

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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EDITORIAL

Tasting the bitter fruits of occupation

It took only three weeks for the combined power of the U.S. and British armed forces to destroy the regime of Saddam Hussein. Saddam's Iraq once possessed one of the largest and most well-equipped armies in the world, but defeat in the 1991 Gulf War and more than a decade of economic sanctions since then had significantly diminished the country's military might.

More importantly, a generation of repression by the totalitarian Ba'ath Party and its police apparatus resulted in a population filled with so much resentment toward its overlords that despite the cadres of paramilitary fighters dispatched to compel resistance to the invaders, the regime was toppled in short order.

George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and the other hawks of the U.S. executive branch could hardly mask their delight that the reckless plans they laid had paid off, without caring to acknowledge that, as a headline in *The New York Times* put it, the "number of Iraqis killed may never be determined."

"Workshop Talks" by Htin Lin and "Black/Red View" by John Alan appear on pages 3 and 10 this month.

Donald Rumsfeld, the secretary of defense and chief architect of the invasion's military strategy, was even moved to force a strange comparison between the

scenes of Iraqis pulling down statues of Saddam and the fall of the East European Communist regimes in 1989. Doubtless this veteran Cold Warrior knows that no U.S. troops assisted the masses of Berlin residents who forcibly dismantled the ugly wall that had divided their city for so long, but perhaps it was wishful thinking on his part. The rulers of the U.S. are much more comfortable when their tanks and helicopters are on the scene to see that matters remain well in hand.

DIRE CONDITIONS IGNORED

Despite the presence of those troops throughout many of Iraq's cities however, they seem little inclined to secure the material well-being of the country's people. There were evidently no orders to discourage the hungry and destitute crowds, who took what they could from government buildings, from targeting even Baghdad's overtaxed and under-supplied hospitals.

The U.S. did nothing as the cultural history of Iraq was stolen from its national museum. Nor did the U.S. military seem to be sensitive to calls from humanitarian organizations to make a commitment to assure the security of efforts to deliver food and other supplies to a population heretofore largely dependent on the Iraqi government for sustenance.

This ambivalence to the present dire condition of the Iraqi people extends to their future as well. No plan has been released that details just how the U.S. intends to administer Iraq. A retired army general, Jay Garner, has been appointed as chief executive of the occupying forces, but despite his recent entry into the country, his plans have yet to be made public. Most of the U.S. government's diplomatic efforts have instead been directed toward letting the UN and the anti-war faction of its Security Council know that they will have only the most subordinate role in rebuilding the country.

The Bush administration's main goal—the eradication of Saddam's rule—was achieved slightly ahead of schedule. This development has starkly revealed that the concrete future of the Iraqi people was only a secondary priority for the U.S.

VESTIGES OF HATED REGIME

What is clear is that the U.S. would like to maintain as many Ba'athist functionaries in place as possible to eventually reinvigorate the basic functions of state power. It is also clear that this will be unacceptable to much of the Iraqi population, who will tolerate nothing less than a clean break with the institutions of the hated former regime.

The British occupiers of Basra found out as much
(Continued on page 4)

Black America's challenge to Bush's war and repression

by Gerard Emmett and Nouveau Toussaint

In the everyday war that rages on the streets of America, on April 17 several hundred residents of Chicago's Cabrini-Green housing projects surrounded the Near North District police station, pelting officers with rocks and bottles. This came after a routine traffic stop ended in a beating for construction worker Rondell Freeman. He didn't open his car door fast enough, so police broke all his windows, drew their guns, and beat, maced and arrested him along with three others.

The people of the community objected to this thuggish behavior and took action. This most recent rebellion is a typical event in this area which also recently saw protests erupt over the police murder of Michael Walker. Cabrini-Green remains a volatile community.

In regard to the better publicized war in Iraq that has been in the news, while the polls have changed in recent weeks as the Bush administration has claimed victory, one thing has remained constant: the greatest opposition to the war remains among African Americans. While opposition among all Americans sometimes reached high poll numbers, that came with qualifications and demurrals—such as "only with UN support." The "successful" war has now undermined that kind of opposition, but the polls still show levels
(Continued on page 10)



Young activists defend affirmative action on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court and other sites in Washington, D.C., April 1.

synchrocity/Independent Media Center



WE NEED YOUR HELP TO KEEP NEWS & LETTERS ALIVE!

Never was it more important to keep a revolutionary journal like *News & Letters* alive. No other paper anywhere presents to the world the voices of those fighting for freedom inseparable from the articulation of a philosophy of revolution. And such a philosophy of liberation is needed if the movements for freedom are ever to succeed in uprooting the dehumanized world in which we live and creating a new one based on human foundations.

George Bush's pre-emptive and unconscionable attack on Iraq was met, before the first bombs had ever fallen, with the emergence of a worldwide, massive and multidimensional anti-war movement that has drawn in a whole new generation of youth. At such an historic moment, it is crucial that their activities are wedded to a positive vision of a new society that can replace capitalism, the economic, political and social system on which the inhumanity of Bush's drive for permanent war is based.

This issue of *News & Letters* celebrates the 50th anniversary of the moment Marxist-Humanism, as a philosophy of revolution, was born. At that time, in 1953, Raya Dunayevskaya recognized, in the unity of the movement from practice and the movement from theory, a pathway to a new society. *News and Letters* Committees has tried to develop that new beginning and that unity of theory/practice ever since. It is why we have chosen this moment to sponsor a class series on "Negativity and Freedom: Philosophic Challenges to Capitalism, War and Terror," at the same time that we participate in all other freedom activities.

It is also why the Spring we are publishing a new pamphlet of *Marxist-Humanist Writings on the Middle East from the 1960s to Today*. Part I will present selected writings by Raya Dunayevskaya from the early 1960s to the 1980s, and Part II will consist of selected writings published in *News & Letters* since Dunayevskaya's death in 1987.

It is also why we will soon publish a "Marxist-

Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension" which will show that the opposition to capitalism and war is nowhere deeper than in Black America—and that the Marxist-Humanist concept of "Black masses as vanguard" has emerged over and over again in Black mass struggles against racism, police abuse, the AIDS crisis, and the criminal injustice system, which all define capitalist society today.

Most of all, it is why we present the voices of all forces of revolt—from labor to youth and from women to the Black dimension—in a paper that grapples at the same time with the hard questions of what it takes to create a new society. That is what you will read in each and every page of this issue.

For all these reasons we urgently need your help! As we have done every year since we began in 1955, we again turn to you, our readers, to help us meet the ever-rising costs for our office rent and the printing of *N&L*—and to help us get our new publications on the Middle East and on the Black dimension off the press. Those costs alone will surpass \$5,000.

NEVER WAS YOUR HELP MORE NEEDED! PLEASE GIVE AS GENEROUSLY AS YOU CAN TO HELP KEEP US ALIVE!

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Queer Liberation or commodification?

by Amy Garrison

Amy Garrison is young lesbian activist in Memphis, Tenn. This column is adapted from her talk on "Sexuality and Revolution" at a recent News & Letters meeting. —Ed.

The Stonewall riot during the summer of 1969 might be the seminal event in queer revolutionary history. After weeks of ruthless persecution by police, mostly characterized by unprompted raids on New York City's gay bars, the patrons of the Stonewall Inn rioted as the bar staff, drag queens, and transgender clientele were arrested without cause on June 28.

The violent riot was suppressed by the police in the early morning hours of the 29th, but peaceful protests of the incident continued well into the day. Gay men and their supporters gathered outside the bar and held hands, kissed, and chanted. Within a month the Gay Liberation Front arose from the struggle of the queers involved in the riot in an effort to overturn existing, oppressive social policies and practices.

The riot and the formation of this group established a precedent in queer political history, and while it was undeniably an important first step toward equality for queers in this society, the Stonewall incident fell short

WOMAN AS REASON

of being truly revolutionary. For the first time, queers were identifying themselves—if not explicitly—as a philosophical category composed of oppressed individuals, as the Other, as a body of people with a valid critique of their objective conditions.

STALLED AT CULTURE AND IDENTITY

But the queers who composed the new Gay Liberation Front and the pro-queer groups since that era have been stymied in their struggle for queer equality because their emphasis on a partial rejection of the capitalist machine of oppression. They have made the first dialectical movement—which Marx calls first negation—in that they have established their opposition to their specific grievances with capitalist society.

But because most queer political groups have failed to recognize the importance of transcending that first negation—of negating their opposition and moving forth with their struggle for a new human society, where all human relations are radically transformed—the queer movement stalled sometime after Stonewall. The most political queer organizations are now preoccupied with is progress without revolution, with making legislative changes without changing the entire political framework of this society, with improving the relationships between queers and heterosexuals without improving the whole of human relationships.

What is worse is the tendency of many queers to identify the pro-queer movement as merely a cultural movement and not one with broad social and political implications.

The queer movement, in its general refusal to completely oppose capitalist ideology, has itself been subject to commodification and corruption. The tradition of queer "pride" is the best example of this perversion. Various symbols of queer pride are adopted by capitalist producers and aggressively marketed to the queer population. Queer beer, queer credit cards, queer vacation packages, queer dating services, and queer mass media are some of the worst examples of the queer identity being appropriated, packaged, and produced by exploitative capitalists.

Even the queer pride celebrations held every June in U.S. and European cities are usually just that—celebrations, a time for queers to flaunt their queerness with reckless abandon and abundant alcohol but without a thought for the practical and theoretical development of the queer movement.

REJECT ALL ALIENATIONS

Queers seem to be faced with the dilemma of a stilted political movement concerned with superficial, legislative improvements and highly commercialized social movement which attempts to validate every preference, indulgence, and whim of the queer person without regard for his or her self-development and without regard to the objective, oppressive context of the society-at-large.

We queers cannot remain trapped between these two alternatives if we have a serious commitment to improving our position in society; nor can we ignore the fact that our problematic situation is a subset of the problems of capitalism as a whole.

We must accept the challenge of rejecting capitalism's alienated mode of relations between humans—a problem that has clearly been exacerbated by capitalism's method of production—and put forth our own way of relating to each other and to all of humanity. Only then will we be on our way to the respect, recognition, freedom and equality to which all of humanity is entitled.

Novel imagines future ruled by religious Right

Half Nation Under God is a novel by Cora Corbett published in 2002 by Eru Books, a new feminist publishing company. It is set in the near future in the U.S. to show why the religious Right is dangerous to democracy. Half of the states are "free" and operate under democracy as we know it today, while half are under the type of government that the religious Right wants to impose.



Half Nation Under God, Cora Corbett.

2002: Tucson, AZ, Eru Books. 342 pp.

Sharon Clark, a reporter from the free state of Southern California, goes to the "religious" state of Arizona to investigate abuses of women imprisoned for attempting to have abortions or attempting to leave the state while pregnant. Her intent is to expose the corruption of the "Moralist" party to prevent Southern California from voting "Moralist" in the next election.

She learns that women of color imprisoned for having an abortion are sterilized, while white women are impregnated several times before their release, their babies sold to infertile couples. Pregnant white teenagers are urged by religious right "clinics" and radio commercials to give their babies up for adoption to religious right couples. The novel makes the point that those who want to prohibit safe, legal abortion are not concerned with the morality of killing fetuses, as mixed-race pregnancies are aborted.

Cora Corbett also shows that reproductive rights are connected to human rights. Two Hispanic teenagers having an argument over whether their oppression is

Afghanistan 'free'?

San Francisco—On April 2, Tahmeena Faryal of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) came again to the U.S. to give an update on the situation in Afghanistan. Last time, in November 2001, the crowds were overflowing. Hundreds had to be turned away. This time the audience was much smaller, about 100. Yet the need for solidarity is just as great.

Faryal spoke on the current situation. Afghanistan is supposedly "liberated," yet after the bombing and vast destruction, fundamentalism remains, both in the Northern Alliance and among other groups. The U.S. used the plight of women to justify "Operation Enduring Freedom," the name for the bombing campaign.

Yet Human Rights Watch concluded recently that post-Taliban Afghanistan is no different than under the Taliban in many areas. Some women were able to take off their burkas, and some men shaved their beards, but there is no liberation. A recent demonstration demanding basic necessities was suppressed bloodily, with four people killed outright. Even Hamid Karzai, the U.S.-installed president, cannot speak freely.

It makes the refugees hesitant to return. Three million are still outside Afghanistan. The children in the camps are called "children of garbage" because that's where they scrounge for something to eat. RAWA is proud to try to bring some education to them, but for most holding a pencil and learning to write is just a dream.

RAWA was the most mobilized form of resistance to fundamentalism, yet even today, they cannot have an office in Afghanistan. So they continue their efforts outside the country. On March 18, RAWA held a celebration of International Women's Day in Peshawar, Pakistan. They termed the Hamid Karzai government a total failure, stating that "the Taliban and the Northern Alliance both looted the country of its freedom and the women of their due rights. Both were fundamentalists and puppets in the hands of outsiders."

Later that day, Malalai Hospital's assistant director, Mr. Mohsin, was shot by fundamentalist terrorists while entering the RAWA hospital in Rawalpindi, Pakistan.

Afghanistan clearly needs solidarity. The Afghan people themselves should rebuild the country. Faryal ended by saying that democracy cannot be brought in from the outside, and that Afghanistan is a good example for Iraq: bombing in the name of liberation cannot work.

—Urszula Wislanska

Welfare rights victory

New York—In a major victory for the welfare rights movement in New York City, the city council passed a law giving most recipients the right to some education and training instead of merely drudge work in return for welfare benefits. The council had to overcome Mayor Bloomberg's veto of the legislation; Bloomberg wants to carry on the draconian welfare rules instigated by former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani that required long hours of work without any opportunity for education or training.

Local welfare rights organizations have made the right to education a focal point of their campaigns since the federal law was overhauled in 1996 and "workfare" became compulsory. The victory runs contrary to the general direction of federal law but is not prohibited by it. The change, though, will not benefit most recipients.

—Poverty activist

Mourning Mothers

San Francisco—Bush's war motivated many people to organize. What gets coverage are the demonstrations of hundreds of thousands. What does not get



News & Letters / Urszula Wislanska

as much attention are new, independent organizations. There are teachers organizing teach-ins and supporting student walkouts; youth forming affinity groups; neighborhood people in candlelight vigils, and many more.

One of the most creative new forms of protest is the Mourning Mothers. Mary, one of the founders of Mourning Mothers, describes its beginning:

"The Mourning Mothers are part of a larger grassroots Northern California mobilization called Direct Action to Stop the War (DASW)... A diverse group of activists launched DASW in October 2002; our first action was the peace camp and shut-down of the San Francisco Federal Building on Oct. 9 and 10, in response to Congress handing over its war authority to the Executive Branch. DASW also organized the awesome 'Day-After' action, in which 20,000 activists came together and shut down the financial district on March 20, the day after war was officially declared. Several Mourning Mothers have been or are currently members of DASW working group.

