

WORKSHOP TALKS

Too risky to let capitalism continue

by Htun Lin

Those who don't work for a living like to brag about how they take risks. They belittle us workers for seeking job security and social security. They claim it is the entrepreneur who brings "value" to the economy.

They say, "Our free enterprise system works on taking risks." They don't say what kinds of risks. Usually they are merely referring to how much money (usually someone else's money) they've thrown into investing into a business which they hope will reap them a profit in return. They pay their workers a modicum of wages in return for their work, just enough so that he will return to work another day.

What the businessman pockets as pure profit he never actually worked for. What the capitalist means by work is the "risk" he took in investing in such a venture—a risk he took using other people's money and other people's labor. Unscrupulous businessmen may refuse to pay your wages altogether, as is the case with so many sweatshops which pull up stakes to pitch their tent in another part of the globe.

In Bhopal, India, Union Carbide was the single most powerful producer of chemical products and provider of employment and economic opportunities in that region. After a devastating chemical explosion killed and maimed tens of thousands of its inhabitants (an industrial disaster of historic proportion second only to Chernobyl), Union Carbide eventually sold all its holdings in Bhopal to Dow Chemical.

The citizens of Bhopal launched a class-action lawsuit to attain redress and compensation for the victims of the industrial disaster—a disaster which was man-made, since company officials cut corners on safety for its workers and the surrounding environment in order to maximize profit.

In other words, the risks they took in their free

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BLACK/RED VIEW

Kerry misquotes Hughes

by John Alan

John Kerry, the Democratic Party's presidential candidate, in his ongoing campaign to defeat President Bush, recently quoted lines from Langston Hughes poem "Let America Be America Again."

Kerry was careful in selecting his quotes, avoiding their contextual meaning. Kerry quoted: "O, let my land be a land where Liberty / Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath, / But opportunity is real, and life is free / Equality is in the air we breathe." He didn't finish the quote, which went on to say: "There has never been equality for me, in this 'homeland of the free.'"

Any reading of Hughes' "Let America Be America Again" would at once reveal that Hughes was saying that African Americans and many others were still struggling for their freedom in America. In Hughes' words: "O, yes, I say it plain, America was never America to me, / And yet I swear this oath—America will be!"

There is a relationship between Hughes' poem and the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. First, there would not have been a Harlem Renaissance if the masses of African Americans had not left the humiliations and the terrorism of southern racism and migrated to northern cities and created large viable communities like Harlem in New York City.

Second, Harlem at that time attracted many people from the West Indies. One of them was Claude McKay of Jamaica. McKay defiantly challenged the violence of America's racism. In one of his poems he wrote:

*If we must die—let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to wall, dying, but fighting back!*

McKay was among the first generation of African Americans would no longer allow themselves to be murdered by white mobs and were, subjectively and objectively, strong enough to engage in major struggles against racism in this nation. The origin of their powerful opposition to this racist terrorism was

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'We can come together to end police corruption'

The Chicago News and Letters Committee recently held a forum: "What Next for the Movement Against Police Torture and Wrongful Convictions." It brought together three activists against wrongful convictions in Chicago: Gerard Emmett writes for *News & Letters* and organizes against the criminal injustice system; Mildred Henry is a member of Enough Is Enough!, a group devoted to freeing the wrongly convicted, and is the mother of Kilroy Watkins now at Danville Correctional Center; and Mary L. Johnson has spent a lifetime fighting police corruption in Chicago and is the mother of Michael Johnson currently incarcerated at Tamms Correctional Center. Remarks by all three, edited for publication, are here. More of Mildred Henry's presentation appeared in "Black/Red View" in the June *N&L*. —Editor

GERARD EMMETT

This is a hugely important moment for this movement against police torture if you think about the impasse that the anti-Iraq war movement found itself in a little while ago. There had been huge demonstrations with tens of millions of people demonstrating all over the world in unison. It was unprecedented. Yet it looked like Bush was getting away with his Iraq war, right up until the moment when the tortures at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad burst upon the world. That was, not coincidentally, the moment when Bush's popularity took a nosedive, and not coincidentally, the moment when a lot of the popular media turned against the war in a bigger way.

