the workers on the docks are an integral part of the U.S. war machine and their Taft-Hartley enforcement powers can mean the full militarization of labor by bringing troops onto the docks. Labor officials and rank-and-filers feel Bush has reached a new stage in his anti-labor offensive.

Up to 170,000 government employees are threatened with losing their union and civil service rights if Bush gets his way with the new Homeland Defense Department. Richard Trumka, secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO, warned that the use of Taft-Hartley in a lockout was unprecedented and that now "all employers know the administration will rush in with Taft-Hartley to give them what they want." *The Wall Street Journal* (Oct. 8) cited Charles Rhemus, a labor relations expert, who predicted Bush would "not hesitate to act" against auto workers in their upcoming negotiations with the excuse they are involved in producing war commodities.

CAPITALISM'S INHERENT ANTI-HUMANISM

The present struggle on the docks is much deeper than going up against an oppressive political authority in that the enemy, which includes the power of the state, is wholly organic to capitalism's innermost soul. Capital's very being is driven by the increasing dominance in production of dead labor, machines in the form of capital, over living labor, the worker. Karl Marx called the former constant capital (c) and the latter variable capital (v). Living labor is variable "capital" because it produces more value than it itself costs in the form of wages. Increasing productivity through speed-

up and technological innovation is a way to extract more surplus value(s) from living labor and is the capitalist obsession.*

The whole history of the introduction of technology in the workplace, increasing c over v, has been to more fully control workers by making humans more of a mere appendage to a mechanical process. The predominance of constant capital is graphically illustrated at today's ports where only a few dockworkers operate monstrous mechanical cranes and do the work that hundreds did before them. In the 1950s, before mechanization and modernization introduced containerization, there were 100,000 longshoremen on the west coast docks.

Now PMA's insistence on doubling west coast port volume in the next five years, especially through information technology, is a particularly insidious anti-humanism. Marx caught the essence of today's conflict a century and a half ago when he said capitalism increasingly endows material forces with intellectual powers while reducing human beings to more of a mere material force. The very nature of information technology is to literally animate dead labor (machines), replacing workers and making those left more completely an extension of a mechanical process.

Today it is not enough to appeal to workers' power through strikes. The dockworkers' struggle is implicitly raising the need to re-think the whole relationship between humans and technology. The dockworkers' struggle raises the need for newer and deeper forms of social solidarity to overcome the anti-human inversion in production, where machines dominate human beings as capital with a logic and direction of their own.

DEEP PROBLEMS IN THE U.S. ECONOMY

This fundamental antagonism in production is connected to intractable problems in the economy as a whole. One of the consequences of the growing preponderance of constant capital over variable capital is capitalism's self-defeating tendency for the general rate of profit to decline. The huge and growing list of criminal behavior by greedy corporate managers reveals a less emphasized fact—the totally phantom profits reported in the speculative bubble of the '90s.

The burden of capital's falling rate of profit affects

workers in several ways. Many workers saw their retirement nest eggs dramatically shrink in the stock market collapse. More consequential is capital's immediate answer to their falling rate of profit, which is to get rid of as much living labor as possible. Thus, we are seeing little hiring and wave after wave of layoffs, like the latest by SBC which will cut 11,000 jobs in 13 states. Though the U.S. economy has had some growth for over a year, it is being called a "jobless recovery." The last jobless recovery, in the early '90s, was followed by what we now recognize as a huge speculative bubble. The biggest fear is that this time we will see a long protracted stagnation as Japan is still experiencing after its bubble burst over a decade ago.

The general drive to diminish living labor is reflected in one of the last pillars holding up the U.S. economy, consumer confidence, which is as low as it has been in a decade. On top of that we are now back to huge deficit spending due to tax cuts for the rich and the growing cost of the U.S. war machine which is now permanently in conflict policing the world for

the needs of capital, especially its insatiable appetite for oil. Another record deficit, signified by all those cargo-laden ships anchored outside west coast docks and for which the bill will some day come due, is the trade deficit, which reached an unprecedented \$38.5 billion in August. \$10.9 billion of that deficit was with China alone.