"The Mourning Mothers was inspired by a Bread and Puppet street theatre piece that a few of us saw in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 29, 2002, at the first major No War on Iraq peace march. At the end of December, the founders of Bread and Puppet gave us their blessings to run with the idea. A group of about 12 of us created the giant masks, cloth children, and gowns in a half dozen work sessions... Our first action was the Feb. 16 march in San Francisco for peace, democracy, ecology, and justice!"

The Mourning Mothers' form of protest is designed to draw in participation from other protesters, by actively identifying with the grief of mothers anywhere (though primarily Iraqi mothers now) who are losing their children. A fairly routine picket line in front of the Federal Building was transformed when the entire demonstration of several hundred, rather than just marching in circles, joined the grieving ceremony Mourning Mothers staged by "burying" the cloth children in a white sheet. The solemn, silent ceremony of taking each cloth child and laying him/her out, made the cost of war very graphic.

We distributed some flowers among the protesters to put on the "graves" of cloth, but many went out to get more flowers to honor the dead. Some brought full bouquets, complete with a card reading "I am sorry you had to die for U.S. imperialism." Many people openly cried realizing that while our ceremony was only symbolic, it was all too real.

The Mourning Mothers have participated in other Bay Area events, not just the big marches, but many smaller events, like the Oakland docks action on April 7 and Chevron/Texaco action on April 14.

—U. W.

Oakland cops' brutal attack on dockers, protesters

Oakland, Cal.—Oakland police went on a rampage on April 7 when 500 war protesters gathered at the Port of Oakland to prevent loading of munitions onto American President Lines cargo ships headed for the Persian Gulf.

Protesters had hoped to form a massive enough picket line that dock workers would legitimately refuse to cross the line for safety reasons. The new ILWU contract does not permit the union to strike over objections to loading military hardware.

But there were no such shipments scheduled for that day. When demonstrators learned as much, they shifted from blocking trucks and workers to marching and chanting in large circles.

Even so, police closed in and ordered the picketers to disperse. Clusters of demonstrators that didn't move fast enough were picked off apart with concussion grenades. They then picked off scattering individuals with wooden dowels, metal shot beanbags and sting-balls. The attacks were repeated as pickets regrouped and more protesters arrived on scene. Nine longshore-

men who were not participating in the demonstration were among the dozens injured.

An hour or so after police had set the tone for the day, a group of about 50 picketers promptly complied with an order to disperse and marched clear away from the terminals to assemble at Mariposa and 7th Street. Moments later, 25 motorcycle cops roared on them while a phalanx of riot troops let loose its full arsenal on the retreating crowd.

This time there had been no warning. Though there was no panic, even among the injured, one protester saw the assault as an attempt to "shock and awe" all demonstrators into staying away from the docks.

Oakland Police Chief Richard Word corroborated that police overreaction to the non-threatening contingent was a preemptive strike. He speculated that if police "had simply waited it out and facilitated protesters, there could have been thousands, not hundreds, out there; and we would have been overwhelmed."

Police claims that picketers throwing rocks and bottles precipitated the barrages are not supported by anyone but the police. This is significant, because every anti-war action for the past several weeks has had participants only too eager to denounce (usually as "anarchists") those who ruin the "peace movement" with their penchant for violence.

Even TV news failed to provide a smoking gun. In an effort to back up police, one reporter told viewers to listen for the sound of a breaking bottle in footage she was about to run. Sure enough you could hear the sound—but only long after the assault began.

Despite shock and awe tactics and preemptive strikes, the battered activists moved on to the Federal Building and then to City Hall where they called upon Mayor Jerry Brown to investigate this unprecedented use of police force.

Of police force. The following night they kept Oakland City Council from its agenda long enough to force council president Ignacio De La Fuente to leave the chambers in frustration. Councilmember Jane Brunner took over and scheduled a special hearing for April 29.

—David Mizuno'Oto

No hard times?

New York—The Bureau of Labor Statistics announced April 4 that nonfarm payroll employment in the U.S. fell by 108,000 in March. It also revised its estimate of February's job loss to a whopping 357,000. Since the recession officially began in March 2001, there has been a net loss of 2.1 million jobs. More than one-fifth of the total, 465,000 jobs, have been eliminated largely for the past two months and March.

During for this reason, on March 7—the same day that the February job loss figures were reported—the Business Cycle Dating Committee of the National Bureau of Economic Research declared that it was too early to determine whether the recession has ended. The committee's determinations are accepted as official by the U.S. government.

If the committee eventually does determine that the economy was still in recession in March, this recession will be the longest one, by far, since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Events like these disclose that, although the military power of the U.S. is unrivaled in world history, it lacks the power to transcend the recurrent crises of capitalist production.

—Andrew Kliman

Lemoyne-Owen fight

Memphis, Tenn.—The Faculty Organization at historically Black LeMoyne-Owen College came into existence around 1968. We met independently of the administration to talk about employment conditions.

In 2000 a number of employees with up to 25 years in, none of them faculty, were laid off. It was scary. We view ourselves not only as a community, but as a family. What alarmed us was that we had no knowledge of it until it occurred. That began a series of attempts to become involved in decision-making at the college.

After 2000, we were told there were going to be budget cuts. At this time there was no union, we were just a discussion group. So we hired a lawyer to advise us. We felt we needed a structure so that, no matter who the president was or what the composition of the board was, we would have governance.

We successfully petitioned the National Labor Relations Board for official status as the collective bargaining agent for the faculty. In September 2002, we voted overwhelmingly in support of the Faculty Organization as the collective bargaining agent.

Now the Faculty Organization is a union affiliated with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) through its Collective Bargaining Congress—AAUP chapters that are unionized on college and university campuses. The NLRB said that we met the criteria for being the collective bargaining agent for the faculty.

Lemoyne-Owen has lost five appeals, the latest a summary judgment this January. LeMoyne-Owen was ordered to recognize our faculty association, but they refuse to do so. Now the Labor Board has taken LeMoyne-Owen to court in Washington, D.C. so that it can enforce the order.

Our issues have little to do with salary. Our main concerns center on not wanting to be in the dark as it relates to major decision-making that affects faculty and staff.

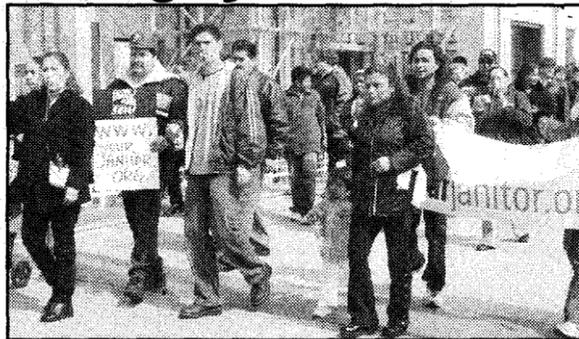
When you understand the relationship between the Civil Rights Movement and the labor movement you have to ask how can LeMoyne-Owen take a stand against collective bargaining? Last month we commemorated the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was when Dr. King came to Memphis that those two movements coalesced.

There is a picture of Hollis F. Price shaking hands with Martin Luther King Jr. on our campus. Civil rights meetings were held here. How can we afford not to stand with an effort to organize?

To contribute to our legal fund, you can send funds to: Faculty Organization of LeMoyne-Owen College, c/o Dr. Cheryl Golden, 807 Walker Ave., Memphis, TN 38126. Soon we'll have a website accessible through <http://www.aaup.org/issues/HBCU/index.htm>, where concerned individuals can respond to a petition of support of the Faculty Organization.

—Dr. Cheryl Golden

Chicago janitors march



Hundreds of janitors marched in downtown Chicago in late March in their fight for a new contract.

WORKSHOP TALKS

by Htun Lin

When I turned 18, my father told me to go down to the local post office to register for the draft. The Vietnam War was over, but draft registration was still required. I was reluctant to sign up even though the draft was no longer in effect, since I had read so much about the carnage of the war. My father nevertheless finally convinced me I had to sign up, if I didn't want to jeopardize my chance at financial aid for college.

I wonder how many people before me also thought they had to join in order to have opportunities open to them. This, no doubt, was on the mind of freed POW Jessica Lynch and so many other youth when they joined the military. Her mother told the press how Jessica saw joining the military as a ticket toward an education. She really wanted to become a teacher.

After her dramatic rescue from a hospital in Nasiriya, Iraq, it looks like she'll finally have that chance. But more than 100 U.S. soldiers who have died in Iraq will not have that chance. To date, we have no tally of the Iraqi soldiers killed.

The late Felix Martin, Labor Editor of *News & Letters* and a veteran of two wars, wrote in "Capitalist Wars and Production" (March 1991 *N&L*): "In this war in the Persian Gulf, the soldiers, sailors and marines on both sides are victims of George Bush and Saddam Hussein. They are the ones dying, and they are the ones who, if they live, will face the point of production after the war."

"In Iraq it will mean the labor of rebuilding from the rubble in the U.S., the soldiers will return to plant closings and unemployment as well as the assembly line."

EMPLOYMENT FOR WAR

A dozen years later, that part of the story is still the same. Many joined the military as a job option because no other jobs were available in a stagnant economy. The military is still seen as an opportunity of last resort. But now their opportunity will be to become part of a permanent war machine.

For a permanent job, military service won't be a temporary commitment, but a permanent job. Bush is disrupting all the reservists' commitments, and wreaking havoc on so many workers' lives. The trend is making war production and war opportunity a more entrenched and prominent part of everyday life.

Have we workers given in to this militarism as when the locked-out dockworkers in Oakland made an exception and returned to work to load military cargo under Bush's Taft-Hartley injunction? Part of the dockworkers' struggle was over the increasing death rate from accidents caused by speed-up and automation.

Bush war on labor

When the AFL-CIO convention last February opposed President Bush's then-looming war against Iraq, it surprised some pessimistic labor analysts who felt an anti-war resolution would be too controversial for the traditionally conservative AFL-CIO even to consider. The war in Iraq may be all but over, but not the war against labor that the Bush administration officially declared at that convention.

Nothing energized the delegates to close ranks and unify against the administration as did the insulting address by Labor Secretary Elaine Chao. She made crystal clear that not only was the administration not going to be throwing any crumbs to labor, but that it intended to aggressively pursue its anti-labor offensive.

The defeat of President George W. Bush in the 2004 national election emerged as the top priority for organized labor. As both delegates and union leaders emphasized, Bush, under the smokescreen of "national security," has removed tens of thousands of government employees from union protection, and plans to privatize hundreds of thousands more union jobs.

Even the opportunistic Teamster President James Hoffa, who has played political footsie with the Republicans in the past, heatedly declared his opposition to President Bush's anti-labor, pro-corporate administration and support for the AFL-CIO campaign to defeat him.

Already weakened by a declining membership and sophisticated management campaigns that have blocked many union drives, the AFL-CIO approved plans to increase organizing efforts, especially among the lower paid service industries, where employees receive the lowest wages and virtually no fringe benefits and have demonstrated their willingness to join unions by their militant strike actions.

—Andy Phillips

Steady jobs—at war

Felix Martin further wrote in his 1991 column: "I worked for many years as a blue collar worker at General Motors, and what goes through my mind when I see and read about this war is the assembly line. It seems like war and production are produced in the same way. There are officers and/or foremen on one side, and in both places—the war zone and the factory—on the other side are the workers, the 'grunts,' doing the suffering and dying."

Today the modern war assembly line is woven together even more by technology. As in many workplaces, technology now counts for everything while humans are its servants. The U.S. effort in Iraq is above all to project the overpowering might of U.S. technology. The steady war news has been one big commercial for high-tech weapons manufacturers.

The dazzle of high-tech weaponry has overshadowed the story of uncounted Iraqi dead, including many innocent civilians. It is that same high-tech weaponry that's been the reason behind the high rate of British and American soldiers killed by "friendly fire."

In the first Gulf War, the U.S. used Saddam as their accomplice to slaughter those who rose up against his regime and try to kill the very idea of self-liberation. Now the message to all, at home and abroad, is that resistance is futile in the face of the U.S. war machine. The rulers want all of us to get used to the idea of war as a permanent assembly line.

KILLING MACHINE

Yet it is living labor that ultimately rejects that assembly line future. Stephen Funk, a marine from the San Francisco Bay Area, applied for conscientious objector status when he realized that the recruitment ads promising scholarship and adventure did not reflect the reality of turning him into a killing machine. This is a reality many soldiers are finding out in Iraq as they efficiently slaughter reluctant enemy soldiers and civilians alike, with high-tech weaponry to which soldiers are mere appendages.

For those of us who do the actual fighting and producing inside the belly of capitalism, war and production are the real axis of evil—we're the ones doing the killing, and the ones getting killed and maimed by man-killer high-tech machines.

If we give in to this regime, we give up all our human intellectual capacities and endow them to machines, while degrading our own human potential to mere mechanical ones. As soon as we reject the domination of machines over living labor, we will have won a crucial battle against capital's deadliest weapon of class destruction—capital itself.

Crump residents launch fight for environmental justice

Memphis, Tenn.—I'm with Concerned Citizens of Crump neighborhood association and I have defined my neighborhood as a chemically boxed-in community. Who are we? We are a 100% African-American urban neighborhood, a working-class and low-income historic Black neighborhood in north Memphis.

There are more than eight polluting plants within three miles of my home. We have no grocery stores. We don't even have a 99¢ store. We don't have any kind of dry goods store in my neighborhood.

Pollution has no boundaries. It starts in north Mem-

phis but it ends up all over Memphis with health effects like cancer. My favorite nephew was rushed to the emergency room this week with an asthma attack. We have asthma, lung diseases, miscarriages, kidney disease because of the chemicals that are stored and used in our neighborhood.

BAD NEWS VELSICOL

There was an article in the paper about Velsicol and the contamination of Hollywood dump which is full of heptachlor and chlordane. We live right by the Wolf River; it's polluted with them. The way the article was printed was as if Velsicol and the city of Memphis decided, out of the goodness of their hearts, to clean up the dump. That is not so. Most of the chemicals can be traced back to Velsicol.

As children we walked over Hollywood dump to get to a main grocery store. We were poor people, so if you found a chair there you would bring it back. One time Mayflower canned biscuits were thrown on the dump. We carried those biscuits back home and everybody had a good time. But we didn't know that they were contaminated with heptachlor and chlordane.

