

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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## WORKSHOP TALKS

### Weapons of mass destruction at work

by Htun Lin

Bush's war department releases daily visions of horror that become our top news story. They project different versions of a kind of technological "apocalypse now" where, for example, Iraq will be hit with 800 cruise missiles all at once to shock and awe the enemy into submission. "Shock and awe" is what our government has come to, obsessing over war above all else. On the domestic front, they instruct us to be on continued alert for nuclear, biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction. After September 11, does anybody really think that it takes high technology to wreak havoc and cause mass destruction?

A veteran African-American nurse at Kaiser HMO shared her view of the impending war on Iraq. She is a resident of the mostly white class and minority community of Richmond, Cal. "Once the war starts," she said, "none of us in the Bay Area is going to be safe."

"It doesn't take a lot of imagination or fancy technology to cause mass destruction. All they have to do is to blow up the oil refineries in Richmond and the whole area will be in trouble. Our neighborhood already has a lot of chronic problems, for example, with asthma in children and old people caused by the refineries."

She also worried that healthcare cutbacks mean our hospital resources are not adequate to handle even a non-terrorist disaster like a flu epidemic or a major refinery accident. We face little disasters everyday because of these cutbacks. For example, chemical leaks periodically cause local crises where thousands line up

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## BLACK/RED VIEW

### Today's 'talented tenth'

by John Alan

During February's Black History Month celebration, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published an illustrated article, "Meet the next generation of African-American achievers." Among the *Chronicle's* selection of a half dozen Black intellectuals and cultural achievers was Henry Louis Gates Jr., head of Harvard's Black Studies Department. According to the *Chronicle*, Gates has "taken black culture to the masses through PBS documentaries, a best seller, *A Bond Woman's Narrative*, the *New Yorker* profiles, and a vibrant web site, *Africans.com*."

However, the article didn't explore Gates' opinion about the inseparability of the African-American culture from the general culture of American civilization. In other words the article avoided the dialectical process by which these two cultures became the culture of America.

#### BLACK ELITE'S BIG HOPES

Gates is the W. E. B. DuBois Professor of Humanities at Harvard University. He once considered himself a representative of the "talented tenth" and a "member of the crossover generation" of African Americans that would go into big time politics or become presidents of big corporations.

Gates didn't go directly into the political economy of capitalism. Instead he proposed that the "remnants of DuBois's 'talented tenth' should assume a renewed leadership role...within the black community" to solve the many problems of poverty and social dislocation of African Americans.

Gates' resurrection of DuBois' late 19th century concept of a "talented tenth" leading Blacks to freedom, seems to indicate that he has purged his memory of the history of the Civil Rights Movement, which arose without (and sometimes in direct opposition to) the leadership of the "talented tenth."

#### COMPARISON TO DUBOIS FALLS SHORT

In fact, more than 50 years ago DuBois himself severely criticized the limits of a talented tenth leadership in an address he gave at Wilberforce University

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## Is anti-war movement ready for war—and its aftermath?



Students step out Feb. 16 against Bush's drive to attack Iraq. For this and other actions, see page 11.

by Kevin Michaels

The huge turnouts at the anti-war demonstrations held around the globe on the weekend of Feb. 15 have reinforced the suspicions of those who believe that the only people with enthusiasm for an invasion of Iraq are those in possession of the executive branch of the United States government. These protests—massive in scale and rich in the diversity of participants—represent a thoroughgoing attempt to halt this war before it starts. They have already produced a grudging recognition of their scale from George W. Bush and, while the demonstrations may not have made him abandon his plans for an invasion, they did capture the attention of the world.

Early reports of the large numbers of protesters at one of the first demonstrations to be held on this weekend-long series of events—in Melbourne, Australia on the Feb. 14—to build anticipation for the magnitude of the event. As many as 200,000 people marched in Melbourne and significant protests took place in other Australian cities as well. At the same time as the Australians marched, a demonstration took place in East Timor, the world's newest country. Protesters there

read anti-war statements outside the U.S., British and Australian embassies.

No one was surprised that anti-war activists in all the major European cities had events planned for the weekend. Western European public opinion is strongly opposed to the war and the governments of France, Germany and Belgium took unprecedented diplomatic moves within NATO to hinder U.S. plans for the alliance's participation in an attack on Iraq. France—with its permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council—has proved to be especially vexing to Washington.

It turned out that expectations for the continental European demonstrations were met or surpassed. In Berlin, a half a million demonstrated, in Barcelona, half a million, in Madrid, an even larger turnout. The Scandinavian capitals all hosted protests. Rome held a truly enormous event that the French newspaper *Le Monde* reported involved three million people. Many of the smaller cities and towns in almost every European country held sizeable protests as well.

Expectations for the demonstration in London were

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## People's power defeats tyranny in Kenya

*Koigi wa Wamwere, Kenya's most famous dissident, was elected to parliament from Subukia in Nakuru by a landslide in the December election that unseated the long dictatorship of Daniel arap Moi. The new government has already ended fees for primary education and health care and return may soon land stolen by the Moi regime. Koigi wa Wamwere had spent 13 years in prison for his human rights work over the past three decades. His autobiography, I Refuse to Die, My Journey for Freedom, was recently published by Seven Stories Press. His comments, excerpted, are from a meeting in New York City Feb. 2, co-sponsored by News and Letters Committees and the African Services Committee. —Editor*

I can't tell you how happy we are at the change in government. After 40 years of tyranny following independence, at last Kenyans are talking about a "second liberation." It is not a complete liberation, but it's a very big step toward it. The whole country was involved in the struggle to get rid of the dictatorship. Children were in the forefront of the struggle because everyone felt that Moi must go.

But those in the leadership of the new government are not the people who fought the hardest. The real heroes remain outside the power structures. As the saying in my community goes, "The one who cultivates the food is not the one who eats it." We are celebrating not just Moi's defeat, but also Kenyatta's [the anti-colonial leader who was the first ruler after independence and became a dictator]. He was the mother and father of Moi. The roots of the dictatorship and oppression go even deeper, back to the British colonialists.

#### IS ALL POSSIBLE?

Kenyans voted for the opposition party, but now I see members of the new government going home in helicopters. Even Moi didn't do that, so I have to ask myself, is this really what we fought for?

Ninety-nine percent of the people who voted for the new government have simple aspirations: three meals a day, water, health care, a job at decent wages. Kenyans voted against Moi with the slogan, "All is possible without Moi," but I wonder how completely true this is.

Moi handed over power, but people are still hurting, they are still without work, there is still a sea of hell in the society. There has to be more than just Moi's depar-

ture. We don't get to heaven from that. We have to dismantle the system that Moi, Kenyatta, and the colonial powers put into place, a system of oppression and exploitation, or nothing much will change.

**I first came to the U.S. as a student. It was during the Civil Rights Movement and I came across Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. and others fighting for freedom. I made their dream my dream for Kenya, and went home to fight.**

I didn't think anyone could be put in jail just for asking for human rights, for democracy, for freedom. But I was arrested I don't know how many times. The police even made it a habit to come to our house and stay all night watching us. I learned to go to sleep. I figured they could kill us just as easily whether we were awake or asleep. Later I was detained without charge or trial, indefinitely. My first detention lasted three and a half years. It was only mentioned once in the newspapers the whole time.

#### DEBT HAMPERS AIDS FIGHT

Sitting in my cell, I wondered why the U.S. and British governments did not once ask for me. At least during the Cold War, they said they were fighting for freedom. Why did they not ask for my freedom? I later learned they had encouraged Kenyatta to set up this dictatorship as a weapon against Communism. They helped Kenyatta, Moi, and all the right-wing dictatorships in Africa. When a democrat arose like Patrice Lumumba, they killed him. Has the West changed? Will they support our effort? Whether they do or not, the defeat of Moi was also a defeat of them.

We need a moratorium on the foreign debt. They have to do it, because Kenya is a dying nation. Every day, 750 people die from AIDS. How do you justify using your money to repay a foreign debt instead of medicine? Paying the debt and dying makes no sense. We can't be any worse off if we don't pay it.

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# Women's militant anti-war stance

by Terry Moon

Excerpted from a talk at the well-attended anti-war demonstration Feb. 15 in Memphis (see page 11).

When you take a poll, you always find that women are much more opposed to this senseless war of Bush's against the people of Iraq than men. This opposition is not some kind of biological determinism where women are physically wired to be opposed to all wars. If that

**WOMAN AS REASON** were the case you wouldn't find women out front in every war of liberation—from Nicaragua to Mozambique and from Algeria to East Timor and Aceh.

Women's opposition to Bush's war is a demonstration of Woman as Revolutionary Force and Reason. It is a thought-out, reasoned response to a war that has nothing to do with liberating anyone, and everything to do with Pax USA, U.S. über alles.

## WAR NEEDS TO BECOME UNTHINKABLE

We know that women and children comprise 80% of the refugees and populations displaced by wars; and that when you look at who dies, the majority of those killed in wars are, again, women and children. When I look at Bush talking macho to the troops, it is impossible to believe that he has any compassion for all those who will die from his orders—including those troops. Bombing Baghdad, or any city, should be unthinkable and should be punished as a crime against humanity.

What shows starkly that this war has nothing to do with liberating the Iraqi people—much less Iraqi women—from the murderous dictator, the brutal Saddam Hussein, is what is happening to the people of Afghanistan, particularly the women. Remember how Stepford wife Laura Bush was shoved onto the national podium to claim that the war on Afghanistan was a war to liberate women from the brutal Taliban? After sweeping over Afghanistan and bombing mountains, sheep, wedding parties, and a few al Qaeda activists, the U.S. did succeed in driving al Qaeda further underground in that country, or at least over the border into Pakistan. But instead of doing what they promised, helping to democratize and rebuild the country, the U.S. turned it over to the bloody Northern Alliance and the various warlords who continue their religious fundamentalist oppression of women.

It is only in Kabul where women feel safe walking the streets without the smothering burqa. Elsewhere girls' schools have been burned, the religious police are out in force beating women whose hair or ankle may show, refusing to let women work or learn. Remember, it was the brutality of those who now make up the Northern Alliance that made the Afghanistan population let the Taliban take control in the first place, thinking that they might be better than the fundamentalist fanatic warlords, and the Rabbani government.

## RAWA SHOWS WHAT WE ARE FOR

The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) reveals the Reason of women in these difficult times. They speak directly to the lie that Bush's war on Iraq has anything at all to do with freedom for women or anyone else but do not stop with saying what they oppose. They insist, as they did at a demonstration in February, that "supporting the cause

## Celebrating Meena

On Feb. 4 in Islamabad, Pakistan, the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan (RAWA) commemorated the 16th anniversary of the death of their founder, Meena, by holding a meeting/demonstration and presenting a play, "Path of Life," which depicted Meena's life and work.

The keynote speaker was Asma Jahangir, who led the UN human rights investigation in Afghanistan. She pointed out that Afghan people have suffered repression for 23 years and demanded an international inquiry commission be established to study this, saying, "A commission...could fix the responsibility and recommend an exemplary punishment for the culprits."

A RAWA speaker, who did not use her real name for fear of reprisals against her family, stressed democracy without secularism is incomplete and that "Meena's active social work and effective advocacy against fundamentalists and the puppet regime acted as a beacon for her supporters in their struggle for democracy."

Another member of RAWA criticized the Karzai government. She said Afghan women are still facing horrible restrictions; the Karzai government has failed to provide freedom and even basic human rights to Afghan people, who are unsafe in their country and have no access to education, health care, or other necessities.

In a critique of U.S. war plans against Iraq and a condemnation for the U.S. betrayal of the people—most especially the women—of Afghanistan, RAWA said: "If America wants to introduce Afghanistan-like 'democracy' in Iraq, we will condemn it."

—T.M.

of democracy without secularism is incomplete."

We need to take note of women like those in RAWA who are uncompromising. RAWA has refused to throw their lot in with those who support tyrants and religious fundamentalism of any form. They condemned the Taliban, the Northern Alliance and the U.S. government but not the U.S. people. They do not, like some in this country, align uncritically with anyone who opposes U.S. imperialism.

As women, we oppose this war, but we will not compromise ourselves or our vision of the future, by aligning with those who support the murder of student dissidents in China, who support genocide against the people of Kosova and Bosnia, and who starve their population while building up their army and nuclear weapons of mass destruction.

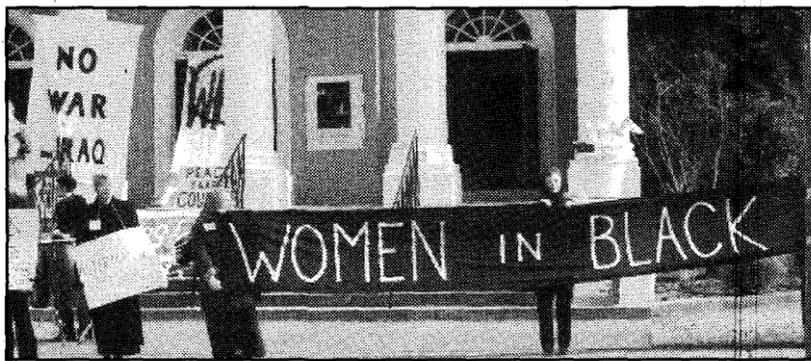
**We oppose terrorism and the terrorism of war; we oppose Bush's lies and his insane, inhuman drive to war; we oppose all religious fundamentalisms—Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu—all of them, because any religious fundamentalism means death and oppression for women.**

Our vision of the future is for new human relations and a world where so-called "ethnic cleansing" would be unthinkable; where war would be unthinkable; where genocide would be unthinkable. And where the human project would not be turned to war, but to the self-development of the human being, what Marx called, "the absolute movement of becoming."

## Demonstrations planned for IWD

Women in Black (WiB) groups in San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and around the country are plan-

ning on demonstrating against Bush's drive for war on March 8, International Women's Day. In San Francisco



Newly formed Memphis Women in Black holds weekly demonstrations against Bush's plans to wage war on Iraq.

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co WiB has been joined by a coalition including GABRIELA Network, Women's Building, and the Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

In D.C. WiB along with the National Organization for Women, Code Pink for Peace—an offshoot of Global Exchange—Peace Action, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and others, plan to demonstrate at the White House on International Women's Day. They are hoping there will be enough women from around the world to circle the White House.