China, as a high growth economy, is practically unique among nations in today's world economy. With a nearly inexhaustible supply of labor under an authoritarian state, it is a low-wage haven for global capitalism, looking to reduce the cost of living labor. Other low-wage centers like Southeast Asia and Mexico, with already stressed conditions, are in further decline.

While Silicon Valley has seen no new jobs for over 18 months, China also now has a growing high-tech workforce. One of the aspects of information technology jobs is that they can mostly be done from remote locations. Indeed, at a recent rally on the docks one ILWU speaker surmised that if the PMA were not stopped, they could shift their remaining jobs handling cargo information to a place like China.

The U.S., as the home world of global capital's empire, may indeed be one of its weakest economic links. Whether in China or the U.S., capitalists with their new globally integrated production search everywhere for state intervention to help impose their despotic plan. The flip side is that the U.S. west coast dockworkers have received unprecedented statements of support and commitments to act if called upon from workers, especially dockworkers, throughout the world. The dockworkers' fight here shows more than ever the need for a humanist alternative to the vicissitudes of global capital.

* For an in-depth discussion of these categories in Marx's *Capital*, see the two part series "The revolt of the workers and the plan of the intellectuals" by Raya Dunayevskaya in the August-September and October 2002 *News & Letters*.



ILWU/David Bacon

Radical forum at D.C. anti-capitalist protest

Washington—Anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian activists from around the U.S. participated in several forums. They discussed and debated the meaning of their activism during the World Bank and International Monetary Fund protests of Sept. 22-28 in Washington, D.C. The title of the event was "Hey, Anti-Authoritarian Anti-Capitalists, What are You FOR? Where is the movement going? A Dialogue Between Anarchism and Marxist-Humanism."

The speakers included Cindy Milstein (an anarcho-communist influenced by Murray Bookchin's social ecology), Anne Jaclard (Marxist-Humanist), Rodney (Australian ecological anarchist), Ben Grosscup (Revolutionary Social Anarchist, co-author of "Open letter to anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist movement" calling for critical revolutionary thought), and myself, a Marxist-Humanist. About 55 activists participated.

"Since Seattle, we've switched the dialogue around. Now Capitalism is named as the enemy and discussed," declared Cindy Milstein. She continued, "I agree with the need for dialectics... to be clear about your goal, always fighting for something at the same time as you're fighting against the specific oppression. One way of doing this is asking what are the maximal demands and the immediate demands in the present? Focus on a demand that can be done right now, with aspirations for the globalized maximal."

"For example, one neighborhood organized to run itself like in the recent uprisings in Argentina is an immediate goal. Self-organized and directly democratically run neighborhoods, organized in a network of confederated neighborhoods globally, is a globalized maximal goal. My critique of the Anti-Capitalist Convergence People's Strike protest is this: Why not organize an open house of anarchism to provide a context... We need to think a lot about our theory and activity and how they relate."

Ben Grosscup took up issues discussed in his "Open Letter" (<http://www.social-ecology.org/new/>): "On the question of organization vs. spontaneity—there is a problem with dualistic thinking that rejects all organization as being static. On how this relates to the protests this week in D.C., the People's Strike collective says: 'Bring affinity groups to do your own action!'"

"It seems for many that the militancy of the deed at a protest is supposed to speak for itself. This is a big part of the anti-intellectualism that we have in the move-

ment. The intellectual's task is to make ideas easier to understand. We need a more holistic idea of organizing."

I tried to address the ideas of Ben Grosscup, Doyle and Cindy Milstein from a Marxist-Humanist perspective. I consider theirs to be the strongest ideas of the anti-authoritarian movement, but I think they get bogged down in the intersection of thought and reality, leading to an over reliance on models or forms of revolutionary organization.

Grosscup and Doyle write, "Our vision for the future should inform how we organize in the present." They argue for "lasting systems of self-governance and community decision-making that mirror the free society we want to build."