Penn Chemicals polluted the land in Douglass Park which is directly adjacent to Douglass Elementary School. I would cry every day when I would see a banner on the school gate that said, "Douglass Elementary loves Penn Chemicals." Douglass Park is one of the

oldest parks in the Black community. It used to be called Negro Park when the city first gave us the land to keep us out of the other parks. It has a deep history, so the companies can't lie and say that they were there first.

Another thing that's been done is the community was divided. Sunday school teachers no longer speak to me because I speak badly of the nice chemical company that gives my poor neighborhood \$1,000 every year at Christmas to buy the poor kids bikes, punch and cake.

NEW HOUSES ON TOXIC LAND

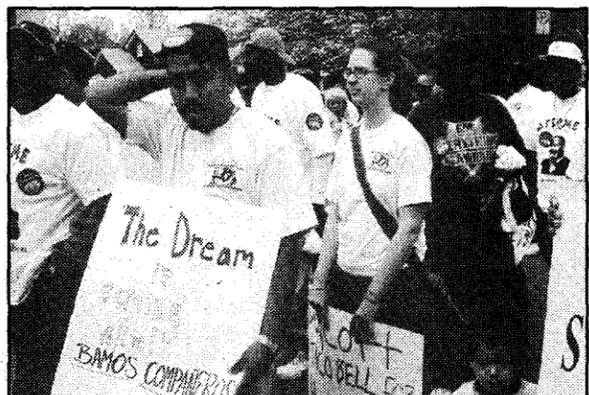
So now we have two neighborhood organizations. One is concerned about building up the neighborhood, but I am with Concerned Citizens of Crump, and we're concerned about improving the environment. What's the use of building new houses on poisoned land?

There's no environmental justice agenda in this city and in this state. You can't get one elected official to a rally. When they find out what you're about, they go out of the room when the TV camera's on. Velsicol called the police saying: Balinda and her gang are going to be up there and we need police protection.

I called the NAACP; they didn't know what environmental justice was in this city. I read Genesis I: In the beginning God created a clean earth. That's what I base my power on.

—Balinda Moore

King's legacy today



News & Letters / Anna M.

Memphis—On the morning of April 4, over 300 activists and community members, Black, white, and Latino gathered to commemorate the death of Martin Luther King Jr. with a rally and a march. The rally site was Lemoyne-Owen College, a traditionally African-American university here.

The amazing thing about the whole march was its location and participants. One young anti-war activist woman remarked, "Since it was through neighborhood streets (as opposed to downtown), a lot of people came out on their porches to wave at us. There was a great mix of folks too, the usual AFSCME participants [sanitation workers union that was on strike in 1968], Lemoyne-Owen faculty and students [some of the faculty were busy celebrating and unionizing at the same time], La Fuerza Latina Unida [a local Latino activist organization], sororities and fraternities, neighborhood residents of all ages, historians, peace activists, one of the Immokalee workers [tomato pickers boycotting Taco Bell in protest of slave labor conditions in the fields], church groups, a marching band, hell even an ROTC unit."

Seeing people of all colors and types marching together really helped with morale during this time of war and political and social retrogression. Here in the South, everyone from politicians to TV and radio station personalities claim to "remember the dream" and pay lip service to King and his ideals. But remembering Dr. King and who he really was is still a rebellious action.

—News and Letters youth

EDITORIAL Bitter fruits of Iraq's occupation

(Continued from page 1)

after they appointed a local sheik with ties to the old regime as administrator of the city. They were immediately confronted with a spontaneous demonstration of residents protesting the British embrace of such a compromised figure. The people of Baghdad's poor neighborhoods too have come out into the streets to assert their hostility to an arrangement in which they are locked out of determining their own affairs.

So the U.S. now finds itself in an ambiguous position. By its criteria, the invasion was a success. From any other standpoint, however, it has brought death, destruction and a fearsome uncertainty to the Iraqi people. Many civilians have been killed and wounded by the fierce missile campaign, the officers of Iraq's regular army forced countless soldiers into a slaughter, and the country's infrastructure—which never recovered from the 1991 war—has been further debilitated.

Politically the U.S. is sponsoring figures from the Iraqi exile opposition while at the same time it is seeking out functionaries of Saddam's regime to employ in the administration of its occupation. It is burdened with the enormous task of rebuilding the country on its terms alone while simultaneously trying to dampen the high expectations of democracy and self-determination it itself raised as ideological justifications for invasion.

And as if the plate wasn't full enough for the rulers of the U.S., it seems as if they have no qualms about

aggressively warning Iran and especially Iraq's old Ba'athist rival Syria to be extremely careful in their interference in the country. The worst fears of critics of the hawks in the Bush administration seem to have been well founded.

POST-WAR STRIVINGS

Despite all the rhetoric justifying the war, the future of the Iraqi people is indeed theirs alone to determine. The U.S. and Britain, while claiming that they have acted out of concern for the interests of those people, have instead placed their future at grave risk.

The wishes of the Iraqis have already begun to come into conflict with those of the occupying powers. The long-struggling Kurdish people, the oppressed Shia communities in the south of the country, the impoverished residents of Baghdad's Saddam City neighborhood, and the minorities of Iraq deserve a nation in which independent newspapers can publish, wage workers can freely associate among themselves, and women can participate and lead in all activities.

It is entirely possible that in such an arrangement, the revolutionary traditions of a country that once had one of the largest Marxist movements of the Middle East will be rediscovered and renewed, bringing an element of democratization most unwelcome to the capitalist rulers of the U.S. and Britain as well as to the authoritarian rulers and religious fundamentalist groupings of the region.

The invasion and the start of the occupation have trespassed upon the basic national feelings of most Iraqis and put this future—one that the people of Iraq are more than capable of building for themselves—in jeopardy. Now that Iraq is free of Saddam and his party of jailers and secret police, the country's people deserve our firmest possible solidarity in their efforts to start anew.

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Then and Now: On the 50th anniversary of the 1953 'Letters on Hegel's Absolutes'

This May marks the 50th anniversary of the writing of Raya Dunayevskaya's "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes"—the philosophic breakthrough that led to the birth of Marxist-Humanism. As part of our commemoration of this event, we are reprinting a 1987 commentary by Dunayevskaya on these letters, in which she reexamined them in light of the effort to work out a new relation between philosophy and organization. We also publish two essays on her philosophic contribution, on pages 6-7. Further discussion of these issues will appear in subsequent issues of *News & Letters*.

The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

Editor's note: The following writing of Jan. 21, 1987, entitled "Talking to Myself," was part of Dunayevskaya's work-in-progress on a planned book on "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy." It appears in *The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx* (Lexington Books, 2002). The references to the 1953 Letters are as they appear in *The Power of Negativity*. "SLII" refers to Hegel's *Science of Logic*, translated by Johnston & Struthers; "SLM" refers to the newer translation by A.V. Miller.

The focus is on the May 12, 1953 letter on [Hegel's] Absolute Idea. The point is to catch the dialectical flow of the self-determination of the Idea, paragraph by paragraph.

Page 21(1) of the letter of May 12, 1953 calls attention to p. 483 of Hegel's *Science of Logic* [SLII, p. 483; SLM, p. 840-41], which shows how the stage of "exteriorization," i.e., that of intensification, i.e., "interiorization," i.e., objective manifestation makes the inward extension more intense.

The paragraph on p. 21, which attacks impatience in "an absolutely uncompromising Bolshevik" manner, I attribute to Hegel, after which I quote from p. 484 of the *Science of Logic* [SLII, p. 484; SLM, pp. 840-41]:

That impatience whose only wish is to go beyond the determinant...to be immediately in the absolute, has nothing before it as object of its cognition but the empty negative...or else would-be absolute, which is imaginary because it is neither posited nor comprehended.

The dialectic flow of this quotation is in no way related to the two names quoted in the preceding paragraph of the letter, but even if said unconsciously, has everything to do with what I follow the Hegel quotation with:

I am shaking all over for we have come to **where we part from Lenin**. I mentioned that, although in the **approach** to the Absolute Idea Lenin had mentioned that man's cognition not only reflects the objective world but creates it, but that **within the chapter** he never developed it. Objective world connections, materialism, dialectical materialism, it is true, but not the object and subject as one fully developed.

Stop for a moment. Hold tightly to the fact that ever since 1948-49, when I first translated Lenin's "Abstract of the *Science of Logic*," I have done nothing less than extol Lenin philosophically, specifically on the *Science of Logic*. There is no question about the fact that it was Lenin who created the great divide in Marxism in 1914-17. Our present **changed** perception of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence shows here that I actually did have some philosophic differences as far back as the early 1950s.

The fact is that it was not only Lenin who, by keeping the *Philosophic Notebooks* to himself, separated philosophy from politics. When we broke politically with the concept of the vanguard party, we kept philosophy and politics in two separate compartments.(2) What this 1953 Letter shows now is that embedded in it was a sharper critique of Lenin's philosophic ambivalence than shown in *Marxism and Freedom*. In 1953, on the other hand...I had stressed that in the chapter on "The Idea of Cognition" Lenin had not concretized the **objectivity** of cognition.

Here I wish to introduce...a letter to me from Grace Lee dated August 31, 1952. With her usual hyperbole, here is part of what she wrote me:

You have mastered Hegel. You write in your letter of August 29 as you have never written before. Instead of that one-to-one correspondence where you impose a movement on the *Logic*, you are now inside the movement of the *Logic*, caught up in its rhythms. The number of people in the world who can do that can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand. You are absolutely right in characterizing Herman's (Johnny Zupan)(3) search for the party as the *Logic* of the "Idea of the Good"—which stands in its own way and hence must in the end turn against itself.

We haven't found my letter of August 29, 1952, which produced that enthusiasm a year before I broke

through on the Absolute, but it is clear from what she said on August 31 that I had evidently been writing on the penultimate chapter from the *Science of Logic*, "The Idea of Cognition." She further points to that specific chapter because, very clearly, I had been relating the [chapter on the] Idea of Cognition to the concept of organization. What was facing the Johnson-Forest Tendency now that it finally broke fully with Trotskyism was the question: What kind of organization now? This took a most ominous turn as I was coming to a break with Johnsonism [C.L.R. James], 1950-53. The specific objective event that precipitated the crisis in 1953 was Stalin's death.*

In March 1953 I felt very strongly that an incubus had been lifted from the heads of the Russian and East European masses (evidently also from my head) and that revolts were sure to happen. It was a very exciting day in Detroit, both because the Black production worker Charles Denby, and the head of the Youth, Ben, had independently thought that, no doubt, I wished to write a political estimate of that world-shaking event; they volunteered to work with me all night. When Denby appeared after his day at Chrysler he concretized this further, laughing jubilantly and saying that what all the workers were talking about, as the radio blared forth the news of Stalin's death, was: "I've got just the person to take his place—my foreman." Denby asked if I had that article I was always talking about on the great trade union debate between Lenin and Trotsky in 1920 (on which I had been working since the 1940s). Denby felt that the workers would now welcome such a revelation; he wished to distribute it to them.(4)

Think of the unpleasant shock that then occurred when Grace, who was in California and the responsible editor for the issue of the mimeographed *Correspondence*, felt that the lead article could not be on Stalin's death, but on the "new" women around Selma [James] who disregarded the blare from the radio announcing Stalin's death. Instead, they were exchanging recipes for hamburgers. Not only was that idiotic suggestion floated, but she undertook to censor my analysis on the significance of Stalin's death, so that it too sounded not so world-shaking. Such an attitude towards a world event produced such a struggle between me and Grace, that it actually affected the whole Johnson-Forest Tendency.(5)

What was C.L.R. James's "solution" to the crisis created by the different attitudes, both to Stalin's death and to the tasks of a Marxist newspaper? It was typically Jamesian: I was judged to be "politically" right, but nevertheless totally wrong because of my sharp attack on Grace. Grace was judged to be "politically" wrong, but absolutely right because she listened to the "new." After two months of this type of meaningless, diversionary, empty "solution" to both things happening in the objective world and attitudes to what are the tasks of a Marxist news-

paper to objective events, I asked for a week off, left Detroit for Ann Arbor, and out of me poured those Letters of May 12 and 20 on the Absolute Idea.

Now then, because the dialectic flow in the present singling out of p. 21 of the May 12, 1953 letter points also to the relevance of looking at it with eyes of 1987, let me examine the new find, the 1952 letter which shows I had made a plunge into the Idea of Cognition, especially on the section "The Idea of the Good." Clearly I definitely had organization in mind. This was not on the level of James and Grace and their dialectic of the "Party," but on the question of dialectic "in and of itself." While I do not remember where I raised the

* The same type of crisis as occurred in March-April 1953 over the Johnson-Forest tendency's attitude to Stalin's death recurred with the first issue of *Correspondence* on October 3, 1953 for which I had written the lead on the Beria Purge. Reexamining this in 1987, I realize that what looks like the "Russian Question"—that same old Russian Question" which caused the first break with Trotskyism at the approach of World War II and reoccurred in 1950 on the Korean War—far from being on the "Russian Question," was actually on the decisive question of war and revolution which has always marked that new continent of thought and revolution of Marxism from its birth. 1917 designated its move to the 20th century. It was Stalin's counter-revolution that gave it a narrow nationalist stamp. Why the hell have all of us been caught in that linguistic web?—RD

question that I wasn't quite happy with Lenin's 16-point definition of the dialectic, I had called attention to the fact that Lenin says its final two points (15 and 16) are "examples of point 9."(6) This, I felt, was a step back from proceeding with the Absolute Idea and returning to the Doctrine of Essence, Form and Content specifically.

At the same time—and that's when I did get brave and started arguing with Lenin as if he were right there—I began arguing with Lenin because he had asked the readers to disregard the last half paragraph of the chapter on the Absolute Idea while I insisted that had he suffered from Stalinism for three long decades he would have seen the relevance of following Hegel's Absolutes to the end. (This of course is taken

up in the May 20, 1953 letter, where I deal with the three final syllogisms [of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*], but for the present what is compelling is to trace the many ways of the development of the Self-Determination of the Idea.)

Here is how the May 12, 1953 letter manifested the dialectical flow on p. 21: **from** exteriorization/interiorization it lapsed into a would-be "absolute" which led Lenin to remain at the "approach to," i.e., on the threshold of, the Absolute Idea. This is the reason why Lenin preferred to let the Absolute Idea stop at **Nature** (Practice), crediting Hegel with "stretching a hand to materialism," instead of following Hegel to the last part of that paragraph where Hegel insists that the Absolutes had not been completed with the Absolute Idea, and must still go through the *Philosophy of Nature* and *Philosophy of Mind* before completion is reached with Absolute Mind.