## Review: A look at Laschitzka's Luxemburg

On Sept. 18, 1911, Franz Pfemfert wrote in *Die Aktion* (*The Action*), an anti-militarist journal in Germany, about the Congress of the German Social Democracy in Jena: "In every speech made there one could perceive the corrupting influence of parliamentarianism. But the German Social Democracy has not yet [recognized] the mistakes about the consequences of these tactics! In Jena the so-called honest people—Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht—would have had to resign if they don't like to be called rowdies and 'anarcho-syndicalists.' The future, however, will prove that they are right. The future will prove that a socialist party has been given up as lost when it becomes untruthful."



*Im Lebensrausch, trotz alledem. Rosa Luxemburg, Eine Biografie (In the Ecstasy of Life, Despite Everything. Rosa Luxemburg, A Biography) by Annelies Laschitzka. Berlin: 1996, Aufbau-Verlag. 687 p.*

One can read these prophetic words of Pfemfert in a wonderfully written biography about Rosa Luxemburg by Annelies Laschitzka, *Im Lebensrausch, trotz alledem. Rosa Luxemburg, Eine Biografie* (*In the Ecstasy of Life, Despite Everything. Rosa Luxemburg, A Biography*), published in Berlin in 1996. Laschitzka quotes Pfemfert because she is describing one phase of Luxemburg's struggle against reformism and revisionism in the German Social Democracy and the Second International.

In addition to anti-revisionism Laschitzka writes about the thoughts and actions of Luxemburg concerning the relation of the Social-Democratic Party to the masses, the structure and functioning of a revolutionary party, the development of Marxism as theory and praxis, the National Question, revolution, and last but not least about Luxemburg as a woman and human being.

## LUXEMBURG IN THE THICK OF STRUGGLE

Laschitzka situates Luxemburg in the development of Social-Democracy in Germany, Poland and Russia from 1890 until 1919. She covers Luxemburg's response to the 1905-06 revolutions in Poland and Russia, the collapse of the Second International in 1914 (when it voted to extend war credits to the German Kaiser), the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 and the German Revolution in 1918-19.

The intent of this biography, Laschitzka says, is "to show the unity of [Luxemburg's] personality, theoretical work, political and pedagogical activities" (p. 11).

In the Poland-Russia context, Laschitzka reveals

interesting aspects about Luxemburg. Drawing on the research of the Polish historian Feliks Tych, she notes the discovery in 1991 by Tych of the so-called "Credo," a manuscript by Luxemburg with annotations by Leo Jogiches. This manuscript analyzes the situation in the Social-Democratic Party of Russia in 1912 and the role of the Polish-Lithuanian party which Luxemburg and Jogiches headed, in the effort to unite its factions. Laschitzka's assessment is: "The 'Credo' belongs alongside the article 'Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy' (1904) and her manuscript on 'The Russian Revolution' (1918) as the most important works of Rosa Luxemburg about Lenin's politics and makes clear the principled differences between the two regarding questions about the unity of the party and the democracy in the party" (p. 404).

## KAUTSKY, LENIN AND LUXEMBURG

In this biography we find an abundance of remarkable things. I single out only two. One is the review Luxemburg made in 1905 of the edition prepared by Kautsky of the first volume of Marx's *Theories of Surplus Value*. Luxemburg had high esteem for Kautsky's qualities as editor in this case (p. 186). This is a bit strange as later commentators concluded that Kautsky's edition was imprecise.

Second is her work on *Introduction to Economics* (*Einführung in die Nationalökonomie*). It was begun in 1909 and not finished at the time of her death in 1919. It was published posthumously in 1925 by Paul Levi.

Compared to Laschitzka's earlier studies on Luxemburg, this time Luxemburg is not mainly measured by Lenin and there is a resistance toward any hero worship of him.

Laschitzka's biography is important because Luxemburg was one of the most interesting personalities of the 20th century, and she was a fighter for a better world, for socialism. On the one side, says Laschitzka, Luxemburg had prescient views, and on the other side she had some fundamental errors (p. 9)—especially Luxemburg's writings on the National Question, an issue on which she was most stubborn—as seen in her lifelong opposition to the independence of Poland; and her theory of the accumulation of capital where she departed from Marx (pp. 411-22).

This biography would have had more strength if the author had utilized some of the thoughts Raya Dunaevskaya developed in her study of Luxemburg, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. The readers of this biography will benefit most from it as they read the study of Dunaevskaya and vice versa.

—Karel Ludenhoff

# Colombian Coca Cola workers struggle for justice

Chicago—My name is Luis Cardona. I am part of a program for labor union leaders that have been subjected to death threats in Colombia. This program began last year with 26 leaders and will last one year. We must return after this time and cannot return to the U.S. for two years. As things get more dangerous, I must re-evaluate if it is safe to return. Our families in Colombia are open targets for the assassins.

I would also like to talk about the larger social problems in Colombia. The biggest are injustice, lack of democracy, corruption and impunity. The causes are Plan Colombia (which we call "Plan Washington"), the fumigation programs and the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

**The state-run corporations and oil companies work with foreign corporations to exterminate union leaders. Corporations currently focused on this are Coca Cola, Monsanto and Occidental Petroleum. These corporations are in close contact with the military. Contracts are created for "disappearances," all with the complicity of the government.**

Given that, I'd like to talk about what my life was like when I worked for Coca Cola. Between 1995 and 1996, five of our comrades were assassinated. Thirty activists were run out of the plant, fearing for their lives. The final assassinations occurred in December 1996. In November, when we workers presented a petition demanding negotiations, the head of the bottling plant told us that they had already contacted the paramilitary and they would call them out if we continued.

We said that they had until Dec. 6 to tell us whether they were going to negotiate with us. On Dec. 5, the paramilitaries raided our plant and assassinated the secretary of our union and a member of our negotiating team. The secretary was shot once in the head and

five times through the heart.

That same day, they tried to take me out of town to torture me. I thought I was trapped and would rather die running away, so I ran to the police station. The commander didn't let the paramilitaries in because he wasn't sure what was going on. The police arranged for me to move with my family to a different area.

Why didn't the police just turn me over? It was because there was a big fight going on in the streets when I was being chased. By the time I got to the police station people had realized what was happening and mobilized in my defense. That night the paramilitaries came to the union offices, ransacked it and took everything of value. Then they burned it to the ground.

One week later the paramilitaries returned and went to all the unionists still working at the factory, and said they had until 5 p.m. to renounce their union

membership. If they did not, they would either lose their jobs or their lives. They all signed out of fear.

Two weeks later, paramilitaries took one of the activists out of the plant and assassinated him at the cemetery. We remaining workers were just too scared to continue. We decided we needed to take our case out of the plant and the community. So we went to Bogotá to spread the word nationally and internationally.

**A union committee stayed in Bogotá for nine months and tried to negotiate with Coca Cola. Some of the workers were even willing to be reassigned to another part of the country. But instead Coca Cola filed a suit against the union and tried to eliminate it. To add insult to injury, while we were gone fighting for our union, the company said that we had left the job site so we were fired. I got a severance package of about \$1,500 for 12 years of work.**

The USW has helped us create a lawsuit against Coca Cola in U.S. courts. So far we've given presentations to human rights organizations in Atlanta, Ga.—the home of Coca Cola—and Brussels, Belgium, and last Dec. 6 in Bogotá, which allowed us to commemorate the deaths of our comrades in 1996. On this same day, the president of Coca Cola-Colombia resigned.

What we are hoping to achieve is not only that international human rights organizations hear about what Coca Cola is doing, but also that everyday people from underdeveloped countries can find out for themselves what is being done and make their own judgments. We want the people to apply pressure on this company.

One of the things we've been doing since April of last year when I arrived is start a campaign against Coca Cola. We're not calling for a boycott at this time because we're focusing on getting our message out. We have organized support from high schools, universities, unions and other support groups. We've gotten UC-Berkeley and the University of Montana to get rid of all their Coca Cola products and agree to a resolution that they will not sell any products on campus until the matter of the Colombian workers is justly resolved

—Luis Cardona

Translated by Erica Rae

For information, go to [www.cokewatch.com](http://www.cokewatch.com)

## Nurses hold the line



Nurses from Northern Michigan Hospital in Harbor Springs, Mich., have been on strike for over 100 days. Members of Teamsters Local 406, they are fighting for improved wages and working conditions.

## WORKSHOP TALKS

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for emergency care. Even without a catastrophic incident, the Richmond refineries spew out record levels of pollutants. Such "collateral damage" is deemed part of doing business. It's no accident that refineries are located in poor and minority areas.

The biggest known threat to the Bay Area is a massive earthquake for which experts say we are woefully unprepared. It could cause unimaginable destruction and loss of life. After the last big earthquake those responsible for preparedness in health care recognized that all the different hospitals and clinics would have to work together in an emergency. They created a computerized data link among all the health care providers for disasters like a TB epidemic, or now, the possibility of a terrorist attack.

### EVERYDAY CRISES

However, restructuring has made it impossible to deal with a disaster. Because we have spent the last decade reducing the number of critical care beds to a bare minimum, in a real disaster we wouldn't be able to do much more than watch it unfold. Before the chief of "Homeland Security" told us to buy "duct tape and plastic," we already knew the reality of homeland insecurity means just waiting for the inevitable.

Our shortage of beds also means little everyday festering crises. People routinely walk in with health problems from industrial pollution and chronic diseases. By design we don't have room to accommodate them. We warehouse them in the ER, where they must be admitted or released after 24 hours.

Once a patient is admitted they have to be taken care of until they are fit for discharge whether they have insurance or not. That is why HMOs routinely dump uninsured patients on other hospitals. We are forced to play this game every day. To Bush health care is merely overhead expenses to be sacrificed for his expanding war budget.

Workers built everything and we are not in awe of tech. Instead we realize that we are all interdependent in a way that is very fragile. What we resent is capital's usurpation of our cooperative nature for its needs, especially the need to feed its war machine.

### WORKPLACE OPPOSITION

For us workers the war is not "just about oil" but it represents the dominance of capital over all aspects of human life. There is a lot more to opposing war than meets the eye. When I go out to anti-war marches, I come home feeling a little empty. I hear a lot of rhetoric about opposing U.S. imperialism. That's OK, but what about the every day struggle in the war against workers at home? A lot of people express their anxiety that the war is a fait accompli. They say they had to be out there anyway to express their opposition but don't really feel it will change Bush's mind.

Even if we "won" and stopped Bush from going to war with Iraq, the war against workers will continue. We need a deeper way to collectively express not only our opposition to war but also a positive vision of a new society. What the nurse from Richmond said shows a total opposition to war that is inseparable from our struggles in the workplace where we experience the daily ravages of capital on our lives.

This war is merely a new chapter in capital's drive for total domination. Workers know that reconstructing society with a new form of cooperation is not easy. However, it is the true opposite to capital's obsession with war.

## Hunger strike for Taco Bell boycott

Chicago—I am Francisco Martinez and I have worked as a farmworker for the last five years in Immokalee, Fla. In 1998, I had an opportunity to come and work in the U.S. Because conditions in Mexico are screwed, I came to the U.S. But I never imagined what it would be like crossing the border and passed from one trafficker to another as if I were merchandise. And that's how I landed in the fields of Florida.

I was brought to a ranch and worked three months for a rancher on his farm. We were 40 workers being controlled by about eight of the rancher's henchmen. But with all of the intimidation and fear, people were afraid to do anything. So I had to draw on my inner strength and decide: Did I want to die incarcerated on this farm or escape? I planned with five other workers and we decided to escape. After this, the ranchers were trying to track us down and we had to hide from them.

When the rancher found us, the woman who was giving us a place to stay called the police. The police chased the rancher away. When the police were filing the report, one of the witnesses called the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. Some members of the Coalition,

basically all farmworkers, came over to find out what was happening and called the FBI. They arrested those ranchers over the enslavement and sent some to jail for six years, others for 10 years.

I decided to commit a little bit more time to the CIW because the unjust working conditions on the ranches are about the same as slavery. In one case they have you in captivity. In the other you can move freely, but they are still screwing you.

The CIW is a grassroots organization. Our members are Latinos, primarily Guatemalan, Mexican and Haitian, and some African Americans. But we don't make distinctions based on race. We are fighting for just salaries for the work that we do, better working conditions from the ranchers, and better housing.

### TACO BELL AS TARGET

We started with four farmworkers and now have 2,000 members. We've been struggling for the past 10 years to dialogue with the growers. We have done marches, strikes, hunger strikes to grab public attention, but nothing changed. So we decided to focus on Taco Bell. Taco Bell, as a major buyer from the companies we work for, can tell the growers to change working conditions or Taco Bell would change suppliers.

We have really focused the boycott on students, the principal market for the Taco Bell chain. We have focused on educating them through presentations at universities, explaining to them that we put so much sweat into this food and they are eating these tacos without realizing what goes into the making of them.

Now we have a Student-Farmworker Alliance. We had an exchange of ideas on how to proceed. Students have taken action on campuses across the country. I have traveled to Chicago to meet with students and others who have been helping us.

### FARMWORKER CARAVAN

We had a caravan of 60 farmworkers go from Immokalee, Fla. to Irvine, Cal. to promote the boycott at the doors of Taco Bell's office. Until now they have always said they didn't have anything to do with the treatment of farmworkers. That was the ranchers' business. But we said, you have the power to influence on our behalf because you are the major buyer of tomatoes from those companies.

Taco Bell makes \$5.2 billion per year. The tomato growers are making \$120,000 per year, while a farmworker makes only \$7,500 a year.

We organized another big protest. We will begin a hunger strike in front of Taco Bell's offices that will end March 5. During this time there are going to be actions by workers throughout California and the U.S.

Even with the majority of farmworkers afraid of the immigration police and of not being heard, we have more than 60 farmworkers committed to traveling to Taco Bell's offices. If possible, the majority will participate in the hunger strike. Feb. 28 is a national day of protest to support the hunger strikers. This struggle continues.

—Francisco Martinez

(Interviewed and translated for News & Letters by Jason Wallach)

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

This talk aims to relate Marx's thinking to the historic aspects of American thought. I proceed on the assumption that this serious, scholarly audience has come to hear a dissenter's point of view on the parallels and sharp divisions between the two. I understand this is predominantly an economic seminar and would therefore feel more at home in the economic and sociological aspects rather than in the purely philosophical ones. This is not to say, in the present period of world crisis when not only the fate of civilization but civilization itself is within the orbit of an intercontinental ballistic missile, that any of us can fail to question the deep human basis of all phenomena. As Marx explained his philosophy in the very first piece of writing at the time of his break from bourgeois society, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*, "To be radical is to grasp the matter by its root. The root of mankind is man himself."