Marxist-Humanism doesn't stop at forms of organization. It is concerned with the relationship between philosophy and forms of organization born out of spontaneity in the process of mass revolt. Marxist-Humanism doesn't offer any blueprint or model—in fact we oppose it as a barrier to the full expression of human creativity which is social revolution.

So far, there have been three of these "What are You FOR? Where is the movement going?" open forums in DC during national mobilizations since 2001. Their success shows that there is a strong drive within people to talk about the questions facing anyone who wants to abolish capitalism and authoritarianism.

—Tom Rainey

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YOUTH Chomsky 'does theory' on 9/11

by Brown Douglas

9/11 by Noam Chomsky (New York: 2001, Seven Stories Press)

Noam Chomsky is forever a topic of discussion among the Left. His viewpoints hold a lot of weight among many people from all kinds of political affiliations, from anarchist to liberal to peace activist to college professor. Many times his ideas are looked on by students and youth as complex, yet accessible; someone who "does theory" but in such a way as to address a broad audience. In *9/11*, a collection of seven interviews all conducted within a month after the terrorist attacks, he gives us his perspectives on the attacks themselves, their causes, and their ramifications.

Chomsky has the reputation of being a well-spoken and serious dissenter against U.S. foreign policy. In *9/11*, he bases all of his arguments on the premise of the U.S. being a lead terrorist state. This is a premise that is surely interesting and merits discussion, but the way in which it is elaborated transforms it into a logic that is more complex than just saying that the U.S. is a terrorist state. He says:

"Nothing can justify crimes such as those of September 11, but we can think of the United States as an 'innocent victim' only if we adopt the convenient path of ignoring the record of its actions and those of its allies, which are, after all, hardly a secret" (p. 35).

I believe that in this statement is the basis of all of the arguments that Chomsky utilizes in the book. Where there is the tiniest hint of sympathy or solidarity with the victims of September 11, always close behind is a statement made in an annoyed tone disabusing all of us of the notion of the U.S. as an "innocent victim" and espousing an almost apologetic view towards any force—no matter how reactionary—pointing "the guns... the other way."

The logic is that the hegemony of the U.S. is so strong

that crimes against its people, although unjustifiable, should be looked at through a lens of crimes committed by the Empire. As writer Joe Lockard puts it, "While deploring bin Laden, Chomsky can describe him as but another noxious product of the American Empire." Not only does this view obscure the two worlds in every country—one being the world of the oppressors, the other world being those oppressed, like racial minorities, women, workers, and youth—but by treating the U.S. as the font of all evil fails to completely analyze religious fundamentalism as a threat in and of itself.

Real U.S. hegemony, in a Marxist-humanist view, takes place in and is an outgrowth of worldwide capitalism. To analyze it outside of that context is to attack the manifestations of a system that creates leaders and governments to carry out the purpose of expanding and enabling the free, uninhibited flow of capital.

This goes hand in hand with Chomsky's treatment of the U.S. as a collective mass of oppressors and his disregard for the forces of revolt in this country or any other. So while talking about the possibility of a war with Afghanistan, Chomsky manages to say barely a word about the women oppressed by the Taliban or people like the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan who are truly pointing the way to an opposition to U.S. hegemony and oppression of all kinds.

When confronted with this drive for U.S. world domination coupled with the global threat of militaristic religious fundamentalism that we have seen since September 11, Noam Chomsky has chosen to stick with a philosophy that, in the end, narrows opposition to the U.S. only. This is an old idea, one that hasn't worked in the long history of anti-imperialist opposition in this country. Chomsky's narrowed vision guarantees that, despite all of his searching for a "root cause" to explain and analyze the terrorist acts of September 11, he just ends up in the same place as always.

Stop Bush's war on Iraqi people

(Continued from page 1.)

to condemn the September 11 terrorist attacks last year, has made itself felt in the calculations of all ruling powers. First it has forced Bush to look for a UN mandate for his planned military action. In the end, he will perhaps be able to work something out with the recalcitrant Russian and French rulers, but his momentum has faltered in the weeks since his address. This is largely because of the overwhelming UN opposition of the American people to any unilateral action by Bush.