Put another way, in place of any **self-criticism**, or **objectivity**, Lenin left future generations without full illumination of what may befall them—Stalinism. It is the generation that followed, our age that suffered through those three decades of Stalinism, that had to face the reality of what happens after. It is **this** point, **this** objectivity, **this** concreteness, that emboldened me not to stop where Lenin stopped at the approach to the Absolute Idea, but to follow Hegel to the *Philosophy of Mind*. The Absolute Method opened new doors already in the Absolute Idea, which Hegel defined as:

The pure Idea, in which the determinateness or reality of the Notion is itself raised to the level of Notion, is an absolute **liberation**, having no further immediate determination which is not equally **posited** and equally Notion. Consequently there is no transition in this freedom...The transition here therefore must rather be taken to mean that the Idea freely releases itself.... [SLII, pp. 485-86; SLM, p. 843].

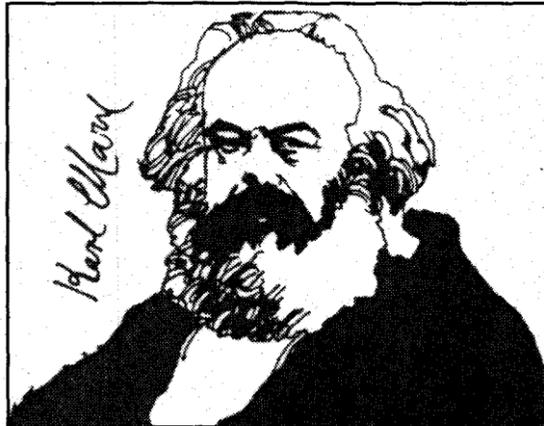
Now stand up and shout: "The Idea freely releases itself." Shout this while a flashing light illuminates Reality and its meaning, philosophy and revolution. Instead of placing a "No Entrance" sign over organization as "pure politics," we finally are in the process of working out dialectics of philosophy and organization.

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Instead of placing a "No Entrance" sign over organization as "pure politics," we finally are in the process of working out dialectics of philosophy and organization.

NOTES BY THE EDITORS

1. This corresponds to the page number of the May 12, 1953 letter as found in *The Power of Negativity*.
2. By 1950, James and Dunayevskaya had broken with the concept of the vanguard party. Her view that the break stayed on a political level, and did not reach directly into philosophy itself, is illustrated by *State-Capitalism and World Revolution* (1950), written by James in collaboration with Dunayevskaya and Grace Lee.
3. Johnny Zupan, a Detroit auto worker, became the editor of the tendency's newspaper, *Correspondence*, upon its appearance in printed form in 1953.
4. The article on the 1920 trade union debate in Russia, "Then and Now," was published in the mimeographed *Correspondence* in 1952, and can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 2181-92. This article became the basis of the chapter on the 1920 trade union debate in *Marxism and Freedom*.
5. The debate around Dunayevskaya's analysis of Stalin's death occupied the first several printed issues of *Correspondence*, in October and November 1953.
6. Points 15 and 16 of Lenin's 16-point definition of dialectic were "the struggle of content with form and conversely. The throwing off of the form, the transformation of the content" and "The transition of quantity into quality and vice versa." Point 9 was "not only the unity of opposites, but the transition of every determination, quality, feature, side, property, into every other (into its opposite)?" [LCW 38, p. 222]. In point 14 Lenin had gone further than this, in singling out "the negation of the negation."



G.W.F. Hegel

Marxist-Humanism, Critical Theory, and the quest for radical subjectivity

by Tom More

The contemporary climate of philosophical discourse casts a pall of suspicion on the philosophy of the subject and the philosophy of history. Jean-Francois Lyotard's injunction against grand narratives and meta-narratives has broad currency in the new dispensation of "postmetaphysical thinking."

Within Critical Theory, deeper than Jürgen Habermas's criticism of French postmodern thought is his agreement with this dispensation.(1) In this respect, he is a "Kantian" and not a "Hegelian." However, whether this figure of stepping back from "Hegel" to "Kant" counts as philosophical progress is an open question. The deeply engrained residues of Kantian dualism that show up in the series of dualisms that characterize Habermasian Critical Theory also help to explain Habermas's rapprochement with liberalism, which some of us have come to think of as a kind of betrayal of the radicalism that once upon a time inspired it in its inception.

At just this post-Kantian juncture or impasse, the figure of Hegel looms large. And standing on the shoulders of this giant, Marx looms large. It was the singular achievement of the founder of Marxist-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya, to have re-created the dialectical relationship between Hegelian philosophy and Marxism, most recently made available to us in *The Power of Negativity*.(2)

This volume is so multifaceted that I have chosen to focus on just one theme, but the theme itself is so grand—in the very sense that Lyotard criticized—that I cannot do it justice here. This is the theme of the renewal of the philosophy of the subject that, at least by intention, aims to complete the radicalism of the critique of the bourgeois subject by being genuinely post-bourgeois and even revolutionary.

Douglas Kellner and others have recently articulated the need within Critical Theory to come back to the question of the subject again.(3) The publication of *The Power of Negativity* coincides perfectly with the emerging sense of this demand.

DOES THE LEFT HAVE AN IDEA?

George Lukács' theory of imputed class-consciousness, or the theory of the vanguard party, having essentially gone the way of the USSR, discloses both the danger and the failure of proletarian romanticism. The conception of the proletariat as a collective, world-historical subject is now generally held to be as fictive as the philosophy of the subject itself. In fact, one of the distinguishing features of contemporary left academic radicalism is its celibate relationship with working class politics. The question, Who is the proletariat?, has been held to be as empty and idle as the question, Who is the subject of history?

Another way to make this point is to observe that the very idea of an "idea of history" has come to be held as a dead letter, as dead on arrival as Lyotard's "grand narrative." From this vantage point, Hegelian Marxism might seem to be merely quaint at best. There is nothing especially novel about this: it has been a long time since Daniel Bell proclaimed "the end of ideology." The 14th chapter in *The Power of Negativity*, entitled "Marxist-Humanism and the Battle of Ideas," might sound like a parlor game.

In reply, however, it is quite possible that the fundamental poverty of the Left in the U.S. is that it has no idea. The miserable defeat of the Democratic Party in the elections of Nov. 5, 2002 is only one measure of how little what passes for opposition to the Bush Doctrine, in its present organizational forms, is able to articulate itself either to itself or to the public. But this self-defeating paralysis of ideas, the postmodern attitude that Richard Rorty christens as "liberal irony," paralyzes the Left but not the Right. It would not be remiss to suggest that what most of all characterizes the emerging fascism of the Right is precisely that it **does** have an idea.

I make these remarks to instigate this thought: that whereas the Right has an "Idea" in the Hegelian sense—in the degraded sense of Right Hegelianism that sanctifies the given—the postmodern academic Left really has no idea. And it has no idea in the Hegelian sense because, to plagiarize Slavoj Žižek, it has not "tarry with the negative." Not having tarried with the negative in the battle of ideas, its critical dismissal of the philosophy of the subject and the philosophy of history has failed to be post-bourgeois. It finds itself stalemated by the bourgeois form of life and the philosophical disposition it had thought to eclipse and surpass.

A PHILOSOPHIC ALTERNATIVE

What I now propose is that waiting in the wings all along has Raya Dunayevskaya, who had the nerve to take Hegel seriously, and who regarded Hegel as her contemporary mentor, as he had been the unparalleled mentor to Marx.

By setting Marx in his proper philosophical context, Dunayevskaya re-created Marxism as a philosophy of freedom. She was as bold as Marx and Hegel themselves in holding that the idea of freedom is the

very "Idea" of history.

Recalling the more notorious passages of Hegel's own *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, which she studiously ignored as more or less irrelevant to the task of re-creating dialectics, we might be tempted to conclude that this philosophy of freedom is really only the Eurocentrism that postmodernism and postcolonial theory have labored so hard to overcome. But this is a hasty conclusion.

Dunayevskaya's is a Hegelianism of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. It is a Hegelianism of what she called the "Black dimension" in the U.S., and of wildcat strikes in the coal mines of West Virginia. It is the Hegelianism of Nat Turner and Frantz Fanon. It is the Hegelianism not of the *Philosophy of Right* but of the "Absolute Idea as New Beginning."(4) It is the revolutionary Hegelianism of Karl Marx.

Or conversely, Dunayevskaya's is the Marx who emancipates the Hegelian revolutionary idea of freedom from its bourgeois horizon, and who emancipates the "Idea" by situating it in a philosophical vision of new human social relations at the point of production—on the premise that the mode of production is the center of gravity that determines the form of social relations and therefore the social form of life that prevails in an epoch.

SUBJECT/OBJECT

Of any number of points of entry we might take into *The Power of Negativity*, one way into its philosophical core as a philosophy of the subject might be to situate it in the landscape of Martin Jay's book, *Marxism and Totality* (1985). Jay there traces the fate of "totality" from Lukács to Adorno and Habermas. In short, whereas Lukács affirms "totality," in Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* "totality" becomes totalitarianism, and Hegel's "absolute" and absolute negativity become a "philosopheme of pure identity and death," the figure of which is "Auschwitz." In this way, Adorno anticipates the death of the subject as a harbinger of certain aspects of postmodern thought.

Inasmuch as the subject's objectivity in capitalism is the result of alienated objectivity—the reality of the human subject crushed by the oppressive nature-like necessity of the domination of dead over living labor, of constant over variable capital—the subject-object identity of the Hegelian logic of history would almost inevitably appear to be imputed to the subject from without, externally and from above, a mystification and an onto-theology, whether of God or the vanguard party to lead.

But from Dunayevskaya's perspective, this appearance is only show, belonging among the false appearances of capital itself.

Capital is the sham "absolute," the form of appearance of which appears to abrogate human subjectivity. However, in Dunayevskaya's re-creation of the dialectic, this false absolute, the apparent historical necessity of capitalist social relations at the point of production, concretely calls into being, as logically it must, its absolute opposite—that is, the absolute negation of this absolute mystification of social reality, at its root, in the contradictory relation between wage labor and capital that constitutes the capitalist mode of production.

Like the concept of totality, the Hegelian logical categories of contradiction and mediation have fallen into philosophical disrepute. They are supposed to belong to the onto-theological project of the totalization of identity at the expense of difference. The speculative projection of subject-object identity through dialectical mediation, it is claimed, either spells out the absolute of capital, a false totality; or if not capital then Stalinism.(5)

But these postmodern, postmetaphysical conclusions follow only upon the identification of the subject to be eclipsed as the bourgeois Cartesian-Kantian subject, constituted as the European project of domination and conquest. The repudiation of this subject on behalf of difference is as one-sided as the totalitarian conception of identity that abolishes difference.

Either capital is the absolute subject, or there is an "other" of capital. The false appearance of the former has the physiognomy of the Cartesian sovereign subject beheld in the philosophical mirror. In that case,

either the withering gaze that penetrates this false appearance (say, the gaze of Karl Marx) is simply critical and negative, illuminating nothing of the other of capital; or what is disclosed in the critical gesture, the gesture of Dunayevskaya, is a second subjectivity—that is, the objectivity of a working class struggle, a Black struggle, a women's struggle to be free.

The philosophical struggle of ideas to identify and to stand in solidarity with the subjects of revolution who are the absolute other of capital, would be effectively blocked by the postmodern discourse of the death of the subject, a discourse supposedly on behalf of the other.

The trouble with this negative dialectics, however, is that it stops short at first negation. The negation of Auschwitz that is merely a first negation not only discloses nothing positive in the negative, but it is also dialectically constituted in such a way that it can only assert itself in the dark shadows of the totalizing identity it claims to transgress. As a negative gesture, it implicitly capitulates to the totalizing claims of the absolute subject it opposes.

On the other hand, the second negation, the negation of the negation, the speculative moment of Hegelian philosophy, also discloses a second subjectivity, speculatively projected. This second subjectivity, for Dunayevskaya's Marxist-Humanism, is concretely or materially grounded in the real, material, political aspiration and the struggle of human beings to be free—the liberation struggles of the subjects of revolt.

If we ask who are the auditors of *The Power of Negativity*, Dunayevskaya is in conversation with the subjects of revolt everywhere she could find them: in class struggles, in the Black dimension, in postcolonial struggles, in women's struggles, and in the philosophical battle of ideas.

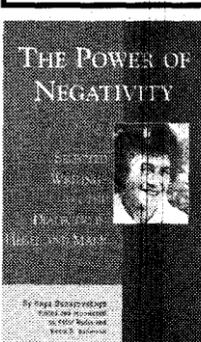
Her own philosophical struggle dictated her conversations with partners as wide-ranging as Herbert Marcuse and Adrienne Rich, George Armstrong Kelly and Louis Dupré, and the Hegel Society of America.

In a time as urgent as our own, the place she occupies in the battle of ideas answers our compelling need: for a philosophy of liberation, a philosophy of the subject and an "Idea" of history, a re-creation of dialectics that renders Hegel and Marx our contemporaries once again.

NOTES

1. See Jürgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays*, trans. W. M. Hohengarten (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).
2. Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx*, eds. P. Hudis and K. Anderson (Lexington Books, 2002).
3. See Douglas Kellner, "Marcuse and the Quest for Radical Subjectivity," in *New Critical Theory: Essays on Liberation*, eds. J. Paris and W. Wilkerson (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).
4. See her paper for the Hegel Society of America, delivered in 1974, "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning," reprinted in *The Power of Negativity*.
5. That is, from the viewpoint of Adorno's "negative dialectics," leaving to one side Dunayevskaya's trenchant critique of the Stalinist USSR as "state-capitalist."

Take a journey of your own into dialectical philosophy...



The Power of Negativity:
Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx

by Raya Dunayevskaya

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Hegel's Absolutes and the crisis of Marxism

by Peter Hudis

The crisis in Marxism is a crisis of liberatory vision. The problem has been around a long time. Neither "dialectical materialists" nor Western Marxists succeeded in fully surmounting it. The regimes that called themselves "Socialist" or "Communist," in which millions were imprisoned and perished in the name of a higher ideal, were not the only expression of the forfeit of liberatory vision. Bertolt Brecht's quip, "Those of us who fought for kindness/could not ourselves be kind" summed up the experience of a century of radicals, and applied no less to Brecht himself.

While much of Marxism lost touch with the liberatory impulses which inspired it, Marx himself has not been confined to the "dusted bin of history" as many a bourgeois pundit would have expected (or wished). Marx is in fact often cited today not just by leftist but also by mainstream critics as "the prophet of globalization" because of his insight into how capital's drive for self-expansion leads to both "the universal interdependence of nations" and immense social devastation. The drive of commodification that now pervades not only every corner of the globe but each aspect of our lives (something that has been aptly called "the cancer stage of capital") has given new meaning to Marx's notion that capital treats all limits to its drive for self-expansion as mere barriers to be overcome. Marxism, it seems, lives on because its object of critique persists.