The only Marxist root I consider genuine is the Abolitionist movement in America and that despite the fact that most of the Abolitionists did not even know Marx. What is of far greater importance is the spontaneous affinity of ideas, the independent working out of the problems of the age as manifested in one's own country, and the common source—the Negro in America and his own activity in fighting for freedom.

The least known part of Marxism is its American roots. I'm not referring to any organization that called itself Marxist either in Marx's own time or ours. Of many of those Marx said, "If this is Marxism, I'm not a Marxist." He found he had to separate himself from the self-styled Marxists in America who tried to evade the whole issue of the Civil War by saying they were opposed to "all slavery, wage and chattel." Marx was actively and unashamedly on the side of the North. The mass demonstrations in England which stopped the British government's flirtations with the thought of entering on the side of the South and the role of The Workingman's International Association, headed by Marx, is certainly an important manifestation of the relationship between the Marxist concept of freedom and the American.

The most glorious page in American history was written by the Abolitionists. Here is how one of their great leaders, Wendell Phillips, expressed the struggle between the North and the South:

*By the South I mean a principle, and not a locality, an element of civil life, in 14 rebellious States. I mean an element which, like the days of Queen Mary and the Inquisition, cannot tolerate free speech, and punishes it with the stake. I mean the aristocracy of the skin, which considers the Declaration of Independence a sham and democracy a snare—which believes that one-third of the race is born booted and spurred, and the other two-thirds ready saddled for that third to ride. I mean a civilization which prohibits the Bible by statute to every sixth man of its community, and puts a matron in a felon's cell for teaching a black sister to read. I mean the intellectual, social aristocratic South—the thing that manifests itself by barbarism and the Bowie-knife, by bullying and lynch-law, by ignorance and idleness, by the claim of one man to own his brother.... That South is to be annihilated. (Loud applause.) The totality of my common sense—or whatever you may call it—is this, all summed up in one word: This country will never know peace nor union until the South (using the word in the sense I have described) is annihilated, and the North is spread over it... Our struggle is between barbarism and civilization.*

Wendell Phillips further spelled this out most concretely when he said that unless Blacks become the basis of Southern Reconstruction we might as well not have fought and won; we will regress to another form of barbarism.

The question of land and the peasant as the prerequisite for a successful revolution was brought home to us in the Civil War. Frederick Engels, Marx's great collaborator, had written before, in this analysis of the Peasant Wars in Germany, that because the German

### EDITOR'S NOTE

To re-establish the American roots of Marxism constituted a goal of Raya Dunayevskaya's book, *Marxism and Freedom*, published in 1958. That year Dunayevskaya developed this theme in a presentation to an economic seminar at UCLA. We present excerpts here of her notes from that lecture, titled "Communism, Marxism and Liberty—The American Humanist Tradition." The notes have been edited for publication, and can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection* 12505-12514.

Reformation in the 16th Century had betrayed the peasant revolts by not giving the peasants land, the country itself "disappeared for three centuries from the ranks of countries playing an independent part in history." We still suffer from the incomplete revolution in the South where the Negro did not get his "40 acres and a mule." (I hope everyone has read W.E.B. DuBois' *Black Reconstruction*, one of the greatest contributions—and certainly the most original—to that period of America's development yet hardly known because it was written by a Negro and supposedly for that reason was "prejudiced." Many a so-called objective historian has yet even to see the problem, much less to analyze it profoundly.)

We must now proceed to the changes in Marx's greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, made under the impact of the decade of the 1860's in general and the Civil War in the United States in particular...

Joseph Schumpeter considers Marx's materialistic conception of history as nothing short of a work of genius, whereupon he complains that Marx overestimated the value of philosophy in general and of Hegelian methodology in particular. He proceeds to call Marx the most erudite of all economists and cannot contain his praise for Marx's "idea of theory," of being able to transform "historic narrative into historic reason"; whereupon he proceeds to dissect him as "economist" only and disregard entirely what made it possible to transform historic narrative into historic reason, or how Marx's "idea" of theory evolved. He does this not maliciously or even consciously—it is impossible for an intellectual nowadays even when he admires another intellectual with whom he completely disagrees, to conceive of the fact that genius has any connection with common man's activity. Marx, on the other hand, always felt the pulse of what he called "the spontaneous organization of the working class," and never more so than when he worked on "theory."

Marx had been working out his economic theories ever since 1844. By 1859 he finally published what he considered to be the first volume of *Capital*, which he had called *Critique of Political Economy*. But he no sooner published it than he was dissatisfied with it. Under the impact of the Civil War he returned to the manuscripts and began a thorough overhaul, in structure and form particularly. The two most fundamental reorganizations occurred in 1863 and in 1866 and the work was then finally published in the form we have it today.

It was in 1866 that he added the section on "the Working Day," which will illuminate what Schumpeter calls "the idea" of theory and what I call the Humanism of Marxism or Marxism as a theory of liberation. It completed Marx's transcendence of both classical political economy and Hegelian philosophy, the two main sources of his theory, and the creation of a new world view of history which was solidly based on the actual activity of man.

First, there was the relationship of the abolition of slavery to the struggle for the eight hour day. As Marx was to write in *Capital*:

*In the United States of North America, every independent movement for the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded. But out of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the eight hours' agitation that ran with the seven-leagued boots of the locomotive from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California. The General Congress of Labor at Baltimore (August 16, 1866) declared: 'The first and great necessity of the present, to free the labor of this country from capitalistic slavery, is the passing of a law by which eight hours shall be the normal working-day in all States of the American Union. We are resolved to put forth all our strength until this glorious result is attained.'*

The workers having by their own "correct instinct" formulated a demand in almost the precise terms that Marx had worked so hard to present to the First International, the theoretician's mind took wing. New categories were created, a step forward in philosophic cognition was made, and a new way of thinking resulted.

First came the shift from the history of theory to the history of production relations. In *Critique*, he stated his theory on commodities and money and then supplemented it with the other theories on that subject. In *Capital*, he removed all other theories to the end of the work, Volume 4, and straightaway from the mentioning of the duality in the commodity between use-value and exchange-value moved over to the duality in labor itself, between abstract and concrete. After that he split the category of labor into labor standing for the

function, the activity itself, and labor power, the mere ability to labor which the capitalist buys as a commodity according to the laws of exchange. This does not get transformed into the function itself until it belongs to the capitalist and the worker is made by him to produce a greater value than it itself is, or get fired after the day's work. Marx is the only theoretical economist who entered the factory—and stayed there for the greater part of Volume I of *Capital* analyzing the relations at the point of production.

In this part—"The Production of Absolute Surplus Value"—the section on "the Working Day" appears. The academic economists, who look upon these pages as "sob story stuff," forget that society would have collapsed had the workers not fought for the shortening of the working day. Capitalism destroyed nine generations of spinners in only three generations. The humanism of *Capital* gives it that profundity, that force and direction which made possible the prediction of monopolies and depressions.

Marx didn't predict them because he was a prophet but because of two factors and two factors only: 1) he dialectically carried through to the end the economic laws of development of capitalist society and 2) having put the human being—the wage laborer—instead of the thing—wage labor—at the center of his theoretical world, Marx discerned in the struggles and new thinking the "new forces and new passions" for a new society. The winning of the shortening of the working day which Marx called "a veritable civil war" was finally the material basis for freedom.

Two principles are involved in the structural change in *Capital*, one flowing from theory and one from practice. The philosophy of the shortening of the working day, which arose out of the actual class struggles, embraced all concepts inside and outside it. The thinking of the theoretician was thus constantly filled with more and more content, filled by workers' struggles and workers' thoughts....

The socialization of labor meant, in human terms, a great army of labor, united and disciplined by the very mechanism of labor and forced, in order to straighten their bent backs, to throw off not only capitalist oppression but put an end to class society, and reunite once and for all, in the human being himself, mental and manual labor so that the pre-history of society can end and humanity's true history begin on the basis that the free development of each is the condition for the free and full development of all.

We need not merely to go back to the traditions of the Abolitionists but forward to a New Humanism comprehensive enough in theory, scope, logic and life to win the global struggle for the minds of men. And our country is rich enough in traditions of self-activity: from the Committees of Correspondence in colonial times that appeared just a big nuisance to the British authorities who awoke one day to find that these nuisances were, as Charles A. Beard put it, "The Engines of Revolution"; through the sit-downers of 1936 who transformed the industrial face of the nation; to the present kind of wildcats against the existing labor bureaucracy which demand a more fundamental answer to automation than either the economists, scientists, or labor leadership has yet seen.

I ask anyone to turn to books on automation which seriously treat man as if he were indeed a buildable machine and then follow John R. Commons' advice and go seek out workers and talk to them and get their attitudes and you will see what I mean when I say that the new impulses are only to be gotten from the workers themselves and not from abstract theories of "automation is progress."

The struggle for the minds of men—and our century is exactly that—cannot be won with hollow words of democracy. But so rich are the traditions of America, so uninhibited are the American workers by the preconceived notions of leaders, including those from their own labor ranks, that a new Humanism is evolving. They have no Labor Party to "lead" them or mislead them—and they have no awe of intellectuals like the French Existentialists. That does not mean they reject theory. On the contrary. There is a movement from practice to theory that is literally begging for a movement from theory to practice to meet it.

When these finally do meet—and I have no doubt of the meeting—it cannot be anything short of a New Humanism.

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# PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE *Reflections on Bush's drive for war*

by Kevin B. Anderson

Author of *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism*

What are the U.S.'s war aims and why is it targeting Iraq today? At the surface level, Bush is attempting to distract from the fact that the "war on terrorism" has netted almost zero in terms of catching any of the major perpetrators of September 11, especially the fact that neither Osama bin Laden nor Mullah Omar have been found. Another motivation is obviously oil, with Iraq controlling the biggest oil reserves besides Saudi Arabia. If a pro-U.S. regime could be installed, this would give the U.S. even greater control than now of the vital levers of the world capitalist economy.

There is also the motivation of politics. Given the end of the Cold War, Iraq today, insignificant as it is on the global scale, is one of the largest military powers that expresses opposition to the U.S.—its government hailed the September 11 murderous attacks on U.S. civilians, for example.

None of these, however, add up to reasons for war. Iraq, despite its hostility to the U.S., had nothing to do with September 11, while Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, U.S. allies, clearly did. Oil can be obtained elsewhere, and Iraq is hardly a military or political threat to the U.S. The more salient motivations for war run deeper. The main factor is the changed world since September 11 in a broader sense than what is usually discussed.

The September 11 attacks on U.S. civilians by murderous theocratic fascists, whose motives were as reactionary as those of neo-Nazi Timothy McVeigh at Oklahoma City in 1995, have had a deep impact on U.S. public opinion.

The equally reactionary Khomeini regime's seizure of Iran in 1979 paved the way for the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and the deep retrogression that followed. By the same token, the Bush administration, the most conservative U.S. administration since the 1920s, believes that September 11 has put wind in its sails and will allow it to unleash the type of warmongering that it always had in mind, but was unsure that its loss of the popular vote and selection by the Supreme Court would allow it to do.

Note how once he declared war on terrorism after September 11, Bush didn't have to add a single new face to his military foreign policy apparatus. He already had a war cabinet, with a former Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, as Vice President, another old warhorse, Donald Rumsfeld, as Defense Secretary, and a warlike National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice. The fact that a former general, Secretary of State Colin Powell, is seen as a voice of relative moderation only shows just how warlike this group is.

The Bush administration believed that September 11 would give it public support to do something even Reagan had not dared to propose, permanent war for a generation or more on any and all perceived enemies of the U.S. And that support would extend, they felt, for sending U.S. troops anywhere in the world where they said there was a threat, thus getting the U.S. over what the rulers call its "Vietnam syndrome." That is the name for the deep distrust and opposition the American people have felt toward foreign intervention ever since that barbarous imperialist war organized a revolutionary mass opposition movement in the 1960s.

## U.S. GLOBAL DOMINANCE

If the U.S. were England or France, or even Russia or China, it could desire these things but have no hope of achieving them. But the U.S. today is in an unprecedented position as a dominant power. In the entire history of modern capitalism it has far greater military and economic power relative to the rest of the world than did Hitler in 1941, or even Britain in the 19th century.

The U.S. annual gross domestic product is \$10 trillion, far more than Russia and China, the closest thing the U.S. has to a military rival today. U.S. GDP is ten times the economic output of China's, \$1 trillion, and 40 times that of Russia, \$250 billion. In fact, New York City, Los Angeles-Long Beach, and Chicago each out-produce Russia, and combined, out-produce China.

As for the other developed capitalist lands, Japan, Germany, Britain, and France combined come close to, but do not surpass U.S. economic output. Even before September 11 and the massive increases Bush has secured, the U.S. military budget had a still greater imbalance with that of the rest of the world.

So in answer to the pragmatist liberal question, can the U.S. fight a war in Afghanistan and Iraq at the same time, the answer would seem to be yes. More importantly, doesn't the sheer weight of the U.S. economy and military make it very hard for anyone to oppose it, even in a UN vote, without running the risk of economic pressure through the world financial institutions that the U.S. largely controls, or even military pressure? The Bush administration is gearing up for war on Iraq because it feels it can do so without fear of

serious opposition from any other power or economic interest. In one sense, this is a grand illusion. Such a war will cost the U.S. economy dearly since the allies will not help to foot the bill as they did in 1991. An even grander illusion is the idea, shared by Israel's Sharon and some in the administration, that such an invasion, if successful, and if the Iraqi people greet U.S. troops as liberators in Baghdad (not impossible), would strike such a blow against Arab nationalism that it would isolate the Palestinians as never before.

But the overall motive of the U.S. is what it has been since World War II: total mastery of the world political and economic system as an imperative of the state-capitalist age. Just as Microsoft aims at total domination of its market, in fear that anything else would lead to its demise, so too with the U.S. economic-political system and the world. Earlier it was checked by rivalry with Russia, but today nothing seems to stand in its way, or so Bush's most aggressive strategists seem to think.