The case for the people against Saddam Hussein by the Bush administration has been so threadbare that Secretary of State Colin Powell has been reduced to stating that "We think the Iraqi people would be a lot better off with a different leader, a different regime. But

EDITORIAL

the principal offense here is weapons of mass destruction, and that's what this [UN] resolution is working on. The major issue before us is disarmament."

So it is not the existence of perhaps the most grotesque police state ever seen in the Middle East that bothers the U.S. administration, a police state that could easily have been removed by the unhindered efforts of the Iraqi people following the Gulf War in 1991. The effort of the Iraqi people that followed the war then is key to understanding what is happening now, and this includes understanding the current anti-war sentiment. The lessons of 1991 have not been lost.

TWO OF A KIND

The first President Bush was able to steamroll the anti-war movement of 1990-91 by virtue of Saddam Hussein's obvious aggression in Kuwait and the confusion of the movement itself, with some unwilling to criticize this aggression and others holding illusions in the efficacy of UN sanctions. There was a distant echo of this in last year's small protests over the war in Afghanistan. George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz and many others think that the September 11 attacks have granted them immunity from any anti-war movement of this kind.

However the kind of sentiment expressed at the recent rallies against the coming war is that, yes indeed, Saddam is bad and needs to go but that George W. Bush is no friend to genuine democracy either. As one Black woman at a Chicago demonstration put it, "Saddam is a dictator, but knowing Bush he'll just replace him with another dictator and a lot of innocent people will get killed in the process."

The point is that this thinking is an expression of real internationalist sentiment that begins from the high point of the previous anti-war, anti-imperialist movement: the struggle for freedom and self-determination of the Iraqis themselves. It is also informed by the last decade of struggle and debate over the proper response to the genocidal attacks by Slobodan Milosevic upon Bosnians and Kosovars.

THE OTHER IRAQ TODAY

The Bush administration, whether in attack or retreat mode, is so out of touch with the real consciousness of people that it has actually been outmaneuvered in the last week by Saddam Hussein. It was not the absurd "100%" vote in favor of his continued presidency, but the counterposition of his lies to the Bush administration's lies that buoyed him.

Saddam Hussein could look George W. Bush in the eye and see his own cynicism and brutality reflected back. In that moment he could feel safe in a world that he owned and in which he belonged.

It was also a moment of weakness, and a crack opened in Saddam's world when he granted, as the lord of all he surveyed, an amnesty to all prisoners except those convicted of "spying" for Israel and the U.S. This resulted in scenes of jubilation as relatives of upwards of 150,000 prisoners were reunited with family members they had perhaps never expected to see again.

But it also resulted in unheard-of demonstrations outside the prisons by thousands of Iraqis whose relatives did not emerge from the prisons because Saddam's butchering regime had already murdered them. Thousands of demonstrators had to be dispersed by riot police from the Ministry of Information building in Baghdad. This is representative of the real bedrock opposition to the regime in Iraq, and the most urgent necessity of the anti-war movement is to connect with this other Iraq.

Nationwide opposition to war

SAN FRANCISCO



Upwards of 100,000 anti-war activists, environmentalists, and people in other movements came out on Oct. 26 to protest impending war on Iraq.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Between 150,000 and 200,000 people came to Washington, D.C. on Oct. 26 to protest Bush's plan for a war against Iraq. People came from all over, including Arizona, North Carolina, Maine and Vermont. The streets and mall were so packed that I couldn't even get close to the rally.

The demonstrators were predominately students saying "Hell no, we won't go!"

The themes were that this is not our war, that we have other priorities in this country. Many speakers said the U.S. was unjust and mindless to go into another war. A big theme was that we need a regime change in Washington.

Soon-to-be-ex-Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney was a strong speaker. I was also glad to hear Medea Benjamin, the Green Party senatorial candidate from California. She was arrested on the floor of Congress a few weeks ago when demonstrators challenged Rumsfeld's speech on the need to invade Iraq.

The U.S. is the real danger because it is the only country with weapons of mass destruction that has used them.