Yet if this has not yet translated into a Marxian renaissance in politics it's because of concern that the loss of liberatory vision which defined so much of Marxism remains with us.

The concern is well deserved. In the past decade many leftists defended or turned a deaf ear to the crimes of genocidal regimes like Milosevic's in Serbia even while avowing the cogency of a Marxian standpoint. More recently, many leftists responded to the September 11 attacks by reciting the "crimes of U.S. imperialism" while not making it clear that they oppose the attacks because they are committed to a world defined by genuine democracy, sexual difference, and an end to class and racial domination, in contrast to the reactionary fundamentalists who carried out September 11. As the ongoing debates in today's anti-war movement show, the much-welcome opposition to Bush's war in Iraq does not by itself ensure that those opposing it will project a vision of liberation that transcends the horizons of global capitalism and its reactionary critics. The crisis in liberatory vision remains with us.

Such crises have often sent Marxists back to Hegel. Recall Lenin's study of Hegel in 1914 in response to the Second International's support of World War I. Or Georg Lukács' return to Hegel in *History and Class Consciousness* in 1923. Lukács there emphasized Hegel's importance for Marxism, taking aim even at Marx's closest follower, Engels, for "overlooking the most vital interaction, the dialectical relation between subject and object."

Yet though Lukács placed much importance on the dialectical method, one can question whether his

approach recaptured the liberatory content of Marx's Marxism. After all, by the late 1920s he capitulated to Stalinism. And even after breaking from Stalinism in the 1950s and returning to the themes of his earlier work, he still held to a rather narrow concept of a new society, as seen in his view that domination of living labor by socially necessary labor time continues to operate under "socialism." As he wrote in his last work, *The Process of Democratization*, "These classical economic categories are applicable to any mode of production."

Whatever may be the reasons for Lukács' trajectory, on one key issue he agreed with Engels even in *History and Class Consciousness*: namely, that while Hegel's method was revolutionary, the culmination of his system in a series of Absolutes was not. This rejection of Hegel's system in favor of his method dominated virtually all of Marxism, from Engels to his most sophisticated critics. For instance, Theodor Adorno

argued: "Although the structure of Hegel's system would certainly collapse without [the Absolute Idea], the dialectic's experiential content does not come from this principle but from the resistance of the other to identity."

Yet there is a problem with this. In Hegel dialectic method is the universal form of the Absolute Idea, which he defines as the unity of theory and practice. As the unity of theory and practice, the Absolute is conscious, purposeful self-activity, or freedom. Dialectic method is the form by which the content of the Absolute unfolds. In this sense, for Hegel dialectics is not something that is externally applied to a given content. Rather, the method is at one with the content of its subject matter.

The dialectic method is critical, because it negates all that stands in the way of subjective self-activity based on a unity of theory and practice; and it is revolutionary by virtue of measuring each development against this "absolute" standpoint.

It took a non-Marxist, Gillian Rose (in *Hegel Contra Sociology*), to point out what should have been obvious but obviously wasn't: namely, if we take Hegel's method but throw out his concept of the Absolute, "dialectics" becomes a formal method that can be used to justify virtually any conclusion one has reached beforehand. Some may take an analytical approach, by emphasizing how dialectical categories reveal the workings of a given phenomena via a "process of abstraction." Others may take a synthetic approach, by stressing the dialectical unity of apparent contradictions. But once the method is divorced from its content—the Absolute Idea, the transcendence—"dialectics" can readily be "used" to defend whatever conclusion one chooses, even a non-liberatory one.

In this sense, the failure of even many "dialectical" Marxists to resolve the crisis in projecting Marxism's liberatory content may not be accidental: the assumption of a separation between Hegel's method and his Absolutes can be seen as overdetermining that very outcome.

A different approach was taken by Raya Dunayevskaya, founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. She held, beginning in the 1950s, that the crisis presented by the rise of totalitarian Stalinism from within the revolutionary movement calls for a reexamination of Hegel's Absolutes. She was not concerned with Hegel's reactionary political conclusions, which Marx long ago exposed in his critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Rather, she was interested in the vision of liberation contained in Hegel's Absolutes that escaped the historic confines of his political conclusions and which took on new meaning in light of the crises of Marxism.

She especially focused on Hegel's view that the transcendence of alienation proceeds through the "negation of the negation." It is not just the negation of a given phenomenon but the negation of one's initial negative encounter with it that ensures forward movement.

Hegel shows in his *Phenomenology of Mind* that this is not just true of the movement from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit and Religion. It is also true when we reach the culmination, Absolute Knowledge. The Absolute turns out to be that fulcrum of self-activity constituted by the full and free movement through "the negation of the negation." At the end of the *Phenomenology* Hegel even says this leads to "a new stage of existence, a new world."

In the *Science of Logic* he says the negation of the negation is "the innermost and most objective moment of Life and Spirit, by virtue of which a subject is personal and free." And in his *Philosophy of Mind* he says "the essential feature of mind is liberty: i.e., the notion's absolute negativity."

In sum, the Absolute turns out to be not a fixed point of abode but rather the movement through "the

negation of the negation" itself, the ceaseless process of breaking down internal as well as external barriers to the self-development of the Subject.

As Dunayevskaya argued in *Marxism and Freedom*, "The vision of the future which Hegel called the Absolute [is what] Marx first called 'real Humanism' and later 'communism.'" The loss of Marx's liberatory vision by later Marxists, she held, called out for a return to Hegel's Absolutes. Her most comprehensive discussion of this is in her *Philosophy and Revolution* and the new collection *The Power of Negativity*.

I would like say a word about what separates a return to Hegel's Absolutes from that now-dreaded word, totality. I say dreaded because the concept of totality projected by Lukács and others has come in for a lot of criticism, some of it deserved. This is not just because there is always access to the totality, in the sense that there is always a horizon of additional facts and phenomena that come into play whenever something seems to be grasped as a whole. Also, it's because comprehending something as a "whole" can still rest on a set of narrow assumptions.

For instance, how often does it happen that something is grasped by using concepts and categories that are historically specific and even informed by Eurocentric assumptions? In this sense the concept of totality not only isn't the same as absolute negativity, it can also get in the way of grasping it in that one settles for a way of viewing things without "negating the negation," that is, without calling into question the grounding ideas from which a phenomenon is grasped.

After all, the only real "Absolute" in Hegel is absolute negativity; what makes negativity absolute is that it applies to everything—not just to the external object of perception but to the mode of apprehending it. This is Hegel's anti-foundationalism, his emphasis on the absolute as a ceaseless process of negation that breaks down internal as well as external barriers to liberation.

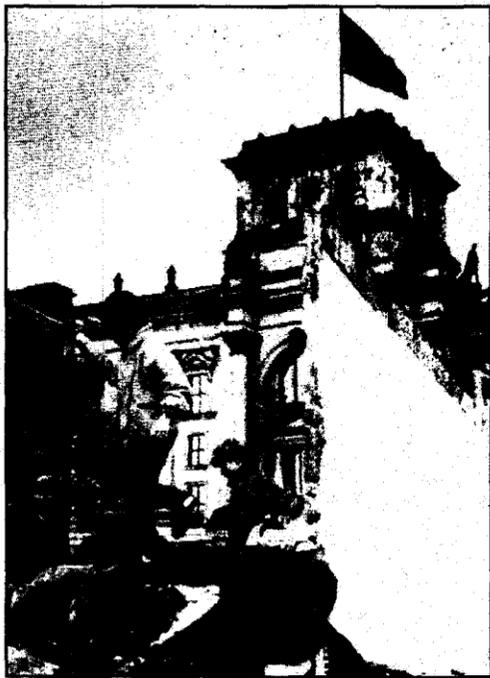
As Dunayevskaya said in 1976 speech that appears in *The Power of Negativity*:

Lukács tried to say, "Well, since we don't believe in Absolutes, let's see what Hegel meant: he meant the unity of theory and practice, so then the key is totality." Totality is very much superior to empiricism, it's very much superior to taking only one single question; totality means you look at the relationship between the Third World and the First World and the Second World—you look at the relationship of various ideas. But, it isn't enough. It's just totality as the opposite of single ideas, single actions.... That's great, but it isn't going to give you any new ideas. We're living in a world that has seen the counter-revolution within the revolution, has seen the transformation of the first workers' state into its opposite—a state-capitalist society.... We really have to begin with the Absolute not only as a totality, but as a new beginning on the basis of what comes from the movement from below, as well as from the Idea, and it's that unity which will finally realize the Idea of Freedom as its reality (pp. 207, 209).

There is no guarantee, of course, that any concept will by itself surmount the crisis in projecting a liberatory alternative to existing society. Ideas mean what they do in relation to the people who embody them, for good or ill. But this is no excuse to deny that the Left today has no common idea of freedom—unlike the Right, whose market fetishism has enabled it to project a common idea of freedom.

Endless critique of capitalism, or of any form of unfreedom, does not by itself surmount the crisis in projecting Marx's liberatory vision so long as we lack an absolute standard against which all pretenses to "liberation" can be measured. As Dunayevskaya wrote in *The Power of Negativity*:

Absolute Idea as new beginning can become a new "subjectivity" for realizing Hegel's principle, that "the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality, and that unity which is truth, rest upon this subjectivity alone." This is not exactly a summons to the barricades, but Hegel is asking us to have our ears as well as our categories so attuned to the "Spirit's urgency" that we rise to the challenge of working out, through "the patience, seriousness, suffering and the labor of the negative" a totally new relationship of philosophy to actuality... (p. 189).



Masses tearing down Berlin Wall, 1989.

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759-C

PHILOSOPHY, FREEDOM IN MARX'S MARXISM



(Black regiments storm Ft. Wagner, 1863.)

In her Archives column in the March issue, Raya Dunayevskaya takes up the indigenoussness of Marxism to American soil. When some of Marx's followers said the Civil War was a bourgeois war and they were above the fray, Marx took a side on the question. He picked the side of the North because emancipation was absolutely essential as a first step to a proletarian movement.

In this piece, I see Dunayevskaya giving a working definition of humanism, not of some unspecified humanness. Some say Marx matured and went beyond humanism. But in *Capital* he is still talking about it. He is talking about the emancipation of labor, Black and white. *Capital* is all about humanism.

David
Oakland

The unity of theory and expression is often misunderstood as expressing opinions. For some people, the notion of the self-determination of an idea sticks in the craw. The idea moves, has its own logic. There is a difference between opinion and an idea. We can test the consequences of an idea only in the context of real collectivity. It's not just sharing opinions, but a collective process of working out ideas.

Teacher
New York

Marx's position on the U.S. Civil War was unprecedented. At the time, Europe was the "center" of the industrial world, yet Marx saw the failed attack on Harper's Ferry as a world-historic event. He was fixed on the idea of liberation as the determinant for the future. Marx's debt to the Hegelian dialectic is there in the dialectic of *Capital*.

Analyst
California

Logic is a very human activity.

Musician
New York

FIGHTING RACISM

There was very little national media reporting on the April 1 march on the U.S. Supreme Court to support the University of Michigan's use of race as a factor in admitting students. But Detroit sent such a large contingent that the media could not ignore them: hundreds of city high school students, a large number from the NAACP, churches, and of course the University of Michigan, only 40 miles away in Ann Arbor. The Detroit City Council sponsored a bus so the Council members' young staffers could experience their history first-hand. The local news and Black-oriented radio stations interviewed numbers of people, young and old, who said the march and the numerous briefs filed by even the U.S. military in favor of affirmative action made this case the signal for the birth of a new civil rights movement.

Supporter
Detroit

LIBRARIANS

The USA PATRIOT Act has alarmed so many people that no less than 73 widely diverse communities across the country have passed resolutions opposing all or part of the act that was rushed through Congress right after 9/11 granting sweeping police powers to supposedly fight terrorism. I am happy to say Evanston, Ill. is one of many municipalities now also taking up such a resolution. Bookstores and libraries have been especially troubled by the way the act allows authorities to secretly monitor what people read and the Internet sites they visit. Some librarians have posted signs warning users about the monitoring and explaining how they are taking measures to shred paper records and delete them from the computers at the end of each day. I applaud them.

Library patron
Evanston

READERS' VIEWS

THE WAR ON IRAQ AND WHAT COMES AFTER?

The U.S. army's laissez-faire attitude to today's chaos in Iraq is in stark contrast to 1991, when mass uprisings foreshadowed an actual revolution. Then Bush Sr. was quick to give Saddam Hussein the green light to massacre the revolts. The difference is that the U.S. is confident that its actions in 1991, followed by 12 years of sanctions, have driven home the message that its armed might will allow only one kind of "liberation"—subordination to Bush's imperial power. What needs to be remembered is that revolution has in the past surprised and toppled many rulers confident in their invincibility.

Observer
Memphis

What is going on in the world today is more than the war in Iraq. There is a world-wide movement the likes of which I have never seen. Millions of people have been coming out against the U.S. Bush has upset the relations between U.S. and Europe and has killed the UN. If he wants to use a country's having weapons of mass destruction as an excuse to go to war he can find it in lots of places. Is he going to be reorganizing Europe? What is our future going to be?

Octogenarian
Bay Area

The Philosophic Dialogue by Kevin Anderson in the March issue on "Reflections on Bush's drive for war" addressed a question I had on why Iraq, and why now. Anderson answers the question by showing that the U.S. is a superpower but is still driving toward world domination. I liked how he lays out U.S. global dominance and internal contradictions and challenges revolutionaries to come up with a philosophy of liberation. The war had nothing to do with liberation.

Iranian exile
San Francisco

In an effort to further discredit the pro-peace movement both in the U.S.

and internationally, the Right characterizes peace activists as "anti-Bush," "anti-troops," and "pro-Saddam." They see every situation in terms of its rigid dualisms. As the war ends and the effort to "rebuild" Iraq begins, the ground we take against both Bush and Saddam has to be our vision of total freedom.

Amy Garrison
Tennessee

The protests here held up well after the outbreak of war. There continues, however, to be a problem of ideas and political direction in the movement. The official slogans were "Stop the War" and "Freedom for Palestine," both excellent aims, but while they were displayed on hundreds of placards and chanted over and over again, there was little or nothing about freedom for Iraqis or Kurds. While Blair cited human rights and democracy in Iraq as a justification for the war, the main currents in the peace movement avoided the issue. It leaves us with an apparent choice between evils: war or the continuation of Hussein's totalitarian rule. To take a higher ground the peace movement has to address the more complex issues of freedom and justice for the peoples of Iraq.

Richard Bunting
Oxford, England

Anti-war marches got much smaller here after the war began, but I can attest that widespread opposition both to the crimes of Saddam Hussein and the war are discussed vigorously in the Black community. One Black co-worker told me he had stayed up half the night after they bombed the house where Saddam and his sons were thought to be. He was appalled that "such a huge bomb was used just to kill one guy, even though he deserved it." He said he was watching for reports to see how many others were killed by that bomb "but never did hear a mention of other casualties."