It shined a light back onto corruptions in this society. It's very easy to debate in an abstract way about what happens in another country, but when the spotlight is on what really happens here, the torture, the racism that goes on in this country, it's a lot harder for the rulers to deal with. If Bush doesn't end up being re-elected president, I'm going to say that will be the reason, the disgust over that more than any

other single factor.

It should also tell people who are part of the anti-war movement why they need to focus on a movement like this one here against police abuses, why they need to



Activists against police abuses and unjust convictions killed by Chicago police: Fred Hampton, shot in his bed Dec. 4, 1969, and May Molina, who died in police custody May 26, 2004 after hours without life-sustaining medicine.

look at it in a different way than before, why they have to forge links with people who are struggling against police torture in the prison system here.

The killing of May Molina by the Chicago Police
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Eyewitness view of women in Iraq

Yanar Mohammed, a founder of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI), spoke at Bluestockings Bookstore in New York City in June. To support OWFI, see their website: www.equalityiniraq.com.

I'm so glad to speak here and to know there are so many people who care about women in Iraq. I believe men and women should have equal rights and there should be no different treatment of people based on ethnicity or religion, and there should be separation of mosque and state.

The bloody rule of Saddam Hussein kept us under dictatorship for 35 years, but now that's history. I didn't want the war because I knew there would be severe casualties, but now we are trying to make the best of it. Real change must come from the people; it cannot be imposed from above.

OWFI began with three women in Baghdad in post-war Iraq. We asked ourselves, what do we want Iraq to look like? I want to walk on the streets, proud to be a woman, without someone telling me to stay inside the house and wear black from head to toe, telling me I cannot go to work without the permission of my husband or my father, denying me access to education. I don't want my husband to marry three other women.

BUSH PROMISED FREEDOM: IT'S A LIE

The freedoms promised to us by George Bush turned out to be a big lie, as expected. The U.S. is giving the power over to the patriarchal forces, starting with the Islamists, then the nationalists, and even, to our big surprise, the tribal leaders.

The new Iraq is being led by a president who is a tribal head, and a prime minister from the previous Ba'ath regime—an Arab nationalist party that is fascist and willing to commit genocide against minorities, as seen in the 180,000 Kurds killed by Saddam Hussein's army. Every decade we had a new war justified by this wish for Arab glory. So this so-called hand-over of power is handing power to the most reactionary forces in society, where women have no voice. Even the few women they put into the new government are not activists who can rise to the challenge of the times.

We have no credible government. OWFI's membership in Iraq is over 2,000—many more than last time I was here! These women are not allowed to take part in the councils organized by the Americans, who don't consider secular women acceptable because they give priority to tribal and religious heads. The mullahs were visiting the U.S. occupiers (CPA) all the time, but we were not allowed to be on any of those councils because we want a government that is secular, egalitarian, non-nationalistic.

ILLEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT

At some points there were promises of a secular government, but now there is none. The new government is illegitimate because it was set up according to a formula based on religion, ethnicity and gender. The transitional constitution they have written is based mainly on Islamic Sharia law. It allows exceptions for those of other religions, but again they identify us as Muslim or non-Muslim. And if you are a Muslim, are you a Shiite, a Sunni, a Wahabi, or what? If you are a Christian, what kind of Christian? Do you see where this scenario takes us? To fighting in the streets by armed militias funded by the Islamic Republic of Iran. They are the ones in black who have machine guns, and are the biggest enemies of women.

Here is some of what OWFI did from January to May: We now have almost 10,000 supporters; we distribute that many copies of our newspaper, *Equality*. During the violent days in March, we were able to get almost 1,000 people out for International Women's Day (IWD), to the square where Saddam's statue was pulled down, 900 of them women, some under the veil.