—Brooklyn Green anti-war demonstrator

MEMPHIS, TENN.

People here came together to re-energize the anti-war movement and constitute ourselves as an active chapter of Peace Action. We began by holding three peace vigils on the median strip of a busy parkway to catch the morning and evening rush hour traffic.

Over 50 people from the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center, News and Letters Committees, and Pax Christi joined individuals from churches, Rhodes College, Christian Brothers University, and the University of Memphis to make our voices heard. The signs read: "No for Oil," "Iraqi people are our brothers and sisters," "No to war! No to terrorism! YES to the new human society!" "Peace is patriotic," and "Peace takes courage."

What made the vigils so exciting was the response from those driving by. We were stunned by the support.

One driver seemed to speak for many when he repeated over and over: "About time! About time!" And from the reaction of others it was, indeed, as if people had been hungering to see some sign of opposition to the incessant drumbeat for war coming from the White House.

—Feminist anti-war activist

DETROIT

Close to 1,000 people marched downtown Oct. 6 past the Federal Building, where 14 people risked arrest by lying down on the sidewalk. On Oct. 14 with very little publicity, 500 people—half of them college students and including a delegation from the National Student Conference on the Palestinian Solidarity Movement—gathered at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel to protest President Bush's appearance at a \$1,000-a-plate Republican fundraiser.

Many demonstrators were disturbed, and some were confused, by a couple of hundred Arab-Americans in traditional garments who came to support war. They carried signs and shouted "Down with Saddam; yes to the Iraqi people." A couple of people who went to their side by mistake were almost beaten up.

—Participant

LOS ANGELES

Thousands of people assembled at the West Los Angeles federal building on Oct. 6 to protest the Bush administration's drive for war on the Iraqi people. The demonstration was sponsored by the coalition Not in Our Name and featured signs and banners with anti-war and anti-Bush slogans. The signs were visible to the thousands of drivers along Wilshire Boulevard.

Ron Kovic, a Vietnam War veteran paralyzed from the waist down, spoke. "We must change the course of history," he said. "The President is moving the country in a destructive and dark direction that has to be altered and changed. The only way it will be changed is by the people."

Though the marchers were mostly white and middle class, there were noticeable numbers of Black, Brown and Asian protesters. There were progressives and left radicals present, but many attending were first time protesters.

—Participant

NEW YORK

Some 30,000 protesters from the city and surrounding areas held the "Not in Our Name" rally in Central Park's East Meadow on Oct. 6. Unaffiliated protesters as well as large contingents from churches and other liberal organizations participated. The atmosphere was serious, people talked to each other, listened to the speeches and visited the literature tables. There were creative homemade signs and costumes interspersed among the crowd. David Brenner sarcastically joked about the Bush Administration "why not just go to war against the entire world."

It was encouraging for us to see so many people willing to come out in a time of general fear of both terrorists and the repressive Bush Administration. But large numbers of people won't succeed if there isn't a development of ideas beyond the ineffective past anti-war movements. The ideas of speakers were mostly pacifist and the organizing ideas were mostly vanguardist and with some anarchists present.

—Participants

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From the foreword in the Humanity Books edition by Joel Kovel, author of *The Enemy of Nature*

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OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Kevin A. Barry

From the horrific Oct. 12 bombing of a disco in Bali, Indonesia that claimed over 180 lives, to the elections in Pakistan, Islamic fundamentalist groups that support Al Qaeda and the installation of Taliban-style regimes have succeeded in asserting themselves again this fall.

As is typical after an Al Qaeda attack, no political message was forthcoming after Bali. However, the dehumanized logic of fundamentalist terrorism found its voice in Abu Hamza al-Masri, imam of the Finsbury Park mosque in London, which recently held a ghoulish "celebration" of September 11.

On Bali, al-Masri declared: "Their target is a symbol of infamy in Indonesia. The way people act in Bali is nothing other than prostitution. Dancing and consuming alcohol is an insult in a Muslim country" (*Le Monde*, Oct. 14). Al-Masri neglected to mention that the island of Bali is populated mainly by Hindus, or that one-third of the population earns a living in the tourist industry

South African strike

In early October, hundreds of thousands of South African workers heeded a call for a general strike by the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), heretofore an ally of the ruling African National Congress (ANC). According to COSATU, 180,000 workers marched in the streets.