City resident
Detroit

DEMONIZING PROTESTERS

I was glad to see a piece by Michael Moore in the *Los Angeles Times* a few days after he won an Academy Award for "Bowling for Columbine." He said his Oscar Day mistake had been to go to Mass that Sunday because it had reminded him that the pope said the war in Iraq was not a just war. Moore described the boing that began as soon as he made his remarks about the "fictitious times" we live in and said he never got to get out his last line before the orchestra struck up its tune to end the melee. His last line was supposed to have been: "Any time you've got both the pope and the Dixie Chicks against you, you're not long for the White House." There are a lot of folks who wish that were so. But as true as it is that we have a president who was elected with fictitious results and conducted the war for fictitious reasons Bush is soaring in the polls and we have a lot of work to do to effect the "regime change" we need here.

Moviegoer
California

Why are the millions of people worldwide who marched and rallied before the war to try to prevent that carnage in Iraq now being demonized as "traitors"?

Is the war any less wrong now than it was before it bombed the hell out of the country and killed and maimed so many Iraqis that even the International Red Cross can't get an accurate count? Public anti-war figures like Susan Sarandon, Michael Moore, Martin Sheen and even the Dixie Chicks are facing vicious attacks—from losing jobs to death threats—for disagreeing with Bush and Company. I shudder to think how many might agree with Rush Limbaugh's vitri-

ol against Tim Robbins: "How is it that Tim Robbins is still walking free? How in the world is this guy still able to say whatever he wants to say?" Homeland Security may, indeed, have the First Amendment in sights. Will a blacklist be next?

Mary Jo Grey
Chicago

It was sobering to see Peter Jennings end his nightly news report recently with a short report on the current attacks on the anti-war celebrities. He closed it with a shot of the infamous McCarthy hearings. No analysis was needed. It said it all.

Jennings fan
Chicago

SAVING HEALTH CARE

About 37,000 health care workers from across New York State jammed into Albany to oppose Pataki's proposed \$2 billion Medicaid cuts. This massive protest organized by the Service Employees International Union/Local 1199 awed and shocked several lawmakers at the rally.

Many who addressed the rallies spoke about their patients. A home care aide from Queens said she didn't know how to talk about it to her 89-year-old client. She concluded, "Tomorrow, I can tell her that 40,000 people from across the state were here to save health care for people like her." Marchers shared their bitterness against Pataki's betrayal after their leader Dennis Rivera supported his reelection bid a few months ago. They lambasted Pataki at every turn while union officials and hospital executives were cautious not to attack the governor.

"Many of our bosses are here with us today to fight these Medicaid cuts; in the end, we will have to fight these same bosses in the workplace," said one marcher. "While we're protesting here, the war in Iraq is going on. How can the U.S. government claim to be a super-

power when it can't even meet the needs of its own people?" asked another. "We need to put pressure on the governor indefinitely. The fight goes on."

Health Care Worker
New York, N.Y.

WHY READ N&L?

Thank you for your work. *News & Letters* continues to be a voice of sanity.

Adrienne Rich
California

DISILLUSION AND YOUTH

Brown Douglas' article in the April issue on disillusion driving young people into the army reminded me of something a friend once told me about his father. As an adolescent my friend's father was living in a country that was recovering from a devastating war, where economic opportunities for young people were severely limited and where there was movement toward authoritarianism. My friend's father was allowed to join an exciting new youth organization. This meant he was freed from having to go to school, received military training, went on a number of fun-filled camping trips and was imbued with a strong sense of patriotism and superiority. My friend said that, although his father has since rejected the ideology of this experience, it has permanently affected his personality and character. The name of the young people's organization in question was the "Hitler Youth."

N&L Supporter
New Jersey

WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN TROUBLE

I'd like to hear more from Maya Jhansi about how the women's movement has gone toward pragmatism, which she took up in her April "Woman as Reason" column. I agree the women's movement has just been focusing on abortion rights and not thinking about how to counter what the Right is saying. The Right has disarmed the freedom movements. They now have some naive feminists thinking they are being more radical by saying we must defend all life.

Artemis
Memphis

Maya Jhansi is right. We're never going to get anywhere if we continue to get caught up in debates about whether or not fetuses are babies. It's why the early women's liberation movement talked about abortion always in the context of women having control over their own bodies and lives. Winning the right to abortion was part of a whole movement for freedom. We are losing that fight because the movement has narrowed itself to fighting on the grounds of the anti-woman Right.

Women's liberationist
Tennessee

JULIUS JACOBSON

1922-2003

We learned with sorrow of the death of Julius Jacobson, who became a socialist in his early teens and whose lifelong commitment to Marxism had made him a determined activist for radical, democratic, socialist ideas.

In 1961 he co-founded the journal, *New Politics*, with his wife, Phyllis, and served as its editor from that founding to his death. He had earlier been active in the Workers Party and its successor, the Independent Socialist League, writing numerous articles for publications such as *Anvil* and *Student Partisan*, *Labor Action* and *The New International*. He was an associate author of *The American Communist Party: a Critical History* (1957) with Irving Howe and Lewis Coser and contributed to three other books: *The Negro and the American Labor Movement* (1968), *Soviet Communism and the Socialist Vision* (1972), and *Socialist Perspectives* (1983). We mourn his death and honor his memory.



VOICES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

By Robert Taliaferro

Terminology and phrases are a big part of war. What family of a military member is not amused when their son or daughter returns from Boot Camp or one of the military training centers and has a whole new vocabulary that they can't wait to share.

The government, when at war, and the mainstream press, when reporting war, also like using innocuous sounding words and phrases. "Collateral damage," for instance, is that quaint phrase used when you intend to kill five members of a control and command center with a guided 1,000-pound bomb that becomes misguided—as such things will—and falls on the wrong target, killing 100 civilians, most often non-combatant women, children, and the aged.

As long as we're discussing words and phrases, let's try some that every American school kid should know: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these rights is life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

These words, of course, belong to the *Declaration of Independence*, that document which long ago became the revolutionary construct to oppose the tyranny of another George who was bent on world domination, and exposing his values at the point of a bayonet and the killing power of military ball ammunition.

WORDS OF FREEDOM, LIES OF WAR

One wonders, will the current war be able to teach a young Iraqi child—one who lost a limb when a General Dynamic-propulsed, Raytheon-guided multi-purpose cruise missile dropped a fragmentary grenade into his play area and maimed him—the meaning and idealism behind those words? Will they be recognized by a Palestinian family about to be annihilated by a 105 mm, smooth-bore, HEAT or SABOT round, U.S.-made, designed to kill top-of-the-line, Russian-made Main Battle Tanks (MBT)? Words and phrases.

Prior to Iraq War II, much was made about weapons of mass destruction, and one of the saddest displays of intellect ever witnessed in the history of the English language were the questions, in the words and phrase-game, that weren't asked.

Weapons of mass destruction, for instance, are only relative according to the conditions in which they are

Cuba's clampdown

Fidel Castro's crackdown against the opposition movement within Cuba has revealed him to be a man whose 44 year rule is haunted by more than the threats emanating from the Bush administration. For the past decade hundreds of organizations have formed on the island, opening a much needed space for debate.

It is this internal movement that Castro is attempting to squelch by sentencing 78 dissidents in the first week of April to terms of up to 28 years.

Those who believe all the accused were in actuality conspiring with James Cason, head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana (there is no U.S. embassy), to overthrow the government have not paid attention to what this movement represents. It is not well defined, nor well united.

It is not located exclusively in the capital; those locked up now came from all parts of the island. About two dozen of them are independent journalists. Others were involved with illegal independent libraries, human rights groups, political parties, youth groups, and workers' groups.

One defining moment in the movement's development was the 1994 revolt that started at the Malecon seawall, the so-called "maleconazo."

The most significant recent event was the Varela Project. This was an attempt initiated by the Movimiento Cristiano de Liberacion (dozens of whose members are now behind bars) to get the requisite 10,000 signatures, per the Constitution, to enact these reforms: freedom of association, amnesty for prisoners, private enterprise, a new electoral law. Some in the movement thought it was foolish and some loved it. Over 200 organizations—within Cuba—endorsed it. On May 10, 2002 11,000 signatures were presented to the National Assembly.

The initial response was silence: no mention of the petition was made in the press. Then in June the Party's apparatus collected nearly nine million signatures (there's only 11 million people on the island) in three days to sign into law a declaration on the impossibility of modifying the current political structure. Apparently at about the same time a much more vicious response was set in motion as well, the fruits of which is the current wave of repression.

—Mitch Weerth

The Revolutionary Journalism of Felix Martin (Isaac Woods)

"I am not saying that one capitalist is better than the other capitalist, because the capitalists in each country are the enemy of their own people."

—On "Remembering Pearl Harbor" during the 1991 Gulf War

\$8.00

To order see page 4

The language of war

used. Prior to September 11, who would have thought a passenger jet was a weapon of mass destruction?

If a 2,000-lb. daisy-cutter explodes in an Iraqi village and kills everyone, then it is a weapon of mass destruction relative to that village. If a tank or artillery shell kills an innocent Palestinian family, then that tank shell is a weapon of mass destruction for that family. If a 5.65-mm NATO, full-metal-jacketed slug pierces the heart of a civilian who got in the way of a fire-fight, then it is a weapon of mass destruction for that individual.

COMPUTER GAME COLONIALISM

We often look at the words and phrases of war as some casual computer or Nintendo game that we can play (view) on our televisions and turn off at will. Perhaps if wars were fought as they were 50 years ago, without the benefit of televised, push-button war-making, those who so avidly support modern wars of colonization would not think with the computer-game mentality, that all you have to do is press the reset button, to make it all right again.

Someone once wrote that war is nothing more than mass murder for political gain. If that is the case, then one wonders how much more Bush family politics will be allowed before the world begins to ask the questions that are the key to ending such word and phrases games. Questions like, "What makes Milosevic and Bush any different, if both use the resources at their command to destroy thousands of lives over a whim?"

"How can a country that incarcerates more of its citizens per capita than any other country in the world; that executes its citizens as a national policy; and that ignores world condemnation of those aspects of its culture, define what is morally right for others?" Words and phrases.

When we speak of the masses, and of words and phrases, all peace-loving peoples should now be coming together and, in a unified voice, ensure that the winning battle-cry of the Bush II Administration should not be "four more years," but "one-term wonder," just like his father before him.

And if freedom is to ring on the plains and hills and valleys of Iraq and Palestine, and throughout the world, let it do so without the concussive violence of war.

No to occupation!



San Francisco, Cal.—Up to 8,000 protesters marched in a wicked rain on April 12 to oppose the U.S. occupation of Iraq. The Bay Area is one place where demonstrations didn't end whether or not Bush was declaring "victory" in his war. Related demonstrations also challenged corporate war-profiteering. (See pages 3, 11 for story and pictures.)

Meeting the new boss in Ecuador

Guayaquil, Ecuador—Unfortunately the news in Ecuador is not good. Lucio Gutiérrez, who, during the election campaign, had already begun to backtrack from his radical position, is looking more and more like just another power-amassing caudillo.

His first act as president was to travel to the U.S. and assure Bush that "Ecuador is your best friend." This was followed by what he is putting forth as his first major achievement as president, an agreement with the IMF for an additional \$200 million, which brings with it the usual "belt tightening" (read: it is to be paid for on the backs of the poor).

The state-controlled price of gasoline was raised by a whopping 35%, which raised the cost of public transportation and utilities and set off a new cycle of inflation. At the same time he froze public salaries and made commitments to the IMF with respect to privatization and other government "economies." This from a man who as candidate spoke of the primacy of the "social debt" over that of the external debt.

Adding insult to injury, in a recent speech to students, he urged them to no longer take to the streets. His policies have sparked strikes amongst teachers, health workers and civil servants. For the appointment of his sister as Ambassador to Argentina and for other appointments, he has already been accused of nepotism.

Wherever he goes he troops along adoring followers

Acheh peace accord in trouble

The peace accord signed last December by the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) in Aceh threatened to unravel during March and April. GAM has been fighting for independence for the resource-rich province since 1976; more than 10,000 people have been killed, mostly civilians killed by the Indonesian security forces.

Hopes for salvaging the peace agreement rose in mid-April, when the parties agreed to sit down at the negotiating table to discuss alleged violations by both sides. But at the same time, Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri instructed the Indonesian military and national police to prepare for a "security operation" in Aceh should the accord fall apart.

Some government leaders are pushing for a campaign to wipe out GAM, clinging to the misapprehension that it consists of only a few thousand guerillas, when in fact most of the population supports GAM and independence. Reports warn that if the civilian movements begin massive public demonstrations again, the army may resort to mass killings.

NEW GOVERNMENT VIOLENCE

Two Joint Security Committee (JSC) offices outside the capital were attacked in March by mobs attempting to assault the GAM representatives on the JSC, which is charged with monitoring the implementation of the accord. Several JSC members were injured. The attacks were instigated and coordinated by the army, which appears to be forming militia groups just as it did trying to stop East Timor from gaining independence four years ago.

According to a report received from SIRA (Information Centre for a Referendum in Aceh), in the wake of a March attack on the JSC office in Takengon, Central Aceh, hundreds of people fled nine nearby villages, mostly elderly people, young people and children. The villagers reported that before the attack militias and soldiers visited their homes, telling them they must take part in the action. Some villagers were reportedly killed and their homes burnt.

ACTIVISTS FALSELY TRIED, MURDERED

Under the peace accord, both sides agreed to cease all hostilities, and GAM accepted a "special autonomy arrangement" for Aceh as the basis for future negotiations. However, GAM has not stopped advocating independence, and the government appears to be using that as an excuse to scuttle the accord. GAM agreed to lay down its arms in stages, and the government agreed to stop all military operations in Aceh and to reposition its troops to defensive positions, but the accord does not specify the details, and these steps have not been implemented.

The government is also cracking down on demonstrations and civil society organizations that seek peace and a referendum on Aceh's status. Muhammad Nazar, chair of the presidium of SIRA, went on trial April 17. The prosecutor alleges Nazar had incited the public at a series of meetings in North Aceh, saying, "We the people must unite in support of GAM," and "When the Joint Security Team comes, you must all yell 'Independence!'" The trial is being held before a single judge, indicating a "fast-track" trial.

Other activists have been abducted and murdered. According to the People's Crisis Centre, an Acehese NGO caring for internally displaced persons and other humanitarian matters, conditions in Aceh resemble the period before the peace accord was signed.