What, then, is the opposition to the U.S. war drive? Largely it lies not in other governments which, even if they oppose the U.S. war drive, as does Germany, will not really do anything concrete to oppose it, like denying the U.S. the right to use all those bases in Germany as part of its war on Iraq. Rather it lies within those countries, whether Western European or Arab, that are U.S. allies and whose people will hold them to blame for any war on Iraq.

There is also a growing opposition inside the U.S. There seems to be counting on the supposed ignorance of the U.S. population on international politics, hoping they will not grasp the obvious fact that Iraq is not a supporter of the type of fundamentalist movements behind September 11. Here he is wrong, just as the pundits were wrong in thinking that the public would be swayed by all the revelations about Clinton's sex life enough to allow a Republican constitutional coup through impeachment in 1998-99.

## INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS

This brings us to what Marxist-Humanists call the subjective factor—the role of the masses in history and society, be they workers, women, Blacks, Latinos and other oppressed minorities, youth, or gay-lesbian-transgendered. Surely all of these groups feel targeted by Bush, like the longshore workers of the West Coast who were slapped with the Taft-Hartley law that strangles their right to strike. Among these opposition forces has been the anti-war movement, both today and in the past.

However, in recent years the anti-war and anti-imperialist movements have developed some deep contradictions.

1) In 1991, the anti-war movement against the first Iraq war failed to support the Iraqi masses when, after the U.S.-led invasion rolled Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait, there was a mass uprising against Saddam's genocidal dictatorship, much of it spearheaded by oppressed national and religious groups like the Kurds and the Shi'ites. Even today, it is rare to hear a leftist European or U.S. or Arab voice come out in support of the Kurds, actual victims of genocide in 1988.

In making only brief and pro-forma statements about the Saddam Hussein regime's oppressive character, Noam Chomsky and other anti-imperialist voices have lost touch with what needs always to motivate the Left: how we can support forces of human liberation, at home and abroad. Here and elsewhere, again and again, anti-imperialism has trumped support for human liberation whenever U.S. imperialism comes into conflict with powers that are themselves oppressive and reactionary.

2) Another contradiction emerged over Bosnia in 1992-95, when most of the Left and the anti-war movement were usually either silent or worse, supportive of Milosevic during the period of his genocidal policies that resulted in 200,000 deaths, most notably the massacre of 7,000 unarmed civilians at Srebrenica, for which he is on trial today.

3) Yet another contradiction developed in 1994, when 800,000 Rwandans were massacred in an ethnic genocide on a scale not seen since Hitler's time. To this day the Left and the anti-war movement have had little to say about this massacre since it was carried out by indigenous African elites, in a situation when UN or even U.S. intervention could have saved lives.

4) Another, even deeper contradiction emerged in 1999 when the Left and the anti-war movement sided with Milosevic's genocidal regime against the Kosovars because its anti-imperialist politics predominated over everything else.

5) Finally, after September 11, the Left and the anti-war movement opposed the war on Afghanistan in a way that tended to excuse the brutalities of the Taliban and bin Laden and to this day cannot bring itself to admit that, with all its contradictions, the toppling of the Taliban has improved the lives of Afghan women, at least marginally.



Victims of Milosevic's ethnic cleansing in Kosova in 1999—have the lessons been learned by today's movements?

All of this puts the anti-war movement in a difficult position today. Was the anti-war movement right that the Taliban or Milosevic were not as awful as the U.S. administration said? Is not Saddam Hussein pretty awful too? Shouldn't we support his overthrow? I certainly do. Yet it isn't that context that I also oppose the Bush war on Iraq. Without such a context of support for movements of human liberation, including those directed against foes of the U.S., anti-war movements lose much credibility, both pragmatically and morally.

This does not mean that anti-war movements cannot grow very large—during the Cold War, many anti-war movements grew very large indeed, despite their narrow politics. Take for example the movement against nuclear war in the 1950s, the main wing of which refused to condemn Russian nuclear weapons, focusing only on the U.S. But such movements on a narrow, uncritical basis will not develop into mass movements strong enough really to challenge the overall global capitalist system.

What does it mean to oppose both Bush and the Iraqi regime at the same time? It is similar to what it meant in the 1960s to oppose the Vietnam War and also the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, or to support the Black movement in the U.S. and also that in the Sudan against the Arab overlords—even though in the 1960s Russia and its ally, Egypt, supported those same Arab overlords, as did the Sudanese Communist Party.

## TOWARDS A UNITY OF THEORY/PRACTICE

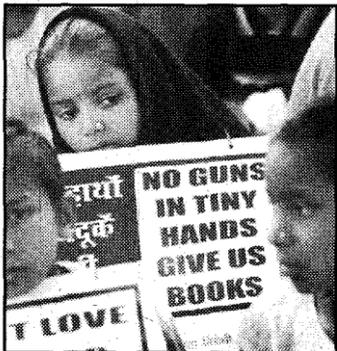
How dangerous to the region is relatively tiny Iraq, hemmed in by over a decade of sanctions? Not very dangerous to the region, let alone the U.S., it seems. That is why our opposition to this imperialist war must be total. Such a war, if it ends in victory for the U.S., will immeasurably strengthen U.S. hegemony around the world, will serve to militarize our own society at home and abroad, will marginalize the Left even further, and will surely lead to other imperialist interventions.

As we oppose this war, however, we cannot forget to think about the Iraqi people and the people of the region who have suffered so much, both from Western imperialism and from the regime of Saddam Hussein and other similarly oppressive ones of the region. Our anti-imperialism needs to find a way to support those movements of Kurds, Shi'ites and other oppressed national and religious groups, of democratic-minded Iraqis, of the workers' and the Left.

In short, can we be both anti-imperialist and for human liberation, at home and abroad? It is not easy to do so when the U.S. very carefully picks opponents as reprehensible as the Iraqi, the North Korean, or Iranian regimes, all of whose peoples dream of overthrow of their brutal rulers. Yet that is the task we face. Facing it in all of its complex contradictions will make our work harder now, but will also help us to avoid what happened during the 1991 Gulf War, when the short-lived anti-war movement collapsed into silence as the Kurds and Shi'ite majority rose up against the Iraqi regime, thus losing much credibility as a force for liberation.

Put simply, mere knee-jerk anti-interventionism will not make it in the era of the Taliban, bin Laden, Milosevic, and Saddam Hussein. These targets of U.S. imperialism are not the Sandinistas of Nicaragua, but killers in some ways even more brutal than U.S. imperialism.

The U.S. of course operates on such a vast scale that it kills far more people, whether in Hiroshima or Iraq. This is true even though internally the U.S. is more democratic. That is why we need to join in the demonstrations against Bush's war in Iraq, while offering, as we always do, a critical, total Marxist-Humanist view that does not stop at opposition to capitalism and its imperialism, but goes on to talk about a new human society for workers, women, oppressed minorities, and youth, whether in the Middle East or the U.S., in Europe or in Africa.



New Delhi, India peace rally

Cornell College

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**'NO WAR!' IS THE OUTCRY—AROUND THE WORLD...**

We have done this many times before, in moments of crisis when the need for a mass protest was evident. Jews and

Arabs together with slogans chanted alternately in both languages and occasionally in English.

But this time it was different, because never before had Israeli peace activists

found themselves such an integral part of a worldwide movement. Never before did our particular concerns in this miserable torn country, mesh so closely with the anxiety and alarm and anger of so many people in so many countries around the world.

Somebody produced an Israeli version of the "No War" sticker familiar from CNN reports of protests in Europe and the U.S., taken up and put on clothes with Gush Shalom's Two Flags or the competing emblems of the Hadash and Balad parties. "Bush, Blair and Sharon are the true axis of evil" was an improvised new slogan, chanted as the banner "Israelis and Palestinians oppose the war" was unfurled.

**Adam Keller**  
Tel Aviv

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I have maintained from the beginning that there will be no Iraq war (at least no invasion). I think the tide has turned and that Bush will be forced to back down, mostly by the defection of his rival imperialists, the French, Russians and Chinese, who have the Iranian oil contracts the British/U.S. oil interests want to grab, but also by the world and especially U.S. demonstrations. If Feb. 15 is big it will seem that we demonstrators made Bush back down. And since the Democrats have made NO protests, this amazing victory will give our movements a huge prestige.

The problem then will be "what happens after?" The Dems can't capitalize on Bush's isolation from the U.S. mainstream, since they went along with him. But Bush will lose the 2004 elections to them, by default. How can the Other America of labor, minorities, youth, women, the poor project its desire for real change? That is the challenge and huge opportunity of our times.

**Richard Greeman**  
France

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At the moment we are preparing for the anti-war actions on Feb. 15. Our task is not only to condemn war preparations from the side of U.S./NATO, but also to repulse the attempts, not only from the side of the Stalinists but also the majority of Trotskyists, to support Saddam, as well as to use great-Russian chauvinism in the present political rhetoric.

**Ukrainian Marxist-Humanist**  
Kiev

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The most important question at the moment is the Iraq war Bush is planning. The resistance to it is growing more and more. In Europe, Schroeder was the first to say "no" and later on France and Belgium, too. There are big

differences within NATO because of the inter-imperialistic rivalries. But what is most important is the resistance to the war by the people. Germany is the strongest case. Nearly every day and everywhere there are demonstrations in Germany. The churches (both Catholic and Protestant) have declared themselves against the war. It will without a doubt have a big influence on the Christian-Democratic Party. What develops on Feb. 15 will be critical.

**Marxist**  
Amsterdam

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The more the buildup for war increases, so does the move to counter it. I may notice it more than others because the military port of Marchwood is close by. This week saw rainbow warriors attempting to obstruct the sailing of a military supply ship. A number of peace people locked themselves in some of the tanks. There is likely to be an appeal to the courts by Greenpeace and others. Whether this will turn out a waste of time and money, we should be permitted to challenge the decision to take others' lives. The war can't be described as American aggression because so many ordinary Americans are opposed.

**Activist**  
England

**...AND ACROSS THE NATION**

In the Hollywood anti-war march demonstrators were calling for Bush's impeachment and carried a sign "To Protest is Patriotic." The discontent is not only about Bush's war but about his ideology of "you are either for us or against us." Among the thousands of people of different colors and nationalities and different groups of the political spectrum, were many newcomers to any demonstration. They had their own messages that voiced expressions not heard in previous demonstrations in Los Angeles, and all rejecting the notion that the "war is inevitable." Masses of people are marching to stop the war from starting.

**Marchers**  
Los Angeles

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At the San Francisco demonstration, one of the best signs was made by the California Nurses Association. Along with a picture of the war weapons was this sign: "I asked for healthcare and all I got was this lousy stealth bomber."

**Marcher**  
San Francisco

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"Everybody has to pull their weight," says National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice commenting on the U.S. demand for Japan, Russia and China to negotiate with North Korea. Oh, so everyone has to pull their weight on that, but when it comes to Iraq, countries "pulling their weight" by not agreeing with the U.S. line are seen as trying to block the U.S.'s right to do as it pleases. Marx was right. Smash the state.

**Revolutionary youth**  
Memphis

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I have a sister in her 80s who has seldom taken much interest in politics, but with the war atmosphere created by Bush's determination to launch an attack against Iraq, she is terrified. I have never heard her speak against anything so passionately. She wanted to know if it was possible to impeach Bush before he plunges the world into a senseless war. "Nothing like this has happened in my lifetime," she said. "I can't believe this is happening in America."

**Old subscriber**  
Michigan

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I bought a copy of your paper at the Peace rally in Portland on Jan. 18 and want to subscribe. I don't consider myself a Marxist or a Humanist but the dialectic idea of looking at the world is what I have been looking for.

**New subscriber**  
Oregon

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You hear nothing in the media about

**READERS' VIEWS**

the "other Iraq." We need some specific information. The Iraqi National Congress held a conference in London in December. The Kurds were left out because the U.S. doesn't want to offend Turkey. We need to see how the Kurds are getting in the way of the U.S. and Hussein. Much of this is not mentioned in the official anti-war movement either.

**Lawyer**  
Flint

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We watch a lot of TV in this place. It's our window to the outside world. Mostly, I've been watching George Bush and Colin Powell rampaging about Iraq. Bush has sent tens of thousands of soldiers over there already and thousands of tons of military hardware. I can't imagine how much that all costs but I know that if we took that same amount of money and sent food and medicine to the people they claim they want to help there, it would be a lot better. I've fought wars in three different countries, and in every place I've found that the olive branch is more beneficial than the M-16.

**Prisoner**  
New Mexico

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While the streets are being filled with people who want it known they are not part of Bush's drive for war, the silence in Congress, especially from the Democrats, is deafening. It is just "business as usual" with no debate or discussion about the war Bush is about to unleash, much less what the aftermath will be. We are reaping what was sown when Bush was allowed to steal the White House two years ago without even the pretense of a fight from the Democrats.

**Outraged**  
Illinois

+++

I can remember how terrified Americans were of Goldwater when he ran for president and was referred to as the "shoot-from-the-hip" candidate linked to the danger of nuclear warfare. More recently we had Oliver North, described as a "loose cannon" whose reckless and criminal behavior in the Iran-Contra scandal reflected the fascistic totalitarian mentality. But compared with Bush's rabid war obsession, he makes Goldwater and North look like pacifists.

**Old Radical**  
Detroit

+++

I just read what the freedom-loving musician Beethoven wrote in 1804, when Napoleon proclaimed himself Emperor: "Now he, too, will trample on all the rights of man and indulge only his ambition...he will exalt himself above all others and become a tyrant!" It seems we have our own would-be emperor, George W. Bush, whose ambitions are far beyond those of Napoleon.

**Supporter**  
Wisconsin

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I'm glad there has been so much protest against the banning of Rabbi Michael Lerner from speaking at the anti-war rally in San Francisco by one of the rally organizers, ANSWER, which he has criticized. It is outrageous not only that he was banned for his particular views, despite the fact that he has been an outspoken critic of Israeli policy in the occupied territories and is widely

known to be among the most progressive of American rabbis. It is also outrageous that such a group as ANSWER could be vested with the power to ban him. There are plenty of reasons to criticize ANSWER, from their uncritical embrace of the genocidal beast Milosevic, to their incredible embrace of regimes like Kim Jong Il's as well as Saddam Hussein's. Are all those who criticized ANSWER now to be banned as well? The real issue in all this is that some prefer to argue about "Zionism" in order to murder revolutionary democracy.