In calling the strike, COSATU targeted privatization, the resulting layoffs, and the government's overall neo-liberal economic policies. These have pleased international capital, but caused great suffering among the masses. The official unemployment rate has reached 30%, nearly double the rate of a decade ago, when, in a wave of enthusiasm, voters elected the ANC to establish Black majority rule after decades of apartheid.

Another major problem is that, until recently, President Thabo Mbeki has blocked the arrival of anti-AIDS retroviral drugs by casting doubt upon the scientific evidence as to the cause of AIDS, this in a country with one of the highest rates of HIV in the world.

Mass European demonstrations

Millions of striking workers shut down the Italian economy, on Oct. 18, while a total of two million actually marched in the streets in various cities. They were protesting recent moves against labor, especially Fiat's announcement that it would lay off 8,100 workers. Another target was rightist Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who wants to gut important legal protections for workers that make layoffs extremely difficult.

Two weeks before, on Oct. 5, some 1.5 million came out across Italy to protest Bush's plans for war on Iraq and Berlusconi's support of the war. The largest outpourings were in Milan with 80,000 people, and in Rome where 200,000 attended an evening march. Leftist and secular groups dominated the Italian anti-war demonstrations.

This contrasted with the Sept. 28 anti-war demonstration in London, which also drew a large crowd of 200,000. In London, organizers allowed black-shirted members of a group calling for an Islamic state in Britain to ring the speakers' platform. This was undoubtedly a result of the fact that the British demonstration was organized by an alliance between the Coalition to Stop the War and the Islamist Muslim Association of Great Britain.

Fundamentalist bombing scars Bali

and will now suffer unemployment, or worse.

The imperial arrogance with which the U.S. has conducted the "war on terrorism," plus its ever-closer ties to the murderous Sharon government in Israel, have in many countries increased rather than decreased support for fundamentalism.

This has certainly been the case in military-ruled Pakistan, where the United Action Front (MMA), a loose alliance of six Islamist parties, won an unprecedented 20% of the seats in the National Assembly elections. The MMA also took control of the Provincial Assembly in Northwest Frontier Province, which borders the part of Afghanistan most sympathetic to the Taliban. MMA Secretary General Munnawar Hasan declared their goals openly: "We will stop the ongoing pursuit of Taliban and Al Qaeda [who] are our brothers" (*New York Times*, Oct. 12).

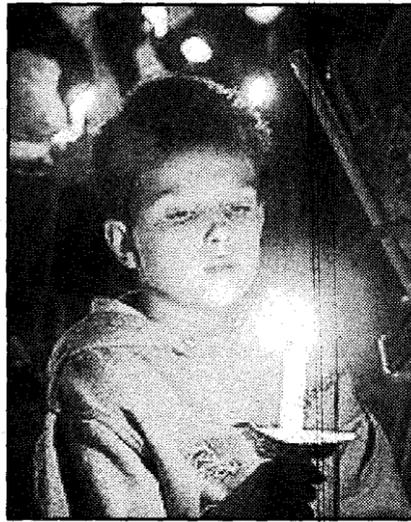
Recent events in the Arabian peninsula, where particularly intolerant and misogynist versions of Islam thrive, have also shown that Al Qaeda is far from dead. In Kuwait, forces connected to Al Qaeda succeeded in killing a U.S.

Marine during an exercise related to Bush's imperialist designs on Iraq. Meanwhile, the U.S. establishment's own Council on Foreign Relations reported that "for years, individuals and charities based in Saudi Arabia have been the most important sources of funds for Al Qaeda" and that government promises to shut off the flow of funds "have not been implemented" (*New York Times*, Oct. 17).

The governments of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are both close allies of the U.S. This underlines starkly how the Bush administration's projected war on Iraq has nothing to do with combating terrorism and everything to do with imperialist politics. However, such U.S. hypocrisy does not in any way lessen the danger of fundamentalism. It in fact increases it.