—compiled by Anne Jaclard

As we go to press, peace talks have collapsed between GAM and the Indonesian government, which is threatening to pull out of the December accord. See the June N&L for developments.

of his Patriotic Society Party. Recently, after joint military exercises with the U.S., a "forgotten" hand grenade went off on the Isle of Puná (just outside of Guayaquil), destroying homes and leaving five dead and numerous injured. Gutiérrez arrived with his contingent and delivered 200 sacks of rice stamped with his propaganda.

Gutiérrez, we must remember, ascended to the presidency based solely on his support of the indigenous uprising of January 2000, which demanded a total restructuring of the political institutions of the country, a freeze on paying the external debt, massive spending in health and education (teachers only received their paltry February salaries toward the end of March), and revoking the agreement that turned an air base in Manta over to the U.S. military (already during the election campaign Gutiérrez had promised to "honor all agreements with the U.S.").

His overwhelming electoral victory was a result entirely of the Ecuadorian masses' passion for fundamental change. To date this victory seems to have had the effect of at least temporarily co-opting radical indigenous organizations and stifling dissent. However, these passions are so strong and deeply rooted in centuries of exploitation that they are certain to erupt sooner or later, most likely with renewed vigor.

—Roger

BLACK/RED VIEW

by John Alan

Last January George W. Bush announced that he was opposed to affirmative action. He said he arrived at that decision with the help of his National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice. However, according to the March/April issue of *Crisis*, the NAACP's magazine, Bush's decision to oppose affirmative action was mainly developed by an influential "small clique of right-wing Black lawyers, all Bush administration appointees."

Shortly after Bush conferred with his conservative African-American appointees, he announced that he had asked the Department of Justice to file a friend of the court brief with the U.S. Supreme Court opposing the University of Michigan affirmative action policies. President Bush is a devious politician who knows that if you are going to play politics in America, where race division is sharper than class division, it is very good to have African Americans playing on your political team as a shield against charges of racism.

ROOTS OF A CONCEPT

The concept of affirmative action has been around for a long time. The term first appeared in a 1935 labor relations act prohibiting racial discrimination in hiring. At that time the term "affirmative action" only implied that a government agency would try to stop racial discrimination. It was neither controversial nor effective. But with the birth of the Civil Rights Movement during the 1960s things changed radically. Nothing could be only implied, race segregation and discrimination had to be uprooted.

That change was indicated in the speech President Lyndon Johnson gave at Howard University on June 4, 1965. He declared, "Our earth is the home of revolution. In every corner of every continent men charged with hope contend with ancient ways in the pursuit of justice. They reach for the newest weapons to realize the oldest of dreams, that each may walk in freedom

Opportunities for mouthpieces can't cover up racial inequality

and pride, stretching his talents, enjoying the fruits of the earth."

Of course, Lyndon Johnson was not advocating a real revolution to create a new kind of society without race and class antagonisms. He was a capitalist politician caught in a tight political situation and had to show African Americans that he was politically fighting racism. One of his political solutions was affirmative action. He issued an executive order establishing the office of Federal Contract Compliance which, along with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, began requiring companies to set numerical racial hiring goals. This was a small beginning for affirmative action.

LEVERAGING RACISM

But it only set the stage for new struggles with racism. The opponents of affirmative action began to vilify it by calling it "reverse discrimination" that gave preference to African Americans, harming whites while stigmatizing African Americans. Of course, this is totally misleading.

Almost 30 years ago, in 1974, Allan Bakke filed a lawsuit against the University of California Medical School charging that the institution's admissions policies were unconstitutional because the spaces "set aside" for minorities prevented his admission. The Supreme Court ruled that the University of California at Davis' admission policy was unconstitutional.

This ruling was in line with the growing opposition to affirmative action after President Johnson launched it as a policy supported by both Republicans and Democrats. Ronald Reagan, when he was governor of California, started on his road to the White House by scuttling affirmative action at the University of California. Later, Democrats like Bill Clinton and Joseph Lieberman joined the chorus and announced that they also opposed affirmative action because it was a "preferential policy based on race or sex." Affirmative action

remains only in small enclaves.

Today, after three centuries of preferential treatment for white Americans, a group of white students who wanted to enter the University of Michigan are asking the Supreme Court to strike down affirmative action there because they claim it violates the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The irony is that the 14th Amendment was originally added in 1868 to protect newly liberated African Americans from their former masters. Ten of the 11 southern states rejected that amendment. As the political situation changed, so has the Supreme Court's interpretation of the 14th Amendment.

FINISH RECONSTRUCTION

What African Americans have known for a long time, is that the U.S. Constitution does not automatically dispense freedom and if they don't fight for freedom they will live under a reign of racist terror. American society, from its beginning, has been sharply divided between the white and Black races. This division is good for capitalist politicians.

Both Republicans and Democrats have outrageously exploited this racial division and are using the issue of affirmative action to drive a wedge between Black and white American youth by causing both races to fight over limited spaces at a university.

The current controversy over affirmative action only proves, if more proof is needed, that remedies seized by politicians cannot solve fundamental problems facing American society. When the African-American masses did have a say in setting up their own education, they did not just ask for a few African-American children to be placed in existing white schools. They created—during Reconstruction—a free public school system in the South, which was supposed to provide universal access to education for both Black and white youth. Reconstruction of the whole of society is still on the agenda.

Black America's challenge to Bush's war and repression

(Continued from page 1)

of 70% to 80% opposition among Blacks because of their unique historical vantage point for judging American civilization.

Police killings and beatings, frame-up trials, the prison-industrial complex and racist death penalty, and simple everyday disrespect are the measure of this pretentious "civilization" which is now reaching its greatest-ever imperial extension in Iraq.

IN DEFENSE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Another measure of the U.S.'s state of human relations could be seen in Washington, D.C. on April 1, when up to 40,000 marchers descended upon the Supreme Court to demand the continuation of affirmative action programs in school admissions. The mainly Black marchers were challenging the expressed wishes of the Bush administration in the midst of a war and declaring that they wanted no return to the era of Plessy vs. Ferguson, when "separate but equal," racist Jim Crow laws were codified by the court in 1896 at the birth of the U.S.'s overseas imperial expansion.

Thousands chanted, "Jim Crow, hell no!" and "Two, four, six, eight, We don't want to segregate!" The messages were directed at President Bush who allowed his Department of Justice to go against the University of Michigan's undergraduate and law school diversity programs in cases on the Supreme Court docket this year.

"Baby" Bush benefited from "Papa" Bush being a Yale alumnus, and Grand Daddy, too. He went to Yale on a "C" average. So President Bush in so many words says, only his relatives and friends should benefit; everyone else, you're on your own.

The opposition to affirmative action is only a part of the Bush administration's attack on education for the poor and working class. Even schools for military personnel serving in the war on Iraq are being told to get ready to do without resources. There are education problems throughout the U.S., but the administration claims there is not enough money to solve them. But \$80 billion (to begin with) can be found for the war on Iraq. Meanwhile Bush proposes cutting child nutrition programs by \$5.8 billion over the next ten years. This could leave 2.4 million low-income children without school lunches.

The Bush administration's argument against the University of Michigan's affirmative action program, which awards extra admissions points to Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans, is that it fails to apply so-called "race neutral" methods to promote diversity. The truth is that minority admissions have dropped significantly where affirmative action programs have been suspended, as in Texas and California. The current cases on the docket constitute the most serious challenge to the concept of affirmative action in 25 years.

This struggle goes far beyond the question of academic admissions. "Affirmative action is the most conservative, the most modest, the most minuscule response to a horrific history that we've had," explained Har-

vard Law School Professor Charles Ogletree. He added, "We cannot let even a favorable Supreme Court decision delude us into thinking that we won something. We've won case after case and we still didn't win. If you think I'm lying, ask Amadou Diallo...ask Abner Louima."

WAR OPENS DOOR FOR RIGHTIST ATTACKS

This caution is surely justified at this moment. It was in the months immediately following the first Gulf War in 1991 that the assault on "political correctness" began on campuses around the country. The ideological Right felt that it had won a great victory and took the opportunity to press its advantage. In the current climate of repressive legislation like the US PATRIOT acts and the institutionalization of the Department of Homeland Security, and in the wake of Bush's military victory over Iraq, the attacks that are sure to come upon the freedom movements here in the U.S. will likely be much broader and more intense.

Now the police have been given the wide range of power to do as they will with anyone who protests peacefully. Your property can be taken from you with no chance of it being returned to you. At the anti-war protest in Chicago on March 20, at which over 500 people were arrested, individuals were held with their belongings (cell phones, and so on) taken, never to be given back. African Americans and others were treated like this with the media present.

Chicago has been a prime example of the politics of hypocrisy lately. It was widely reported around the world that the Chicago City Council, with the approval of Mayor Richard M. Daley, passed a resolution opposing the war with Iraq. It has not, perhaps, been as widely reported that in the recent period the Chicago Police have been responsible for the shootings of numerous Blacks and Latinos. This is a better measure of the supposed progressivism in this city government than the anti-war resolution which wasn't very strongly worded to begin with and which Mayor Daley in effect retroactively revoked in his recent statements.

As one Black woman in Chicago said, "It makes no sense. These people here are confused and they don't really know what's going on. One minute you have a group of them who are anti-war and then the next minute they become 'patriots.'"

The way the government here doesn't exist to serve the people, to enhance our lives and help to humanize our environment, is a lesson soon to be learned by the people of Iraq. One U.S. military officer in Iraq recently admitted that moving from "liberation" to "restoring

order" was like "stepping through the looking glass." This is indeed because the true measure of American civilization is not the so-called "liberation" brought through machines of war or the profits made by carving up the earth's natural resources until they dry up and blow away, but the lives of the most oppressed people here and their struggle for freedom.

The people of Iraq have been most brutally oppressed by Saddam Hussein's fascist regime. They have their own stories to tell and they will be heard. As the U.S. military recruits the old Ba'athist police to help them to "restore order" (an "order" that never in fact existed, not for one single moment, in Saddam's Iraq) there will be new stories to be learned. The Iraqis will receive a fast crash course in American "civilization" and the strict limits of our democracy.

As another Black woman here remarked, "Some Iraqis may see the U.S. as a symbol of freedom because they got rid of Saddam, but I don't know what the U.S. has planned for them. They could just get a similar, U.S.-appointed president."

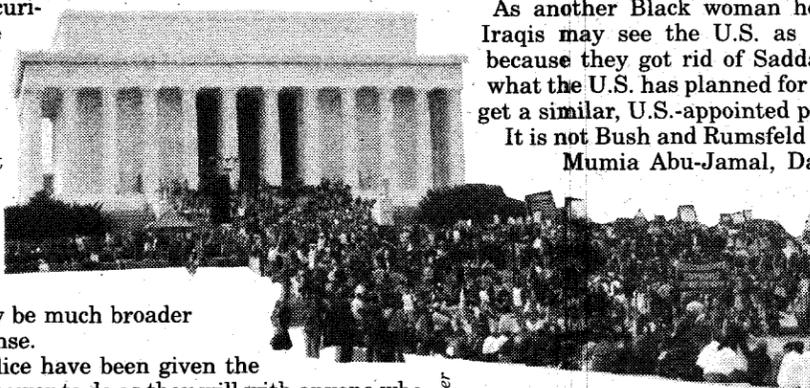
It is not Bush and Rumsfeld who represent us, but Mumia Abu-Jamal, Damien Williams, Jose Solis, Khalfani Khalidun, Richard Flood, Aaron Patterson, Robert King Wilkerson, the framed, slandered and humiliated who keep fighting back unbowed. It is not

Exxon or Royal Dutch Shell we fight for, but Abner Louima, Timia Williams, LaTanya Haggerty and Robert Russ, Kelsey Hogan, Kevin Morris, the beaten, oppressed, murdered, whose families and friends and communities raise the banner of their names when they fall. These are our brothers, our sisters, and we measure our freedom by their lives. This is our side of the looking glass.

WATCH OUT FOR YOUR VOTING RIGHTS

We should take nothing for granted. One thing that should be on the minds and agenda of the Congressional Black Caucus is getting the Voting Rights Act not only to pass, but to become law. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Act in 1965. President Ronald Reagan amended it in 1982 for another 25 years. This means that in four years, if "Baby" Bush wins or steals the next election, he could legally settle with African Americans by not renewing the Act.

There have been a number of African Americans who died in this year's Iraq War, but it is not out of the question that their families and friends in several years would not be able to do as the Iraqis are promised—vote for whom they choose for president. African Americans may be told by their ministers and politicians that everything is more or less all right. In actuality, all hell is breaking loose, it just hasn't reached its zenith yet.



synchronicity/Independent Media Center

Nationwide opposition to war on Iraq

New York

Over 100 protesters gathered in front of the New York offices of the Carlyle Group investment fund (of which George Bush senior is a member) in midtown Manhattan April 7, as part of a national day of direct action targeting war profiteers. The action was barely attempted when police, outnumbering activists two to one, descended on the demonstrators.

Several eyewitnesses who eyewitnesses had no intention of disobeying any laws, reported being penned into an area across the street. Some were asked to disperse or be arrested, but many were not. Some who claimed not to be doing anything other than standing on the sidewalk, observing, were taken in on the thinnest of pretenses. All in all observers claimed over 100 arrests were made.

The outcome of the April 7 action contrasts sharply with the mood and success of a similar action that took place on March 27 in front of the GE building in Rockefeller Center, and shows what has changed in light of recent news emanating from Baghdad this past week. Along with violent measures, such as the rubber bullets and shock grenades used against protesters in Oakland demonstrations, such "pre-emptive strikes" and zero-tolerance policies on the part of the police seem to have as their target the momentum of the anti-war movement itself.

These tactics may continue, and become typical in the U.S., if the movement fails to strengthen itself by rethinking its tactics and its strategy, and broadening its message for the challenges that lay ahead as the U.S. threatens to intervene in other countries.

—Anti-war protester

More

by michaelangelo

No war what about no prisons more money for school systems
 No racism aids drugs no smoke screened elections
 No death penalty no us presidents
 that we don't vote for no bush no jokes
 No dictators revenging with a death sentence no attack on iraqi people avenging 9/11
 All this is American owned terrorism in your home
 fascist globalization equal rights
 No Raising that racist flag with pride yet every us president was white
 No fake snake democratic ballots
 no cops to serve and protect their own gangs no state no army airforce navy air born imperialistic dynasty babies
 no corporate owned pollution the earth has been colonized no third world crime no apartheid no Chicago north and southside South Africa
 Israel Palestine no genocide
 people want no war attack on iraq but I want much more than that
 no one sided story propaganda no military war support with our hard earned taxes
 no Washington dc wall street stock market crashes no private property no cia or fbi I
 guarantee you that's the end to all crime
 no condos and yuppies next to ghettos unless you come to bring that poverty stricken
 community some money
 no hollywood no horror no new world order disorder middle east mass destruction
 atomic peace there's oil in that desert we didn't elect our president running things
 I doubt no I'm sure that him and his team doesn't want democracy
 no roman british empire thrones for our American global economy colonial tech society kings
 no fast food no saddam osama or bush administration mom bombs
 no holy army war atomic gods no rich no poor no lying to your country, fight your own damned war
 civilization can't afford the cost of a worldwide holocaust
 no constitution or bill of rights if the rules don't apply no pigs or bullshit to fly

West Lafayette, Ind.