**Gerard Emmett**  
Chicago

**WARY OF MEDIATION**

The community and worldwide support for the workers at Azteca Foods has finally forced the company to accept federal mediation in negotiations for their first contract. The workers have been walking a picket line since September in a strike over unjustified takeaways and the company's use of threats against them. But UE Local 1159 wants all their supporters to know that forcing the company to accept mediation doesn't guarantee them a fair contract. The national boycott of Azteca products is going to continue until they get one.

**Supporter**  
Chicago

**REMEMBERING KING**

I recently saw a tape of Martin Luther King's 1967 speech at Stanford. He talked of the need for a mass movement to unify a divided America. He said to have a mass movement you have to address some erroneous issues. That way of thinking doesn't exist in today's movements. King said time is neutral and won't solve the problem by itself. The reason he was so profound was because of the dimension of mind as mediation, and not an external party. He was out to rid us of erroneous notions of what constitutes freedom.



**Freedom activist**  
California

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I saw a letter written by Kathleen Desautels, one of the women serving a prison sentence for the protest against the "School of Assassins" this year. Her fellow inmates at the prison put up a display to celebrate Black History Month. It included a large poster of Martin Luther King Jr. which she said prompted her to recall King's "Declaration of Independence from the War in Vietnam" made at Riverside Church on April 4, 1967. He said: "When marches and computers, profits and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplet of racism, materialism and militarism are incapable of being conquered." "No wonder he was assassinated," she said. Like many of us she saw the recent protests revealing people beginning to act together to do what we cannot do alone.

**Long time activist**  
Illinois

**NIGHTCLUB TRAGEDY IN CHICAGO**

I can't see how the police can say they didn't know the E2 nightclub, where 21 people died in a stampede in February, was still operating. There's a police station six blocks away. You mean the police never noticed hundreds of people crowding into the club every weekend night? Also, everyone knows that off duty cops work as bouncers there. They had to know the place was operating.

**Furious**  
Chicago

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The Black business class is a very small and tight-knit group in this city. It's seen in how Jesse Jackson is a close friend of the owner of E2. I was once in E2 and saw the staircase where those

people died. It was so high and narrow, I couldn't see how you could walk down it safely after having a few drinks. But though the club changed names four times in the last 20 years, the owners did nothing but give it a new paint job.

**Black feminist**  
Chicago

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It's no secret why the disaster happened. The owners get \$25 a head on the weekend. They crowded in as many as they could to make as much money as they could. I was in the club once and it was so crowded I swore I wouldn't go back again. I'm glad I didn't.

**Black youth**  
South Side Chicago

**... THEREFORE, I AM**

Out of the malaise of my younger teenage years in the hate-filled, fearful fifties, sit-ins, picket lines, and years of massive demos taught me thought, organizing, the analytics and dialectics of Human Freedom, taught me the error of Rene Descartes, of his graphs and his logic-chopping as the way for human life.

Emergence was through sit-ins, Being through demos, Essence through seeking ever more change, seeking our power, free and transcendent.

We struggle, therefore, I am.

**Sam Friedman**  
New York

**ISRAEL AND PALESTINE**

After the last vote was counted in the election at the end of January, two more Knesset seats were gained by right-wing parties: Likud is now 38, and the National Religious Party, now 6. The two lost seats came from the Arab-Jewish Hadash party and the labor-oriented One Nation. And Labor retained a measly 18 seats in the Knesset.

As if we needed an illustration of the terrible tidings this bodes, it was soon followed by the razing of the Palestinian food market in Hebron. This completes the work of the settlers in that city, whose teenagers would regularly overturn Palestinian stalls and laugh, a grotesque Israeli version of Hitler Youth as soldiers look on. The army's explanation for the razing was that 22 Israelis had been killed by Palestinians in the Hebron area in the three months before. What they did not mention is that 155 Palestinians were killed by Israelis during the same period.

Yes, we do feel discouraged, which makes it all the more surprising that the next day we had a particularly large vigil of Women in Black and a full house at a meeting of Coalition of Women for Peace where we made plans for the coming 6 months. In a grand gesture of defiance to the election returns, we decided to hold a major international event in June, the anniversary of the occupation, to take place simultaneously in Israel, Palestine, and internationally, to declare that "we refuse to be enemies."

**Gila Svirsky  
Jerusalem**

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U.S. Representative David Bonior recently returned from Iraq and spoke at our church on Martin Luther King Day. We also learned that funds are being raised to support Palestinians whose homes have been bulldozed by the Israeli government. To rebuild, a \$25,000 permit is required. If the owner builds without it, the house is torn down again. At the same time, in some areas

there are duplex houses in which Palestinian and Jewish families live side by side. There is a long waiting list for them.

**Ray and Carol  
Detroit**

**PHILOSOPHIC FOUNDATIONS**

Every article in the December issue of *N&L* was excellent, but the one that intrigued me was a letter written on Oct. 20, 1960 called "Philosophic foundations of the struggles for freedom." I have never studied philosophy. However, I have for many years used logic to solve problems. Raya Dunayevskaya's statement that "the self-development of freedom as destiny of man that the future begins to pull on the present so strongly that it propels it forward" is what I call sound reasoning. That is the exact nucleus which develops true revolutionaries and freedom fighters. For there is no other logical explanation for their development. Of course, one can argue that revolutionaries and freedom fighters emerge from their oppression/conditions, but that doesn't explain those who fight for the liberation of all people regardless of their color, gender, race or sexual preference.

**Prisoner  
California**

**PATRIOT ACT II**

The news we are finally learning about a new Patriot Act II that has been secretly drafted by the Department of Justice is chilling. It is reported to include one provision that would empower the government to strip Americans of their citizenship if they participate in the lawful activities of any group that the attorney general labels "terrorist." It's important to know that the legal definition of domestic terrorism is now so broad it could include traditional forms of political protest like non-violent civil disobedience. Although it has not yet been officially released by the DOJ, a full copy of the draft was published by the Center for Public Integrity on Feb. 7 and can be read on [www.public-i.org](http://www.public-i.org). According to them, Ashcroft's staff prepared a draft on Jan. 9. Can there be any doubt

that it is a response to the ever-growing protests that have just seen millions marching to stop the war the Bush administration seems determined to wage, no matter what?

**Chilled to the bone  
New York**

**THE BUSH RECORD**

I thought Bush was just taking a cheap shot to appeal to Black Americans when he gave his State of the Union address with all that drama about fighting AIDS in Africa. There's no doubt about AIDS being a crisis in Africa. But he didn't say a word about the equally serious crisis of famine there. The truth is that the Farm Bill that Congress recently passed is absolutely devastating to the whole economy of Africa, subsidizing American farmers to the point where African farmers cannot sell their grain.

**Observer  
Detroit**

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Someone sent me this quote and asked me if it reminded me of someone we know: "It is enough that the people know there is an election. Those who cast the votes decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything." The quote was from Josef Stalin, although it sure sounded like it could have been President George W. Bush. Except Bush added a new twist. He made sure the votes were not counted, didn't he?

**Correspondent  
Illinois**

**MICHIGAN POOR VICTORY**

The Michigan Welfare Rights Organization has succeeded in reversing winter utility shut-offs in Detroit. You printed our letter in the January-February issue of *N&L*, describing the way we picketed DTE Energy and the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. Of the 28,000 homes where gas or electricity were shut off, DTE Energy has restored 24,000 to date. We made little progress with the Water Department until we threatened to picket the Board of Water Commissioners and department executives at

their homes. It takes acts to get results.  
**MWRO Activist  
Detroit**

**DEE BROWN**

Dee Brown, who just died at the age of 94, was the author of the 1970 *Bury My Heart at the Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*.



He told a story of U.S. history far different from what the movies told. His story told of the ruthless displacement of Native Americans by their white conquerors from 1860-90. As a review in *The New York Review of Books* put it when it was first published, "The Indian wars were shown to be the dirty murders they were." The book had a powerful impact on Indians. The title refers to the slaughter of 300 Sioux men, women and children at Wounded Knee in 1890. In 1973, a group of Sioux chose Wounded Knee to hold a protest against federal policies which resulted in a 71-day standoff with police and the death of two more Indians. The history Dee Brown wrote of is still an unfinished story.

**Reader  
Illinois**

**A FIGHT FOR JUSTICE THAT STILL KEEPS GOING**

As I write this, 680 days have passed with no justice for Timia Williams who was beaten by police for no reason. It will soon be two years since three attack dogs of the Chicago police in the person of three white male officers, brought injustice to her family. Even an adult gorilla has been seen to show more humanity than the Police Board, the OPS, and the superintendent Terry Hillard. If the law allowed Timia to treat them like she was treated, they would all be screaming bloody murder. But Timia would never lower herself to the level of those officers.

**George W. Smith Jr.  
Chicago**

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# The system ain't broke, and it can't be fixed

"In the government you call civilized, the happiness of the people is constantly sacrificed to the splendor of the empire. Hence the origin of your codes of criminal and civil laws; hence your dungeons and prisons. We have no prisons; we have no pompous parade of courts; we have no written laws, and yet judges are as highly revered among us as they are among you, and their decisions are as much regarded. We have among us no exalted villains above the control of our laws. Daring wickedness is here never allowed to triumph over helpless innocence. The estates of widows and orphans are never devoured by enterprising swindlers. We have no robbery under the pretext of law."

—Thayendanegea, Mohawk tribe (ca. 1742-1807)

With the historic events of the past month (especially former Illinois Governor George Ryan's pardons and/or sentence commutations for all condemned Illinois state prisoners) the current "hot topic" pendulum has swung stateside. This is encouraging news for prisoners as we ponder the conundrum of why so many Americans protest against U.S. foreign policy while simultaneously acquiescing to fascism here at home.

The primary misconception that I urge people to address is the notion that the criminal justice system has somehow "broken down" and may need to be fixed. As the castaways of this ultra-civilized society, prisoners realize this is reformist rhetoric. If left unchecked, it will lead to more status quo lip service and not much in the way of substantive reform, let alone abolition.

## Indiana prison hell

**Carlisle, Ind.**—The state of Indiana appears to be up to its old tricks again. Preparations are underway for building a new prison plantation where the state's most dangerous prisoners can be warehoused. I was told this on the day they recently decided to boot me out of the "Supermax" control unit in Westville.

The Secured Housing Unit counselor, where I am now, advised me that if I would stop writing so much about my struggle with the Indiana Department of Corrections, my situation would probably change drastically. She was trying to make me feel that I am causing them to keep me in total isolation by exposing the deplorable living conditions throughout the Indiana prison system.

The Department of Corrections sent me to the Carlisle facility as a countermeasure to block my constant networking with the outside. They can monitor everything I do through a camera focused on my cell at all times. They are reading and withholding legal documents and other critical mail that shows support for those like myself who are speaking out against their repression. They are allowing me only 20 minutes, once a week, for phone calls.

There are no windows for me to look to the outside, meant to damage my mental stability, yet I will remain strong, but I will need support in the free world. Currently we are preparing a civil class action suit to challenge existing policies and procedural violations. The two control units in the state, "Supermax" and the S.H.U., must be put under tough scrutiny by all progressive groups in the Midwest. This is so that the prisoners who are dying or being severely beaten by these racist people will not be overlooked, and also so they can feel strong and confident in a reliable base of support.

They may have moved me to disrupt the organized efforts, hoping the men left behind would give up their fight. Those men still need our continued support. Supporters, working as a team, are all that the racist, arrogant people running the prisons will understand. So let's build a strong solidarity committee to challenge the control units.

Anyone may write a letter demanding my release into the general prison population and send it to J. Mulroony, Superintendent of WVCF, PO Box 500, Carlisle, IN 47838, or call him at 812 398 5050.

—Khalvani M. Khalidun

## Argentine masses: 'All politicians, out!'

The man the Argentinian masses have accused of destroying their economy while he was president during the 1990s, Carlos Menem, plans to win the next presidential elections, scheduled for April 27. He has declared from his safe haven in Miami that the solution to the country's ongoing revolts of *piqueteros*, occupied factories, and neighborhood assemblies, is to "saturate" the streets with the military.

**Menem will have a tough time achieving his goal. The currently ruling Partido Justicialista is deeply divided over who should stand as their candidate. More importantly, the mass movement that arose Dec. 20, 2001, which continues to identify itself (in part) through the slogan "que se vayan todos" (all politicians out) considers Menem's plans a slap in the face.**

Whether Menem ends up as the PJ candidate or they find someone else, it's clear that the bourgeoisie has grown desperate for a way to put an end to the protests.

Unfortunately, the mass movement has gotten no nearer to proposing an alternative to PJ rule. The third national meeting of neighborhood assemblies that met

Any study of the past 500 years of imprisonment in America will indicate that "The System" is performing exactly the function it was implemented to perform—namely the criminalization, punishment, warehousing and murder of former slaves and all other dregs of a pristine, civilized society.

In addition to the stiflingly repressive conditions of confinement (across-the-board) experienced by prisoners, a major factor largely overlooked is that the injustices and criminal acts perpetrated against capital defendants by the "justice" system (in other words, the set-ups, coerced confessions, ineffective assistance of counsel, prosecutorial misconduct, judicial activism, and so on) are in fact perpetrated against each and every poor criminal defendant in the U.S.

**If people continue to take part in the scam that "The System" was implemented to serve and protect the people and that U.S. courts of law are fact-finding bodies whose purpose is to adjudicate cases by the concepts of impartiality and fairness, anyone can arrive at the preposterous conclusion that the system is broke and needs to be fixed.**

Aaron Patterson was kidnapped off the streets, tortured by cops (even though his dad was a cop and tried to intervene on his behalf) and sentenced to death without one single piece of evidence (other than a

## Kenyan dissident



Koigi wa Wamwere, left, and Safiya Bukhari at human rights event in Oslo, 1999.

(Continued from page 1)

Land reform won't hurt just one race in Kenya; the large landowners are both Black and white. One man owns 140,000 acres, and he doesn't even cultivate it since the price of sisal fell. He has not paid his farm workers for six years, yet he won't allow them to grow food on the land.

If foreign governments will not support us, then we ask for the people's support. In the U.S. today, people are also fighting for democracy. I hear about detentions, tapping telephones, reporting on your neighbors—this is the same terror that we went through. We can tell you what a police state means—it is terrible.