Where Islamic fundamentalist movements have collapsed, as in Egypt, Algeria, Afghanistan and, most recently, Uzbekistan, mass revulsion against their dogmatism and extreme brutality has been the decisive factor. For what both U.S.

hawks and most of the anti-imperialist Left forget is that these fundamentalist movements have killed far more fellow Muslims than Western non-Muslims.



More than 100 residents of Tuncurry, Australia held a candlelight vigil, Oct. 23, in memory of those who died in the Bali bombing.

Independent Media Center/Melbourne

Middle East conflict grows more ominous

The Israeli army's siege of Yasir Arafat's compound, which began on Sept. 19, hasn't really ended. On Sept. 29, Israeli troops pulled back to positions near Arafat's compound under pressure from the UN Security Council and mass West Bank protests.

On Sept. 30 George W. Bush signed a law ordering all U.S. government documents to identify Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. By recognizing Israel's claim to Jerusalem without at the same time acknowledging the Palestinian claim to East Jerusalem as its capital, the Bush administration has gone the farthest in rejecting Palestinian sovereignty.

More ominous has been Sharon's meeting with Bush on Oct. 16 to discuss preparations for the U.S. war on Iraq. At this meeting Bush gave the green light to Sharon to retaliate against Iraq if Iraq attacks Israel.

Even before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Sharon is threatening to launch a war against Lebanon. Lebanon's inauguration of a new pumping station on the Wazzani river near the Israeli border takes from the water that feeds the Sea of Galilee, Israel's largest fresh water reservoir. Sharon has proclaimed this a declaration of war.

In the meantime, the siege of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel and suicide bombings by Hamas continue. There are currently 5,000 Palestinians in Israeli camps without charges and for an arbitrary time period.

One important development was the Sept. 25 march led by women in Ramallah against the siege of Arafat's compound and the 24 hour curfews imposed on Palestinians. Women, men and children banged on pots and pans for hours after midnight. They were joined by thousands who banged away from balconies and windows. These protests spread to Nablus, Tulkarem, Bethlehem and Gaza, as well as the Israeli city of Nazareth, where Arabs and Jews marched together.

—Sheila Sahar
Oct. 20, 2002

Kurdish autonomy

The rival Kurdish organizations, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) met for a National Assembly in Arbil in northern Iraq, on Oct. 4. Their agenda was to propose a federal Iraqi state divided between Kurds and Arabs once Saddam Hussein is overthrown.

Iraq's population of 22 million consists of nearly 4.4 million Kurds. The rest of the population consists of Arabs, Assyrians, Turkomans, Armenians, Lurs, and Iranians. Shiite Muslim Arabs constitute 60% of the population.

In 1991, when Kurds and Shiites rose up against Saddam after the Gulf War, the U.S. government refused to help them. Thousands were killed by the Iraqi army and 1.5 million Kurds fled Iraq. Since then, Iraqi Kurds have established a de facto autonomous region in northern Iraq under the protection of the "No Fly Zones" and the UN which administers the "food for oil" program imposed on Saddam Hussein. Kurds now study in their own Kurdish language and Kurdish media have been thriving.

The Bush administration has insisted that once Saddam is overthrown, this Kurdish enclave must rejoin Iraq. It is opposed to an independent Kurdistan and has not expressed any interest in aiding the 30,000 combined Kurdish troops to act as a ground force against Saddam Hussein. Turkey, Iran and Syria which have a history of persecuting their Kurdish populations are also opposed to Kurdish autonomy.

On Oct. 3, Turkey lifted the death sentence on the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan because they had been forced to abolish the death sentence nationwide to meet European Union human rights standards. Turkey, however, is using the hostility between Turkomans and Kurds in northern Iraq as a pretext to attack any Kurdish autonomous region. Both Turkey and the U.S. are interested in the oil-rich cities of Kirkuk (with a large Turkoman population) and Mosul in northern Iraq.

—Sheila Sahar

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*.