Some students and local residents gathered together for a two-week campout on the "memorial mall" lawn at Purdue University recently, in protest of the war with Iraq. Chain-fasting, pamphlet distributing, drumming, and a wealth of conversation and fun pervaded the scene. The threats of violence, drunken

insults of passers-by at all hours, and the rather disturbing amount of ignorance displayed by the many were not enough to break the spirit of the few, who believed and continue to believe in a cause. The hope has remained that a much more just humane world may come—one that is radically

different than the vision of the Bush administration and the clutches of the invisible hand made visible with military force.

As a student concerned about the future of the world, I have been struck by the experience which may be a microcosm of America. This representation of the greater whole both terrifies me and gives me hope. Dissent is unwanted as consent is produced and it seems that many Americans are simply willing to give, as someone angry at us protesters said, "absolute blind faith in my government." Obviously, "blind faith" is a problem in itself, but perhaps just as troubling is the use of the word "my" here. The fact that many seem to believe that the government is truly theirs and not that of the wealthy and privileged is disturbing.

On the other hand, there are some people out there (and they are everywhere) who believe in peace, true progress of humanity, and the fostering of mutually affirming relations with others in interpersonal and

Anti-war civil disobedience



Protesters block access to Chevron Texaco in San Ramon, Cal. on April 14 just before they were arrested en masse.

News & Letters Urszula Wislanska

international relations. With Saddam gone, the potential of mutual affirming relations with the Iraqi people is there, that is, if this government was truly ours. But it is not, and the Iraqi people will continue their suffering, this time because of American and British brands of oppression.

—Purdue U. student

"Neither Bush Nor Saddam: For a Humanist World"

All too often one hears the anti-war movement characterized as "sympathetic to Saddam," as if protesters against this war were morally relativistic and absolutely blind to the nature of the Hussein regime.

All along, we Marxist-Humanists have condemned the Hussein regime for its crimes against humanity, yet do not believe that the current war is at all justified for many reasons. Specifically, we single out its genocidal use of poison gas against Iraq's Kurdish minority. This took place in 1988, at a time when Iraq was a quasi-ally of the U.S. Recently, as the regime crumbled, the Iraqi people have come out into the streets, attacking symbols of the dictatorship and revealing as never before the full story of its foul prisons and torture chambers. We support the aspirations of the Iraqi people to be free of all forms of oppression, whether from the Saddam Hussein regime, from other internal conservative forces such as religious fundamentalism, and from the attempt by the U.S. and Britain to incorporate Iraq into their version of globalized capitalism.

World opinion is against this U.S.-led invasion because the world sees that the current administration is driven by a desire for unchecked American power around the globe. The world sees that the Bush administration has taken to defining so-called threats to America under the guise of fighting terrorism and launching pre-emptive strikes, bringing terror in the form of "collateral damage" to innocent Iraqi civilians.

The Bush administration has provided no viable evidence of a link between the Hussein regime and Al-Qaeda. In fact, they fabricated evidence and lied directly to the UN and the world. Colin Powell's presentation to the UN outlining the "threat" posed by Iraq contained British intelligence that had been forged by forged documents seeking to establish that Iraq had tried to buy uranium from Niger, and much other information that had been denounced by chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix as untrue. Such supposed links between Hussein and Osama bin Laden contradict the reality of the relationship between Hussein and Islamic fundamentalism...

The claim that the Iraqi people will experience democracy and liberty is dubious and it seems contradictory to impose democracy from outside. Democracy is not forced, it is chosen.

—April 12, 2003

Flyer by the Marxist-Humanist Network at Purdue University

YOUTH

by Brown Douglas

In the ever-bloodier campaign of the denial of the Palestinian people of self-determination, the first American casualty was claimed on March 16 in Rafah, a city of refuge on the Gaza Strip, with the death of Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old peace and solidarity activist. As if this horrible tragedy didn't spill enough peaceful blood, the Israeli army has, in the three-week period following Rachel's murder, shot two more international activists in the face, killing one.

All three were part of the International Solidarity Movement (www.palsolidarity.org), a Palestinian-led movement of Palestinian and international activists working to raise awareness of the struggle for Palestinian freedom and an end to Israeli occupation.

For most of the day of March 16, the international activists had been standing in the way of Israeli bulldozers attempting to demolish water wells and Palestinian homes. As a bulldozer approached the home of a Palestinian physician and his family, who were well known by most of the activists, Rachel ran with megaphone in hand to block it with her body.

STOOD HER GROUND

From the eyewitness account of one of her comrades, we hear that she stood in the way, shouting in the megaphone even as the bulldozer started to move the ground under her feet. After scrambling up the pile of rubble made by the bulldozer and coming to eye-level with the driver, she was plowed under by the blade. Only after she was run over again by the blade going in reverse were fellow activists able to administer first aid. She later died in Al Nejar hospital.

Rachel was a senior at Evergreen State College in Washington. What is amazing about her story is that she was so moved by the movement of a people for control over their own lives. She took herself out of a privileged situation in the U.S. and immersed herself in one of the most negative realities of our times. Here's an excerpt from a letter that she wrote to her family detailing her feelings about her own life and background compared with those of the Palestinians:

"Nobody in my family has been shot, driving in their car, by a rocket launcher from a tower at the end of a major street in my hometown. I have a home. I am allowed to go see the ocean. When I leave for school or

Remembering Rachel Corrie

work I can be relatively certain that there will not be a heavily armed soldier halfway between Mud Bay and downtown Olympia at a checkpoint with the power to decide whether I can go about my business, and whether I can get home again when I'm done."

What also struck me when looking at her letters was the internationalist feeling of a young person being immersed in the "Other" and at the same time having a recognition of the commonality of all humans. She declared, "Today, as I walked on top of the rubble where homes once stood, Egyptian soldiers called to me from the other side of the border, 'Go! Go!' because a tank was coming. And then waving, 'Go! What's your name?' Something is disturbing about this friendly curiosity. It reminded me of how much, to some degree, we are all kids curious about other kids."

I think that the fact that a young American woman could go to a foreign country with a foreign language and a foreign culture under such oppressive circumstances, and yet come to such a conclusion, is amazing. At the best of times, there seems to be a certain universality to youth. It can be seen in the very fact that Rachel made the decision to go to Palestine, and also in the work she did there.

The vision of youth that I see coming from her is one of internationalism, solidarity, and, as she says it, "curiosity about other kids." It's a beautiful vision and one that I think is worth developing and being a part of. I don't even think that it would be hyperbole to say that it is a vision that Rachel died for.

It's no coincidence that Rachel was also against the planned war on Iraq. A few days before her death, she made a banner for a local demonstration that said, "No war on Rafah! No war on Iraq!" It wasn't hard for her to make the connection between a war on youth in one country and a war on youth in another. She was against all of it.

I hope that people keep sharing the story of Rachel Corrie and who she was, and why she traveled halfway across the world to put her body in front of bulldozers. Some Israelis have already made a sculpture in her honor in hopes that we will not forget. The Palestinians whose lives she loved being a part of will not forget her. In the work that we do to end all wars and create genuine self-determination for all people, we will be remembering her.

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

European anti-war movement continues

by Kevin A. Barry

The massive anti-war movement that has gripped Western Europe over the past few months has declined somewhat, but has managed to continue nonetheless, even after the total collapse of the Iraqi regime during the third week of the war. Not since the anti-nuclear demonstrations of the early 1980s have we witnessed such a large and persistent peace movement.

On Thursday, March 20, as the war began, 250,000 demonstrated across Germany. In Berlin, 50,000 high school students chanted slogans such as "No blood for oil," swelling a pre-existing march to 70,000. That same day in Paris, high school students were also the first to gather and by evening the crowd grew to 100,000, with many working people joining in. Many of the youth first became active during the mass rallies against racist Jean-Marie Le Pen's 2002 presidential candidacy.

In Southern Europe on March 20, the outpouring was even larger. In Spain, which has had the most protests of any country, 35,000 tied up traffic in Barcelona during the day and by evening, the crowd had grown to hundreds of thousands.

More than 150,000 marched through Athens, tying up traffic, while in Italy, hundreds of thousands marched through Rome, many of them workers who took the day off to participate. In Turin, 20,000 students blocked the railroads, which have been used to transport U.S. equipment. Many of these youth are linked to Arcolero (Rainbow), a new coordinating group that emerged out of the anti-globalization movement.

On Saturday, March 22, three days into the war, the protests continued. At least 200,000 demonstrated across France, with 100,000 in Paris. In Spain, 100,000 demonstrated in Madrid, sometimes clashing with police. A very youthful crowd of 200,000 came out in London as well.

During the following days, many began to declare the movement dead, as demonstrations grew much smaller. However, the events of Saturday, April 12 proved otherwise, even though the war was essentially over by then. In London, more than 100,000 turned out. Film director Ken Loach, one of those at the front of the march, called for an end to the "occupation" of Iraq. In Rome, 500,000 took to the streets, with small

Zimbabwe crackdown

With the world's attention focused on the war in Iraq, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe cracked down hard on supporters of the Movement for a Democratic Change (MDC), who had staged a successful general strike in mid-March. As Mugabe declared in a speech that he was capable of becoming a "Black Hitler, tenfold," pro-government militias attacked MDC supporters with iron bars and whips, arresting at least 500 people.

The MDC has called for the disbanding of the militias, restoration of freedom of the press, and release of all political prisoners. These confrontations were all part of the run-up to the March 30 elections in which the MDC, despite pervasive voter intimidation, again carried Harare, the capital, in large part due to its support in working class communities.

Mugabe, a former Marxist who led the country to independence two decades ago, has consistently played the narrow nationalist card, emphasizing the largely urban MDC's links to both white farmers and various Western powers. While buying him time, such arguments have had only limited appeal in a society plagued by deep economic crisis, corruption, and increasingly authoritarian rule. Nevertheless, they also point to severe limitations of the MDC's politics of democratization through greater links to global capitalism.

groups attacking Blockbuster Video stores (owned by billionaire pro-war President Silvio Berlusconi) and Esso (Exxon-Mobil) stations. In Spain as well, very large demonstrations included 200,000 in Barcelona and 100,000 in Madrid.

This massive and persistent peace movement is not without its contradictions. First, as many have noted, the movement has had a very difficult time responding

Strikes in France, Italy



Workers marched in Milan, April 2, as part of a general strike across Italy called by alternative unions. One million walked out and more than 250,000 marched in different parts of the country.

In early April, hundreds of thousands of workers went on strike across France to protest plans by the conservative government of Jacques Chirac and Jean-Pierre Raffarin to slash pension benefits. The vast majority of flights had to be cancelled, while railroad and subway service was cut in half. Only about half the school teachers showed up to work and museums were also strongly affected. In addition, a total of over 350,000 workers took to the streets across the country. Comprised mainly of public employees, who formed the heart of the strike, the demonstrators included large numbers of private sector workers as well.

Two weeks earlier, thousands of Belgian, Dutch, British, French, and Spanish dockworkers demonstrated outside the European Parliament in Strasbourg, leading to some confrontations with police. The workers were protesting plans to make the European ports more "competitive" by allowing ship owners to use low-wage non-unionized workers from Third World countries to load and unload cargo.

Egyptian released

Saad Eddin Ibrahim, an Egyptian-American democracy advocate whose imprisonment had drawn international condemnation, was acquitted of charges against him on March 18. Dr. Ibrahim, a world-renowned sociologist, had been arrested in July 2001 along with 27 associates from his Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies. He had been charged with "accepting European Union funds" to produce a documentary that harmed Egypt's image.

Ibrahim had been a commentator on political affairs across the Arab media, and an outspoken defender of ethnic minorities in the Middle East. He is the author of *Images and Practices, Racial, Ethnic and Religious Minorities in the Arab World*, as well as other books. He had called for fair treatment for Egyptian Copts, democratic voting practices, and full normalization of relations with Israel.

—Sheila Sahar

to the brutal, genocidal character of the Saddam Hussein regime. Those with slogans targeting both Bush and Saddam were hard to find, as were those supporting the legitimate demands of the Kurds.

Second, there were the more than occasional displays of anti-Semitism, most dramatically in Paris on March 22, when four members of Hashomer Hatzair, a leftist Zionist youth group that supports a Palestinian state, were beaten up by pro-Palestinian demonstrators. Reportedly, someone with a loudspeaker announced from within the ranks of the Coordination for a Just Peace in the Middle East, "there are Jews over there," something the Coordination denies. Afterwards, the leadership of the peace movement strongly denounced these attacks, while Hashomer Hatzair demanded that it make the statement "anti-Semites have no place in our movement" into one of the main slogans at future peace marches.

El Salvador leftist win

The leftist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) scored a major victory in nationwide legislative and mayoral elections in March. It received more total votes than the right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), which controls the presidency. The FMLN not only won the mayoral elections in ten of the 14 largest cities, but in the capital, San Salvador, the FMLN also took 100% of the city council seats.

In the new national legislature, the FMLN will control 31 out of 84 seats, to ARENA's 27. Since ARENA cannot command a majority, it is possible that the government will be subjected to enough pressure from the Left to open up some space for working people.

To take one prominent example, state healthcare workers have been on strike against privatization plans for the past six months, with polls indicating that 80% of the population opposes privatization. The ARENA government has stonewalled, firing the strikers, but there is now a possibility that the legislature can force it to compromise.

These elections are the product of a compromise forced upon the FMLN ten years ago, after over a decade of civil war. During the war, the Reagan and first Bush administrations gave the ARENA-controlled government lavish funding and military support, as it used death squads, disappearances, and torture to crush the FMLN, a multi-layered revolutionary movement that had deep roots among the country's working people. ARENA's U.S.-backed repression resulted in over 70,000 deaths among a population of under six million. To this day, no U.S. or Salvadoran official has been prosecuted for these murders.

Since the compromise of 1991, the FMLN has been relegated to a secondary role in the nation's politics. The 2003 elections seem to signal a change in the balance of forces, opening up the possibility of an FMLN victory in the 2004 presidential elections. But both local ruling classes and the U.S. are sure to resist such a possibility.

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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*.