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ONLINE: www.newsandletters.org

'Revolution in permanence' and women's liberation

by Terry Moon

In the discussion after the workshop, "Women and the Anti-War Left: Coalition or Conflict?" at the National Women's Studies Association conference in June (see "NWSA shows revitalized women's movement," *N&L* July 2004), women wanted to talk about the question of genocide. One woman asked, "How can we stop genocide? Is the UN or the trials at the Hague effective?"

The question flowed from our presentations. I had spoken on women's militancy and reason during the conflict in Bosnia 1992-1995, when women worldwide critiqued the Left's inaction and demanded that the massive number of rapes against mostly Muslim women be seen as a crime against humanity. Sonia Bergonzi had spoken on Iraq and how many on the Left support opponents of the U.S. who want to restrict women's freedom. Women are challenging this narrowing of revolution to anti-U.S. imperialism.

AGE OF GENOCIDE

While we all agreed we must use every means to

WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey

Angelina Atyam, a tireless advocate for the release of thousands of children abducted by rebels in northern Uganda, has finally been reunited with her own daughter, Charlotte, who escaped with her two children after eight years in captivity after being kidnapped with 138 other girls from a boarding school. The "Lord's Resistance Army" said they would release her daughter only if Angelina would stop speaking out, which she refused to do. She co-founded the Concerned Parents Association which works for the release of the estimated 30,000 children kidnapped over the last 20 years.

Racism and sexism go hand in hand at the Catholic University of America, in Washington, D.C, which has rejected the proposal of student William Jawando to start a chapter of the NAACP on campus because that organization supports abortion rights. NAACP President Kweisi Mfume called the action "blatant discrimination in its most naked form" that "speaks volumes about their level of intolerance." The group plans continued support for Jawando's fight, including possibly suing the university to force them to recognize the campus group.

A Vatican report released in August charges that "radical feminism" is threatening the traditional Christian family defined as one with a mother and a father. Written by conservative Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the statement criticized feminism for ignoring the biological differences between the sexes, stressing that a woman "is not a copy of a man." It concluded by repeating the church's ban on women becoming priests.

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture are urging the international community to demand the Russian government immediately end human rights abuses in Chechnya and Ingushetia. They especially condemned the widespread sexual violence perpetrated against Chechnyan women.

Information from
Women's Human Rights Online Bulletin

Discover Rosa Luxemburg's feminist dimension

The Rosa Luxemburg Reader

Edited by Peter Hudis and Kevin B. Anderson

From the introduction:

"Luxemburg was quite aware of the male chauvinist attitudes that permeated many German Social Democratic members and she fully supported, although often behind the scenes, the work of close friends like Clara Zetkin in projecting women's emancipation as an integral dimension of socialist transformation."



The Rosa Luxemburg Reader brings together a number of Luxemburg's writings on women, including several never previously translated into English, that demonstrate her lively and ongoing involvement in women's struggles.

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stop genocide now, women also wanted to know how, in what some call our "age of genocide," can we change the conditions from which it springs. Far from posing an alternative, the Left often fails to practice solidarity with the victims of "ethnic cleansing," from Bosnia to Sudan. That narrow concept of revolution is something the Women's Liberation Movement has long critiqued.

It reveals the necessity for a different kind of revolution than those the world has experienced, one that transcends the alienated

human relations of our capitalist world. Bergonzi and I tried to tackle this question by talking of Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence."

The women's movement has consistently raised: "Why is most of the Left's concept of revolution so narrow that it doesn't include women? How do we create a society where women can experience freedom?" To me they demand looking into how the Marxist-Humanist feminist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya made a category of Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" and developed it further for our age.

How Dunayevskaya took up Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" in her 1973 work, *Philosophy and Revolution*, shows, in embryo, what will be developed fully later: "Had Marx not broken with bourgeois idealism in its philosophic form as well as its class nature, he would not have been able either to disclose the algebraic formula of revolution inherent in the Hegelian dialectic, or to re-create the dialectic that emerged out of the actual class struggles and proletarian revolutions, and sketch out that, just that, self movement into 'permanent revolution'" (p. 288).