We should form one world force fighting for democracy all over. Dictators are the same all over, and they help each other. People in the West can help us by helping yourselves. The human condition is infectious; when you walk among free people, you feel freer yourself. We need to consolidate our victory, and we need all the assistance we can get.

My constituency is 95% poor, especially since the economy collapsed. Today farmers are not even picking their coffee or tea because the price is so low that it's not worth selling. Instead people are growing maize and potatoes for their own consumption. Only 5% have work that earns them three meals a day.

My constituents start coming to my house at five in the morning to seek help with their problems. Many are seeking school fees for their children and for the many AIDS orphans. Secondary school costs about \$450 per year. For them, I've started the Subukia Scholarship Fund. Please send donations to Kenya Commercial Bank, Nakuru Branch, P.O. Box 18, Nakuru, Kenya, account no. 200776351. The bank's sort code is 01-103 and swift code is KCBLKENX.

on Feb. 1 only attracted 150 people.

**There are still about 100 factories that are under workers' control, but these too seem to be on the defensive. Workers at the Brukman plant, for example, were ousted by the police in November, re-occupied it in December, and are bracing for more of the same. Their predicament is revealed by their formal proposal, issued to the government in early February, demanding "stratification under workers' control." There is no explanation how they will retain control if the current State becomes the owners.**

The Bush Administration, for its part, has appointed a new ambassador to Argentina, the Cuban-born rightist Lino Gutierrez. The choice of Gutierrez as well as the timing leaves no doubt as to U.S. intentions, given his ties to the conservative Cubans in Miami who played an important role in the Menem government. He intervened in the Nicaraguan electoral process in late 2001 when Bush was desperate to ensure that former Sandinista president Ortega not win.

—Mitch Weerth

coerced signature to a cop-written confession). And Miguel Castillo rots in prison for 17 years for a murder on the streets of Chicago (though at the time Castillo was in the Cook County Jail serving a 60-day misdemeanor sentence).

**These are not merely minor glitches, to be worked out, nor are they even major and fundamental flaws, but rather the intended results of an inherently corrupt, classist, racist system that has conditioned people into viewing the torture of others as some sort of spectator sport. Furthermore, these outrageous and blatant examples of corruption and criminality (by the system) are not the exception (as the media alludes) but rather the rule.**

In my own case, the cops, prosecutor, my well-paid yet highly incompetent defense attorney, and the judge decided that a radical political activist and former political prisoner should not have the legal right to protect his wife or himself from an armed attack by three drug-addled assailants. To add insult to injury, as further punishment I was sentenced to the maximum extended term for having the integrity to refuse their "deal" of the taking the minimum sentence in exchange for a guilty plea.

Whatever reason, George Ryan made the radical move of breaking ranks with his former co-conspirators, perhaps because with the heat on his own back, he decided he might as well return fire on the way out the back door. In any event, it cannot be said enough that this is in fact the only break in their system.

We need to move quickly and decisively in support of a nationwide death penalty moratorium and real, concrete changes within the judicial system, as well as significant relief from the extremely repressive conditions within the prison system. The alternative leaves people in the precarious position of having to bear the brunt of the reactionary backlash by the ultra-Right.

—Richard M. Flood

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## BLACK/RED VIEW

(Continued from page 1)

to an African-American audience of doctors, lawyers, college presidents and businessmen. In August 1948 he told that audience that "Karl Marx stressed the fact that not merely the upper class but the mass of men were the real people of the world." Therefore, DuBois said, "my Talented Tenth must be more than talented, and work not simply as individuals [but] to sacrifice and plan for such economic revolution in industry and just distribution of wealth, as would make the rise of our group possible" (quote in David Levering Lewis' biography of W. E. B. DuBois, p. 538).

Such declarations don't prove that DuBois understood the revolutionary philosophy of Marx, but they do show that he knew that the unchained activity of the African-American masses is crucial in any struggle against racism and the social and physical brutality needed to maintain it. The middle-class African-American audience did not appreciate this and "left him sitting alone on a campus bench" after the talk.

Although DuBois, who was educated at Harvard and the University of Berlin, did grasp the internal conservatism lurking in a majority of African-American intellectuals back then, his criticism hasn't brought about any great change in the thoughts or in the activities of most of the African Americans connected with the stellar universities of this country today.

### CULTURE OF FREEDOM, OR GAIN?

For example Henry Louis Gates Jr., in *The Future of the Race*, a book he co-wrote with Cornel West, claims: "The nature and size of this new black middle class is significant here because of what it says about patronage and the economics of black art: whereas the Harlem Renaissance writers were almost totally dependent upon the whim of white patrons who marketed their work to the predominantly white readership, the sales of some of the most phenomenally successful black authors (such as Terry McMillan, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison and Alice Walker) are being sustained to an unprecedented degree by black readers."

Here Gates becomes irrational. On one hand, he transforms a social condition of poverty into an economic agent that creates monetary profits for white publishing companies and some royalties for Black writers. And then he, consciously or unconsciously, demeans the historic Harlem Renaissance as if it was a hidden white agenda and not really the birth of a new Black self-consciousness, itself aware of the great role that African Americans played in creating the universal culture of this American civilization. Gates, at Harvard, is a manifestation of the culture.

Intellectuals at Harvard can entertain ideas of a self-sustaining independent Black culture. However culture comes out of the life and struggles of people fighting for freedom, who in the process create culture that speaks to all and sustains everyone's aspiration for freedom.

African-American culture can and has become universal by this process. But an attempt to separate culture from its source in the struggle for freedom is doomed to make it no more than an intellectual exercise that fits into the bourgeois world without solving any of the problems of poverty and social dislocation.

## EDITORIAL U.S. militarization of space

The disintegration of the space shuttle Columbia evoked shock not only at the deaths of the seven crew members but at bureaucratic complacency over safety problems, as news stories revealed that prior warnings had been rejected or covered up. Why is crew safety taken so lightly at a time when space—at least, using space for war—is so high on the government's agenda?

In the wake of the 1986 explosion of the Challenger, NASA was supposed to have become zealously devoted to safety. However, several reports in recent years have spotlighted dangerous corner-cutting on maintenance of the aging shuttles. During the same period the safety and maintenance workforce at NASA was cut by one-third. The remaining shuttle workforce "shows signs of overwork and fatigue," according to a government report. In 2001 five members of NASA's safety advisory panel were fired while preparing a report critical of inadequate maintenance and safety funding and practices.

### DECREPIT CAPITALISM

NASA's five shuttles were designed to operate for 10 years or 100 flights. With Columbia's destruction after 21 years of use, only three are left. This decaying fleet reflects the decrepit state of capitalism. One result of the collapse of the high-tech economy in 2000 was a sudden glut of capacity in the satellite market. Private space businesses and NASA scrambled to cut costs, and, as always in capitalist production, human beings bore the brunt in the service of almighty capital.

NASA was already in bad shape, never having fully recovered from the 1986 Challenger disaster, which reduced its military and commercial customers to seek more reliable means of launching their equipment into space. Left without any significant mission, the space shuttle became little more than a welfare program for military contractors, who receive hundreds of millions of dollars each year the shuttles remain in operation.

But even as the space shuttle program's budget has been stalled, the military's space program has been well-funded and growing, because it is a foremost element of the U.S. strategy to perpetuate its global military and economic dominance. Which is why the seven dead seemed a mere aside in Bush's first callous statement: "While we grieve the loss of these astronauts, the cause of which they died will continue. America's journey into space will go on." At the same time, his spokesman made it clear that any mourning would not delay his timetable for war against Iraq by one second.

Few things could be more frightening than Bush's rush to carry on an "us against the world" arms race. Reagan's "Star Wars," ostensibly ended under the first President Bush, lived on through the Clinton administration, and now the militarization of space has

returned to high gear.

Militarization of space dates back to 1960, when the first U.S. spy satellite began operating. The space shuttle itself has always been a joint program of NASA and the Air Force. One-third of the flights in its first 10 years performed military missions, many of them shrouded in secrecy. Sean O'Keefe, appointed by Bush to head NASA, called for "a more direct association between the Defense Department and NASA," adding that there cannot be a differentiation between military and other applications. The Air Force will play a decisive part in designing the successor to the space shuttle, and the key requirements will clearly revolve around supporting the new version of "Star Wars."

Modern warfare is coordinated from space using satellites for communications, mapping and spying. Global Positioning Systems were developed for military purposes, and have guided projectiles to their targets in all U.S. wars since Iraq 1991, including bombing villages in Afghanistan and committing assassinations in Yemen. Currently, about \$20 billion is openly spent per year on military and intelligence space programs, plus billions more for secret programs.

The largest program in Bush's immense 2004 military budget is the "son of Star Wars," the Missile Defense Agency, slated for a staggering \$9.1 billion. Also included are a "space test bed" to deploy weapons in space for the first time, and the first flight of a complete anti-missile laser system.

### BUSH'S STAR WARS

The Pentagon envisions a vastly intensified militarization of space, including military space planes, anti-satellite weapons and ballistic missile systems. Space-based lasers and other weapons would be powered by on-board nuclear reactors. Numerous planning documents call for "domination and control" of space. Most brutally, Senator Bob Smith declared that space "is our manifest destiny," letting fly the phrase used 150 years ago to justify conquest and territorial expansion by the U.S. through genocide of Native American peoples, war on Mexico, and threats against Canada.

Bush is determined to let nothing stand in the way of total domination of the earth, the seas, the sky and space, whether it be the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which he explicitly abrogated; or the Outer Space Treaty reserving space for "peaceful purposes," whose reaffirmation by the United Nations the U.S. refused to vote for; or even China's threat to respond to the U.S. by "the extension of the arms race into space." Bush's insane vision of turning the entire planet—and more—into a battlefield must be stopped.



## Indonesia violates peace accords with Aceh

The Indonesian government arrested Muhammad Nazar, the chairman of SIRA (Aceh Referendum Information Center) on Feb. 12, indicating a renewed crackdown on peaceful organizations that seek to end the military repression and advocate a referendum on Aceh's status.

The government and the Free Aceh guerrilla movement (GAM) signed peace accords Dec. 9 that were supposed to end killing in the province and restore the right to conduct meetings and demonstrations, but so far neither provision has been realized. A few weeks after the accords were signed, SIRA held its first above ground meeting in some time, and soon after that, the police came for Nazar in the middle of the night.

Nazar, his wife and child were sleeping when seven policemen with long-barrel guns leaped over fences and broke into the house. Handcuffed and wearing only shorts without a shirt, he was taken to the Banda Aceh Regency Police office at gunpoint. Nazar is accused of attending a rally in January without a permit, even though a permit is not supposed to be necessary under the accords, only that the police be informed. It was not even a SIRA rally; he was an invited speaker at the illegal rally organized by SURA, an organization of Acehese Ulama.

But the police had another more serious allegation: "The accused has mobilized and provoked the masses since January," said Adj. Sr. Comr. Sayed Husaini, spokesman for the Aceh Police. "It is part of acts of treason," they said. If he is tried for treason, Nazar could receive life in prison.

Two years ago the government tried him for "inciting hatred and hostility against the government" for his political activity in promoting a peaceful settlement in Aceh. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison and served 10 months. Other Aceh activists are also in danger, including Kautzar bin Muhammad Yus, who spoke at a peace demonstration with Nazar in Lhokse-

umawe, in the oil and gas producing region, in January (see January-February *N&L*).

Aceh Police Chief Inspector General Bahrumsyah accused both men of aiding GAM, in spite of their advocacy of non-violence. "They were talking about referendum and freedom for Aceh," Bahrumsyah said. "We must take action against them. There's no other choice." Kautzar stated, "What we said reflected the Acehese people's aspirations to human rights and democracy."

On Feb. 16, three more SIRA Presidium members were summoned for police interrogation. It thus appears that the government is intensifying a campaign to wipe out SIRA. SIRA was founded by various civil society groups and helped sponsor an Acehese student and youth

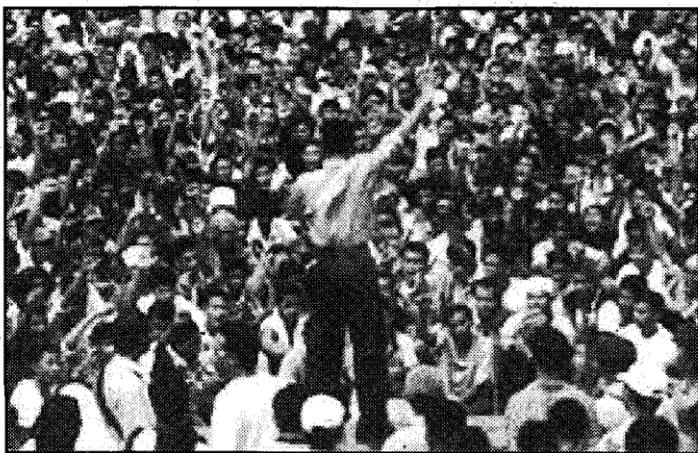
congress in 1999.

Over the past few years, as mass grassroots organizations have emerged in Aceh, many non-violent activists were killed after being arrested or abducted by the military. Just before the ceasefire agreement was signed, on Nov. 30, 2002, Musliadi, a coordinator of the Coalition for West Aceh Students Movement and SIRA member, was abducted by six armed plainclothes men and later found tortured to death.

SIRA is seeking help for Nazar's release from the Joint Security Committee that is monitoring the peace accords, but that body has little power against the Indonesian government. The Joint Security Committee recently reported three serious violations of the ceasefire by the government and one by GAM, but it lacks a mechanism to sanction either group. The official monitoring team has only 150 monitors. Indonesia must be exposed, and Nazar must be saved!

Please write the chief of police for Aceh, Inspector General Bahrumsyah, and fax to 011 62 651 22488. To get involved in Aceh support work in the U.S., contact Aceh Center, PO Box 6356, Harrisburg, PA 17112.

—Compiled by Anne Jaclard



The spirit of referendum: Muhammad Nazar speaking to thousands of Acehese people on Nov. 8, 2002.

## Biopharming or bio-harming?

Have you had your drugs on the cob today? Welcome to the world of "biopharming": engineering of crops to produce drugs or industrial chemicals.

Last fall, a company called ProdiGene was linked to two incidents of contamination involving corn plants altered to produce a vaccine for pigs. The genetically modified (GM) corn cross-pollinated corn grown for food nearby. In a separate field, GM corn sprouted the year after it was supposedly removed, and was harvested together with soybeans intended for the food supply. In either case a drug whose effects on humans are unknown could have ended up in our stomachs.

ProdiGene has been producing insecticides and industrial chemicals in GM corn since 1997. Biotechnology promoters project that 10% of U.S. corn production will be pharmaceutical crops by 2010, and hundreds of thousands of acres are already growing pharmaceutical corn and soybeans. Fields are being turned into industrial chemical and drug factories.

Opposition to biopharming is mainly focused on the possible contamination of food with chemicals never meant to be eaten, which was declared a real possibility by a panel of the National Academy of Sciences—no radical group.

Environmental and consumer groups have long been critical of agribusiness pressing ahead with GM crops without any real testing of the ecological and human health effects. In the wake of the ProdiGene incidents, farmers and food manufacturers have become alarmed about biopharming adulterating the food supply, which would hurt their business.

Biotech companies rejected food manufacturers' pleas for drugs to be grown only in non-food crops, since they believe corn and soybeans provide the lowest cost of production. Cheapening production is the whole reason for biopharming—to produce drugs and chemicals more cheaply than could be done in factories. That's why biotech companies have been pushing recklessly ahead at breakneck speed without doing the necessary research to identify threats to human and ecological health.

That's why their experimental crops are grown in open fields, even though seeds and pollen can be carried substantial distances by wind, water, storms or animals. The only way to avoid this means of contamination of food crops is to use non-food crops grown in closed greenhouses—but that would cost more. To date, 315 tests have grown GM drug crops on thousands of acres, nearly all close to food crop fields.

Agribusiness firms are allowed to keep secret what genes they are adding to crops, what experimental crops they are growing and where. Even neighboring farmers do not have a right to know. How many cases of contamination have gone undetected? Biotech companies assure us that they are taking the necessary precautions. As if these things can really be contained! Remember the StarLink fiasco? GM corn never approved for human consumption was found in about 300 food products, leading to a massive recall. An executive from the company that genetically engineered the corn later admitted that it will never be possible to eliminate StarLink from the food supply.

It's no wonder biopharming companies are keeping a low profile. They're worried about the outrage when people find out how their food has been tampered with. Already genetic engineering has quietly crept up on us to the point where 70% of processed food in the U.S. contains GM ingredients. In capitalist society, unless massive social opposition makes itself felt, any technology that can cheapen capital's production costs will tend to be pushed to its most frightening consequences.

—Franklin Dmitryev

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# Is anti-war movement ready for war and—its aftermath?

(Continued from page 1)

especially high. British Prime Minister Tony Blair has taken every opportunity to express support for George Bush's war aims and has effectively served as the war's most articulate proponent. Anti-war activists hoped that a huge turnout in the British capital would help to check Blair's efforts on behalf of the U.S. drive to war.

The London police made plans for the demonstration difficult by initially forbidding a gathering in Hyde Park. They were forced to relent however and a million people—London's largest protest ever—are reported to have marched. A large protest took place as well outside of a Labor Party event in Glasgow at which Blair was speaking.

New York City was the site of the main U.S. demonstration and despite extremely cold weather and the denial of a permit to march past the UN building, at least a half a million demonstrators took part. The protesters—many of whom traveled great distances to participate—had to cope with aggressive police efforts to prevent them from moving freely around the city.

In Chicago, a large protest was held in the heart of the city's Indian and Pakistani communities. Organizers specifically condemned the upcoming Immigration and Naturalization Service deadline for the registration of Pakistani men as a repressive and racist move. San Francisco, Los Angeles and numerous other cities across the U.S. hosted protests as well. Even small towns and suburbs of cities that had large protests held their own modest, but significant demonstrations to oppose the drive to war.

Other notable protests took place in Toronto, Mexico City, and Sao Paulo, Brazil. In Tel Aviv, a demonstration of Israeli Jews and Arabs took place that numbered 2,000.

That demonstration, and the long series of similar ones at other trade and economic meetings in its wake, truly seemed to represent a qualitative development in a world seemingly dominated by a resurgent free market capitalism. The decentralized and global nature of the movement, the process by which it made its plans and decisions and the content of its lively protests caught the world's attention and inspired renewed efforts at radical critique of existing social arrangements.

The September 2001 attacks, however, seemed to throw the movement out of balance. The authoritarian and militaristic response of the U.S. and other state powers seemed to discourage diversity and discussion within the movements opposed to those repressive measures. Long-existing political tendencies uneasy with the anti-globalization movement's transparency and unsuccessful in attempts to try to lead it were now back on more familiar ground. Their influence in the anti-war movement increased and the memory of the energy of the anti-globalization movement diminished somewhat.

## CONTINUITY OR DISCONTINUITY OF MOVEMENTS?

The international gathering most closely associated with the movement, the World Social Forum held for three years running in Porto Alegre, Brazil to counter the annual World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, served as something of a barometer of this development. The first Social Forum provided an arena for discussion for many of the figures and trends of the movement. The third one—held earlier this year and so the first to be held under the administration of Lula da Silva—was easily the largest one yet. While its organizers proclaimed it a success, it was harshly criticized by writer and anti-globalization activist Naomi Klein as having been "hijacked" by the leaders of the Latin

American electoral left.

The European Social Forum, directly inspired by the Porto Alegre gathering and held last year in Florence, Italy was well attended, but organized almost entirely by elements attached to left organizations, including successors of official Communist parties.

The anti-globalization movement possessed such vitality before the period of war and terror inaugurated by the attacks of Sep. 11, 2001 that no one can say its potential has been lost. It remains to be seen how-

in Baghdad's Al-Amiriyah neighborhood by a stray missile on Feb. 13, 1991—which killed 400 people—takes place cannot be ruled out.

So in place of a war, the anti-war movement may be confronted with a massive humanitarian disaster, compounded by a political situation in which the aspirations of the Iraqi people for a more democratic system than the one they have been subjected to come into conflict with U.S. military rule aimed at achieving a substantial restructuring of the political order of the region. While the 1991 nationwide insurrection of both Kurds and Arabs against Ba'ath Party rule after Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War was put down with great violence, the desire for freedom behind it is not likely to have disappeared with the revolt's repression.

The scenario facing the anti-war movement may not be unlike that leading up to and following the U.S. war against Taliban rule in Afghanistan. The bombing and the civilian casualties it produced were rightly condemned. Interest in the war's aftermath, however, in which the conditions facing women, children and the rural poor have remained dismal

under the rule of regional warlords has not so far developed into a meaningful movement of solidarity. So what in this extremely complex situation should the anti-war movement do? There are statements circulating, such as the one authored by the New York-based Campaign for Peace and Democracy called "We oppose Both Saddam Hussein and the U.S. War on Iraq" that chart out the beginnings of a foundation for a viable movement for solidarity with Iraq's people. Distributing and discussing them would be a contribution towards sharpening the anti-war movement's analysis of what confronts it. While the great distance and the scale of the need involved make the provision of material aid in the aftermath of the conflict by the anti-war movement difficult, perhaps some way to overcome these obstacles—such as the organization of sister city programs—could be conceived and carried out. Efforts could be made to organize speaking tours for activists of the Iraqi opposition and victims of oppression by the Ba'ath Party regime such as Kurds or the Marsh Arabs, whose unique and remarkable homelands in the south of the country were intentionally dried up and depopulated by the government as retribution for participation in the 1991 rebellion. Delegations of activists or interested persons could visit Iraq's cities and villages and bring back firsthand accounts of the struggle to rebuild a country that has suffered so much due to authoritarian government, international economic sanctions and the lust of the world market for the country's chief commodity, oil. None of these undertakings would be easy, but the situation confronting the anti-war movement is not an easy one, either. The energy and depth of feeling displayed in the massive outpourings of the weekend of Feb. 15 shows that a huge reservoir of talent and creativity exists within the movement. This potential is more than enough to sharpen, redirect and renew the effort to oppose a war that may have a disastrous impact on the people of Iraq and attempt to contribute towards the future of those same people.



Anti-war actions (clockwise from top left) during the Feb. 15 weekend: San Francisco youth in mass protest; young people step out in Memphis, Tenn.; New York protesters challenge police presence; Chicago protest in Pakistani and Indian neighborhood against attacks on immigrant communities.

ever, if its critique of the world trend toward the curbing of state economic intervention and regulation can develop and mature in a period in which the state's drive for security and repression may actually serve to put a brake on further liberalization.

## WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

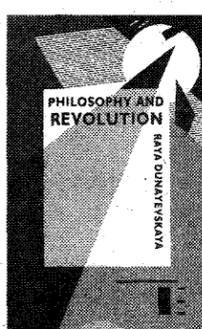
The anti-war movement has two enormous challenges before it. It faces, first, a war that seems to be impending despite the hopes of the millions who marched the weekend of Feb. 15. Second, the movement faces an aftermath to war that may prove to be worse than the actual fighting.

The rule of Iraq's Ba'ath Party, dominated by Saddam Hussein, is extremely fragile and has little chance of withstanding the U.S. military onslaught threatening it. The Iraqi army is much weaker than it was in its previous conflict with the U.S., and the morale of its regular troops is rumored to be low as well. Crucial to any military conflict is the reaction of the civilian population, and it is likely that the Iraqi populace will do no more than seek to stay out of the way of invading troops. While no one knows exactly how the events of the next few weeks will unfold, it is possible that the anti-war movement will not get much of a war to oppose.

What is more certain is what a writer in the *Economist* referred to as the "unusual vulnerability of the civilian population." By this was meant in part the total dependence of people upon the state for food rations. No state means—temporarily, at least—no food.

Furthermore, most civilian casualties directly resulting from the 1991 war were a consequence of the devastation wreaked upon Iraq's water and power infrastructure. A similar or more intense aerial bombardment this time could have dire effects on systems that were never fully rebuilt after the initial destruction. The impact of this scenario on already overtaxed Iraqi hospitals could be catastrophic. And the chance that a repetition of the destruction of the bomb shelter

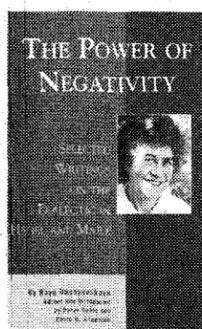
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—Patricia Altenbernd Johnson, University of Dayton



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# Millions over the globe oppose Bush's war on Iraq

## New York City

More than half a million people turned out for a massive anti-war rally, Feb. 15, in New York City, joining the issues of stopping Bush's war machine and confronting the mounting threat of a U.S. police state. A permit to march past the UN was denied by the city, with the denial upheld by the federal courts as a "security hazard." Then, a permit to march at all was denied.

The rally took place on First Avenue and extended uptown from a few blocks north of the UN — which the city powers assiduously separated us from. But as whole subway cars filled with demonstrators flowed out of the Lexington Avenue subway station to reach the rally site a few blocks east, they were blocked by police barricades. The enormous crowds were told by the police to walk many blocks further uptown to gain access to First Avenue. Ironically we were not given a permit to march but nevertheless were marched all over the place.

Not surprisingly, a tense scene developed as the crowds swelled but were prevented from reaching the destination some had traveled long distances to reach. There were many busloads of demonstrators from New England states and upstate New York.

The News and Letters Committees wanted to use an empty side street to walk one block further to reach the rally. A dozen police blocked our way. When I argued that the side street was empty and did not obey instructions to immediately move uptown, a cop took me by the shoulders and firmly turned me around. The chant, "Whose street? — our street" was raised as we stopped traffic and essentially, briefly, controlled the streets of the fancy Sutton Place section of Manhattan.

The police caused a security hazard when they rode horses into the protesters who had taken over the avenues, forcing us to retreat onto the sidewalk. They then threatened to arrest us for obstructing the sidewalks, after they had forced us there.

Roughly 70 feeder marches fed into the rally site. We met a small youth contingent in Union Square. Most were students at an alternative high school, School of the Future, who had come with the teacher who had urged them to join the rally. Educators for Social Responsibility and other teachers marched with signs that read, "Study war no more."

Almost every demonstrator carried his or her own sign. One mocked "King George." A man identified himself as "Mister Mainstream." A teenager's sign said: "There was a war sense of camaraderie, a sense that we were in this together. The fact that so many had written their own message represented a combination of both collective resistance and individual imagination. Marx referred to phenomena such as this as expressing "the social individual" in his 1844 *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*.

A Marxist-Humanist contingent carried a banner which read: "No to war and terrorism! For a new human society!"

There was a scattering of people of color at the demonstration but not a concentrated number, and very few Hispanics who now constitute the largest "minority" group in the U.S. The rally stretched uptown from East 49th Street to 72nd Street. Archbishop Desmond Tutu called for "Peace! Peace! Peace!" Let America listen to the rest of the world — and the rest of the world is saying, "Give the inspectors time."

—Eli Messinger

## San Francisco

Between 200,000 and 300,000 people demonstrated here against the war on Feb. 16. It was remarkable because this march came a day after millions demonstrated around the world.

There were sizable labor contingents in this march against Bush's attacks on workers especially in the recent use of Taft-Hartley in the west coast ILWU lock-out. Representatives from many groups contrasted the drive to war with neglect at home — from nurses raising healthcare issues to teachers concerned with education. In general, people wanted to make a statement because of what the new pre-emptive war policy says about our country. Many signs like one that read "Osama bin Forgotten" questioned the rationale for Bush's fixation on Iraq just now when the inspections are going forward and most of the world opposes his adventure.

Iranians carried a large banner proclaiming "Iranians against war and oppression." Given Iraq's attack on Iran a decade ago (when Hussein was doing the U.S.'s bidding), it was a great show of solidarity, recognizing perhaps the two worlds in each country: Iraq's ruler may have attacked Iran, but most Iraqis should not suffer the ravages of war.

People of color were well represented throughout the march and several Asian and Middle Eastern groups formed a block of about 700, moving to the beat of a thunderous samba drum-line at one end and a corps of hand drummers at the other.

A small band of Japanese Americans carried poster-sized photos of Japanese immigrants undergoing INS re-registration circa 1940, and of Japanese Americans being processed for detention after the Pearl Harbor attack. The captions read, respectively, "It didn't work then, it doesn't work now" and "Never Again."

While many still believe that even huge sustained marches may not prevent the war, there is hope that the depth of opposition to this war even before it starts cannot be ignored.