In this same chapter she articulates what characterized the Women's Liberation Movement then, and the global women's movement today: women are demanding "an end to the separation of mental and manual labor, not only as a 'goal,' not only against capitalist society, but as an immediate need of the Left itself, especially regarding women" (p. 279).

In *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution (RLWLMPR)*, Dunayevskaya develops revolution in permanence thoroughly, creating an explicit category that she traces throughout Marx's life including his last decade. It is integral to the entire work.

There, revolution in permanence is tightly related to the spontaneity of the masses and Hegel's negation of the negation. She makes clear that it is not simply a revolution that does not stop with the overthrow of the

Outrage over sham trial in Iran

The case of Zahra Kazemi, an Iranian-Canadian woman journalist who was tortured and murdered in an Iranian government prison last year, is forcing international reporters to pay more attention to human rights abuses in the Islamic Republic. Kazemi was arrested outside the notorious Evin prison on June 23, 2003, as she was taking photos of the families of Iranian students who had been arrested during a week of protests against the regime.

On July 10, 2003, the government announced that she had died in prison of a "stroke." Although her tortured and broken body was quickly buried without an internationally supervised autopsy, the authorities had to admit, under international pressure, that she had died from a fractured skull and brain hemorrhage caused by blows to her head.

It was only after much protest from her son in Canada and human rights groups in Iran and abroad that the Iranian government named a culprit and set a trial. In July, however, after a sham trial in which much of the evidence presented by attorneys led by Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi was dismissed, the prison agent arrested was declared innocent, and Kazemi's death was declared "accidental."

Shirin Ebadi has vowed to take this case to the World Court if an appeal for a retrial based on all the evidence is denied. What is at issue is not simply the involvement of one person but the Iranian judiciary and its chief judge, Saeed Mortazavi, who often presides in torture sessions. Ebadi tried to summon to trial top government officials including Mortazavi, who many believe ordered the torture of Kazemi leading to her death.

—Sheila Sahar

existing capitalist relations and thus continues all the way to socialism—although it encompasses that. Marx's and Dunayevskaya's concept goes further, insisting on a different kind of revolution altogether.

THE CHALLENGE FOR OUR AGE

Part of what this means is taking the highest point of the previous revolutions as the point of departure for the next; that revolution must be total from the start and be for new, truly human relations, including ending the division between mental and manual labor; it means a never-ending openness to, and search for, new forces of revolution whose Reason has the capacity to expand the concept of freedom.

While in the 1970s we saw women in the midst of revolutions, in our more reactionary times the reaching for revolution in permanence continues to shine forth in women's struggles. Look at the women in Darfur who in the midst of genocide are the ones demanding that the world take heed (see "Our Life and Times," p. 12). It is seen in that the Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq's founding statement begins: "Women's freedom is the measure of freedom and humanity in society" (see article this page). It is seen in how a woman leader of the Civil Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras states: "...unity among women and men is primary...we can't have unity when men dominate our struggle. We can't reproduce the problems of the power structure within our own country."

So important had revolution in permanence become to Dunayevskaya by the 1980s that *RLWLMPR* ended with this challenge: "Every moment of Marx's development, as well as the totality of his works, spells out the need for 'revolution in permanence.' This is the absolute challenge to our age" (p. 195).

Women are oppressively aware that no revolution has freed us, which is why revolution in permanence is such an important concept. This column is the barest beginnings of exploring it for today. We welcome discussion from you, the reader, on these ideas.

Iraqi feminist speaks

Continued from Page 1

In January, the CPA held a conference for women but invited only professionals and women sent by political Islamist parties. They defended the Iraqi Governing Council's Resolution 137 imposing sharia and repealing rights of women. With sharia, there is no minimum age for marriage, men can and do marry children. The day after the resolution, 85 women's groups were demonstrating against it! We succeeded in getting it repealed.

Yet the U.S. continues to say that people want a religious government. They cite the half million Shiites who came into the streets after Saddam fell. That took place during the euphoria of being able to practice religion as they wished after years of being forbidden. But this year only 1,500 came out. People don't want to live under a sad religious culture. Even men want to see the women they live with free. Capitalist systems need religion to keep the family structure, to keep workers divided, to keep workers and women under control. We want socialism instead.

In February millions of dollars went missing from the banks and was replaced by counterfeit money. It was probably stolen by people in the Ministry of Finance. They blamed low level women bank clerks saying they would go to jail unless they paid back huge amounts of money. Fifty women were taken to jail and hundreds more were threatened. We helped them organize a union and demanded the CPA negotiate with us. It was a major embarrassment for the CPA, and the women were released. The men who put them there were jailed instead. All these women are now members of OWFI.

The new government is illegitimate. The Worker Communist Party of Iraq is planning for another day. I believe in a socialist revolution, but I work for reforms every day. We don't want a society like Russia; that was state-capitalist, not socialist. We emphasize human rights, women's rights, a future of workers' rule.

—Yanar Mohammed

KEEP THE DISCUSSION GOING!

Pre-Convention Discussion Bulletin No. 1

Includes essays on questions of what happens after revolution; "Capitalism, Alienation, and Humanism"; and five reports given at the National Women's Studies Association, including "Women Philosophers: Simone de Beauvoir, Raya Dunayevskaya, and Rosa Luxemburg."

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Slavery undergirds global economy

by Robert Tallaferra

A recent conservative estimate sets the number in excess of 30 million souls who, as slaves, contribute approximately \$15 to \$20 billion a year to the global economy. They mine diamonds and gold; they harvest the beans that will eventually reach Western markets as coffee or cocoa; they pick our fruits and vegetables, and they sew the clothes that we wear. Despite international laws that are tepidly enforced, few who are caught up in slavery are able to escape its harsh realities.

Slaves of Eastern European extraction, and people of color; they are bought and sold in nearly every country of the world—including the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Western Europe, Russia, China, Japan, and Israel—with near impunity. They are commodities that epitomize and embody many of the negative features of globalization, especially in light of trade agreements like NAFTA.

Overall, the largest number of slaves in the world are known as "debt slaves," a practice which is most prevalent in countries like India and Pakistan. Debt slaves are often inter-generational, some becoming slaves before they were born due to debts incurred by their parents, grandparents, or even great grandparents. Debt slaves can pass on the "alleged" incurred debts in the post-Civil War period in the U.S. Former slaveholders worked former slaves through sharecropping on the same plantations that they had worked for generations as property.

One of the ironies of history is that the 13th Amendment to the Constitution allowed slavery to exist in the country if a person is convicted of a crime. The U.S. is the only Western country to still include thus as an official doctrine of law.

In southern India, whole towns of Indian women vie to be subjected to living organ harvesting so that they can pay off debts or feed their families. Girls as young as 10 are married off in order for a family to gain a "bride price"; children are sold by their parents to brothels in countries like Thailand and Singapore. Men, women and children from impoverished countries



Forced child labor in Pakistan

throughout the world are being forced on a daily basis into the international sex trade.

Even newborns are victimized due to baby trafficking. Shady adoption practices in the U.S. and Europe place hundreds of children in homes every year at a healthy profit for middlemen. These children may have been kidnapped from their biological families, who do not have the resources to recover their missing child.

Billions of dollars are generated every year through various forms of slave labor. Yet, despite those numbers, the overwhelming majority of the slave-candidates subsist on less than a few hundred dollars a year. With civil wars destroying property and crops, families often subject themselves voluntarily to slavery so that they can feed themselves, and their families.

Even in the U.S. acts of slavery exist in subtler forms, the actions of companies like Taco Bell and Wal-Mart promulgate subtle forms of slavery. The lack of unionization in some of those companies allows for them to perpetrate many of the main cornerstones of slavery: low wages, substandard working conditions that may even border on criminally dangerous, and discriminatory practices to select members of their work force. With many undocumented workers, this condition is often exacerbated.