—Bay Area participants

## Detroit

People from the Detroit metropolitan area joined millions more around the world on Feb. 15 in an anti-war march. Despite cold and wind (one woman's sign read "Freezing for Peace") peace and labor activists,

high school and college students and many others concerned with justice and human rights came out to march. The line stretched almost a half mile; nearly half the participants were barred from the rally inside Cobo Convention Center once the capacity of 1,500 was reached.

The march had almost no publicity in the city, and very few Black Detroiters were present. A small group of Iraqi-Americans carried signs reading "No to war; No to Saddam; Yes to the people of Iraq." I heard some of the march organizers complaining

that their signs did not say "Down with Bush!" They want to build the anti-war movement but cannot understand the concept as formulated by those most immediately affected. Marxist-Humanists, on the other hand, will seek to reach those in the largest Arab-American community in the U.S. who oppose war and the horrors Saddam Hussein has been getting away with since the first George Bush resuscitated him after the 1991 Gulf War.

—Susan Van Gelder

## Front groups subvert anti-war movement

by Brown Douglas

A growing debate in the anti-war movement today is about front groups — political organizations or "coalitions" that arise from other organizations, but with the relationship hidden. This is done for many reasons, and they all reek of Vanguardism, authoritarianism, and counter revolution.

### ANTI-WAR ORGANIZATION

The front group being talked about and debated in today's anti-war movement is International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) and its parent organization the International Action Center (IAC). These two organizations are part of the Workers World Party (WWP), a neo-Stalinist organization. Among some of its reactionary political positions are the support of the Chinese government during the Tiananmen Square massacre; support of Slobodan Milosevic, the Yugoslav war criminal, and more recently heaping praise upon the North Korean Stalinist dictatorship of Kim Jong Il as an heroic "independent socialist system" that is fighting U.S. imperialism tooth and nail.

With political stances like these, it is unsurprising to see that on an organizational level, A.N.S.W.E.R. and IAC display some abhorrent tactics that alienate many activists from working with them. They have been widely accused of taking over events not organized by them and claiming them as their own. They've also been known to buy up all the permits of likely protest spots before an event, and then dole them out to other organizations with the condition of signing on to an A.N.S.W.E.R. demonstration, thus creating many of these so-called "coalitions." The anarchist website infoshop.org has a thorough and interesting critique of these "left" groups and the role they have so far played in the anti-war movement.

What I'm concerned about is what happens to an anti-war movement that allows itself to be infiltrated by these groups and the ideas that accompany them. Some activists caution us to put aside our differences for now while we all get together to try and stop a war, as if the differences aren't important. Others recognize that these groups are suspect, but feel powerless in resisting or don't feel that it's as important as resisting the impending war.

I would say that the most pressing and important contradictions to work out in any social movement

## Memphis

On Feb. 15, in solidarity with peace activists the world over, we held one of the biggest political actions this city has seen in years. Over 250 came to demonstrate against Bush's war plans at a rally that was often joyous and at the same time completely serious. Homemade signs spoke of people's fears, hope, and their profound mistrust of Bush and his administration. One sign said simply, "Ashcroft must go." Another expressed what so many fear: "In every war there is a Hiroshima waiting to happen." A young girl held a sign reading, "Iraqi people are our brothers and sisters."

There was a sign made to look like an American flag but in place of stars they had written "Duct 'N Cover," comparing the completely ineffectual advice to duct-tape plastic sheeting over doors and windows as a way to protect against chemical and biological weapons, to how children were told to duck and cover their heads in the 1950s as a way to protect themselves from a nuclear bomb.

The speakers included a war veteran, a women's liberationist, an environmental justice activist, a Muslim cleric, peace activists, and a liberation theologian. All were well received because this was a crowd looking for answers and ways to move forward. All of us there realized that one demonstration will not do it, that we're in it for the long haul.

—Women's liberation and peace activist

## London

I have never experienced anything like it in my life. A carnival feeling was present in the anti-war march, Feb. 15. The size of the march was said to be between one and two million. The age and makeup of the crowds all made it special. There was an army of speakers and I did not stay to listen to them all. When Tariq Ali said there was a need for a change of regime here in Britain, he was greeted with much enthusiasm.

One of the things I noted about the march was the high representation of people of colour. Another was the energy and vocal nature of the women present.

But the anti-war movement is being led by some people with questionable reasons. The march provided a table for Charles Kennedy to put out his wares of parliamentary democracy and electoralism.

There was much to ponder as I nearly tripped over an elderly homeless woman begging on the underpass. Thoughts of the nature of state power and how and when might the rank and file come in on their own. One had a glimpse of this great and immense power made all the worse as a stage army. There must be a battle ahead for the ideology and the direction of the anti-war movement.

—Pat Duffy

## YOUTH

comes from within that same movement. Resolving these contradictions is vital if there is to be any meaningful unity between the many diverse organizations and individuals participating.

To what extent will activists allow front groups to stifle dissent and go about their way of organizing? Pragmatism is so ingrained in the logic of this society that it has seeped into social movements and made many uncritical and unprincipled. An activist wrote to me that, "I do not buy the WWP platform, but I'll sure as hell endure their anti-war gatherings." Does that

mean sitting back and watching as speakers are banned for daring to speak out against A.N.S.W.E.R. policies, as was done this past weekend to Rabbi Michael Lerner in San Francisco? When does it become "important" enough to bring up the fact that many are marching under the organization of a group whose policies are overwhelmingly anti-freedom? These things must be questioned and opposed!

### WHAT ARE WE FOR?

A key thing to do in opposing the vanguardist philosophy of front groups is to bring to the forefront the question, "What are we for?" Vanguardism is the idea that we can't think for ourselves and that a certain group can do the thinking and doing for everyone and "lead" a movement. Spelling out very explicitly what we are for makes it hard for counterrevolutionary ideas to be hidden behind the scenes where they are not questioned or even heard by many people. The pragmatist law of sticking together based on opposition to only a few issues can be exposed for what it is — fatal to the anti-war movement and all other justice movements. It also forces us to redefine ourselves in relation not only to what we're against, but what we want to see happen with our movement and how we want the world to be.

Many activists prefer to organize in a lowest common denominator fashion by picking an issue that everyone can agree on and not focusing on anything outside of that issue. That has been an historical downfall of radical social movements, as seen most tragically in Spain in the 1930s when the Popular Front ideology allowed Stalinists to come in the guise of anti-fascism while at the same time murdering many revolutionaries attempting to create a totally new society. Repressing discussion on what we are for only comes back later to kill a movement from within.



Pastor Cheryl Cornish speaks at the Memphis rally.

News & Letters / Terry Moon

## OUR LIFE AND TIMES **Milosevic trial undermines wall of silence**

by Kevin A. Barry

The trial of Serbian war criminal Slobodan Milosevic has been going on for over a year now. Neither the way the judges have allowed Milosevic to browbeat witnesses, some of them still traumatized by torture, nor the fact that Western complicity with Milosevic is not part of the proceedings, can take away from its historic importance.

For the man sitting in the dock is responsible for nothing less than two wars, the Bosnian and Croatian Wars of 1991-95 and the Kosova War on 1998-2000. These resulted in the deaths of 200,000 people, the often permanent expulsion from their homes of millions more, and the rape and torture of thousands. The victims of Milosevic's plan for a "Greater Serbia" came from the ethnic and religious minorities of the former Yugoslavia, Bosnian Muslims above all, but also Kosovars and Croats.

The trial has offered a few surprises, such as the testimony of a Serbian private, unable to sleep after carrying out orders to murder a group of Kosovar Albanians in 1999, including an infant. He volunteered to tes-

tify even though this meant his own self-incrimination.

The wall of silence and denial that persists among Serbs has also been undermined by a few high officials, who provided evidence on Milosevic's direct responsibility for the crimes in Bosnia and Kosova. In a separate trial, Bosnian Serb leader Biljana Plavsic pleaded guilty, thus becoming the highest-ranking official to admit publicly that she "collaborated closely with Slobodan Milosevic in the conception and the execution of the objective of forced ethnic separation."

One survivor, Jadranka Cigelj, the author of *Room 102*, wrote after visiting the Milosevic trial as a spectator this winter: "I was one of 37 women held in the

disused mine of Omarska where thousands were murdered outside my home town of Prijedor. I was taken there on June 14, 1992. I was raped the first day and repeatedly for the next eight weeks.

"I can smell the scorched earth. I can hear the screams of people dying to the accompaniment of the national songs the Serbs played on the stereo as they tortured them. I can see the nights we would lie in Room 102 worrying whether we would be taken out of the cell by a Serb guard. We never talked about the rape. It was an unwritten rule among the women, for to talk about it would have destroyed our morale."

A few months ago, the anarchist writer David Watson published a careful critique of the way in which much of the Left has ignored, or worse, attempted to defend Milosevic as a victim of Western imperialism: "The Milosevic trial, like the entire Western intervention in the Balkans, is too little and disastrously too late....Today, significant vestiges of Milosevic's project remain intact. The 1995 Dayton Accords ratified the destruction of the Bosnian synthesis and the conquest of territory through ethnic cleansing by recognizing the ethno-exclusive Bosnian Serb 'entity,' a functioning product of genocide....Despite the terms of the agreement, and in contrast with the Albanian Kosovars, hardly any Bosnian Muslims have been allowed to return to their homes."

"Leftists in the West who participate in genocide denial and directly or indirectly champion Milosevic and his cronies by promoting his claims undermine that necessary process." (See his "Milosevic 'Crucified': Counter-Spin as Useful Idiocy," *Fifth Estate*, Fall 2002.)

Since the murderous September 11 attacks, liberal pundits have wrung their hands over where a tolerant, democratic version of Islam that recognized women's rights could be found. It is truly amazing that Bosnia, a multiethnic democratic society with a Muslim majority that welcomed Christian Croats and Serbs as well as secularists into its leadership, even as Serb fanatics were murdering its people, specifically targeting Muslims, is so rarely mentioned in such discussions. However, doing so would also require dealing with the West's failure to support or protect Bosnia during the years of genocide, 1991-95, and its forcing of the Dayton Accords upon that long-suffering land.

### Ivory Coast unrest

Tensions in this small West African country reached new heights in February. After months of civil war, the intervention of "peacekeepers" from former colonial ruler France, and a peace accord imposed under French pressure, murderous rioting broke out on the streets of Abidjan, the capital, located in the South.

Orchestrated by elements of the police and the military, the rioters attacked French targets, blaming France for a peace agreement that mandated power-sharing with rebels centered in the North and West. They reserved their most violent attacks for Ivory Coast citizens from other regions and immigrants from neighboring countries, considering all of them rebel supporters.

In fact, the central rebel demand, the repeal of the 2000 electoral law defining nationality or "ivoirité" in such a way as to label vast numbers of citizens foreigners in their own country, is completely justified. Enacted by the former dictatorship in a demagogic attempt to hold onto power, the policy of "ivoirité" was retained by the democratically elected President Laurent Gbagbo. The fact that many of those so targeted were of Muslim background (60% of the country is Muslim), while the rulers were predominantly Christian, only exacerbated the tensions. One hopes that Gbagbo and those around him, many of them with leftist backgrounds, will begin to use their immense prestige to dampen rather than fan the ethno-religious fires they have helped to create.

### African conference

Women from across Africa gathered, Feb. 5, for an international conference on genital cutting. Female genital mutilation is practiced in 28 countries in Africa and the Middle East. Despite the efforts of many African women to ban this inhuman practice, half of Africa's nations still do not have any prohibitions in place. In Somalia and Ethiopia, the most extreme form of genital mutilation is practiced, and in Ethiopia 90% of rural girls are mutilated.

In countries like Kenya where the practice is now officially banned, some girls are bringing lawsuits against their parents for subjecting them to this practice. In Ghana and Ethiopia, resistance to genital mutilation is also growing. As one Ethiopian activist, Bogaletch Gebre, expressed it: "The silence has been broken."

—Sheila Sahar

### Tel Aviv anti-war rally



More than 2,000 Jews and Arabs demonstrated in Tel Aviv, Feb. 15, against the war on Iraq, in partnership with a Palestinian demonstration in Ramallah in the occupied West Bank (See page 6).

### Taliban regroup

A short battle in the mountains bordering Pakistan in January pitted U.S., European, and Afghan government forces against Islamic fundamentalists allied to the Taliban and former mujahideen commander Gulbuddin Hekmaty. Such a regroupment is believed to be taking place with the help of elements of Pakistan's sinister Inter-Services Intelligence, which backed Hekmaty during the 1980s and later with the Taliban.

Mullah Muhammad Omar, the head of the previous Taliban regime who has successfully eluded the U.S., reportedly differs with Hekmaty on tactics. Where Hekmaty has called for an immediate jihad against the new government and the U.S., Omar's emissaries have fanned out into Pashtun areas of Afghanistan urging quiet organizing rather than confrontation with overwhelming U.S. power, hoping that mass anger will eventually build against the U.S. Indiscriminate bombings and arrests have begun to build that anger, but not to the point of creating much support for the widely discredited Hekmaty or Omar.

The situation in government-ruled areas is also very troubling. While some advances have been made since the Taliban was dislodged in 2001, there is also evidence of a slide back toward fundamentalism by the warlords the U.S. used to oust the Taliban.

In Herat, ruled by the warlord Ismail Khan, a newly-formed religious police harasses those few women brave enough to go in public without the full covering of the burqa. Women have been most outraged, however, by a new law enacted on Jan. 10 that bans them from receiving private lessons from male teachers, something they have been using to catch up on their studies after five years of a Taliban ban on women's education.

### Bolivian government murders 27 strikers

The Bolivian government called out the army to break mass strikes, in February, killing 27 people. The strikes began as a protest against President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada's attempt to enact "reforms" ordered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These included steep hikes in income taxes for workers and severe cuts in social spending.

Burning with anger, the strikers surrounded the presidential palace, calling for Sanchez de Lozada to resign. Even police joined in, refusing to attack the strikers. The military then did the government's dirty work, in an orgy of killing over three days. Resistance subsided only after the government cancelled the new economic program.

Sanchez de Lozada was narrowly elected last July over populist Evo Morales. Morales has called for the nationalization of industry, a halt to payment of the national debt, and an end to the war on drugs. The strong support for Morales, an indigenous Aymara who openly accuses the U.S. of trying to undermine him, has continued to worry the U.S., the IMF, and global capital, who see it as another sign of the move toward the Left in Latin America.

## 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*.