NAFTA has done its part to promulgate slavery by driving millions of peasant farmers in Mexico out of business and off of land that may have been in their families for generations. This causes them to seek a living as undocumented workers in the U.S. Then, like in the "emancipated" plantations or company towns of old, they are charged for everything from water to a slice of ground that they call home, until even those meager earnings are gone.

In a recent report the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) estimated that about 10-15% of farmworkers in the U.S. are essentially being held and worked as slaves. Francisco Martinez and his comrades felt as if they were merchandise. He wrote, "Did I want to die incarcerated on this farm or escape?" Martinez was one of the lucky few who escaped, but for every one that escapes, tens of others are enslaved. Now, as a member of CIW, he works to free others. (See *News & Letters*, March 2003, "Hunger Strike for Taco Bell Boycott.")

To end slavery, governments must be more proactive in the prosecution of slavers; trade agreements have to define and enforce fairness and parity for all peoples; workers must be more aggressive in asserting that they have inalienable rights to be free from the abuse of slavery; and, consumers must be more aware of the plight of those people who make the products that they buy, and they must demand that companies ensure that the rights of their workers are not abridged.

You see, the struggle for freedom begins with that one person who decides that enslavement is inherently wrong, and that freedom for others sometimes means making sacrifices yourself.

Rally in Chicago for Million Worker March

CHICAGO—Union workers and their supporters rallied on Aug. 9 in front of the Drake Hotel in Chicago, where the AFL-CIO Executive Council was meeting, behind a banner announcing the upcoming Million Worker March. ILWU Local 10 in San Francisco has called for workers to travel to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 17 for a Million Worker March to press for universal health care, adequate wage and pension guarantees, opposition to NAFTA and other international agreements undermining working conditions in the U.S. and abroad, and other demands.

Because AFL-CIO President John Sweeney used his position to send a letter to AFL-CIO locals directing them to steer clear of that campaign, rally participants urged delegates to "Fight for Workers, Join the Million Worker March."

The AFL-CIO officers who are trying to silence everything but "Vote Kerry" between now and the election can't claim with a straight face that merely dumping Bush would end corporate attacks on U.S. workers' conditions of labor.

The news that United Airlines is now attempting to slither out of its pension obligations and Delta Airlines keeps answering "not enough" to pilots offering massive concessions warns us of the readiness of companies to line up for their own takebacks. Labor solidarity has to be at least equal to the collusion among corporate interests.

Some labor groups such as AFSCME District 37 in New York are beginning to endorse the Million Worker March and provide some trade union financing. But organizing is still largely being done by rank-and-file workers.

—Bob McGuire

For further information, contact chicagoworkermarch@yahoo.com in Chicago, or www.millionworker-march.org. For the Midwest Organizing Committee, call 773 913 6539.

Appeal for Mexican Sara Lee workers

Garment workers at Sara Lee's Confecciones de Monclova factory in Mexico have long suffered under exploitative working conditions including severe occupational injuries, low wages, and abusive management while making Hanes Her Way Products. One woman commented, "I went to the infirmary almost every day with a pain in my stomach. They said it was normal." The factory refused her requests for lighter work and soon afterward she miscarried. Unfortunately, this woman's experience isn't an exception; it's the kind of mistreatment that has been occurring regularly at Sara Lee's Monclova factory.

Workers at Monclova have responded by organizing for improved working conditions and demanding that Sara Lee respect their rights and take responsibility for abuses at the factory. Sara Lee has responded by deciding to dismiss the women who have been organizing and announcing the closing of the plant, which will leave over 1,000 workers unemployed.

Today we are asked to stand in solidarity with the workers of Confecciones de Monclova and demand that Sara Lee not close the plant, that they accept full responsibility for all the women who have been injured and disabled working in their factories, and that they respect the human and worker rights of all Sara Lee employees.

Please call C. Steven McMillan today at (312) 558-8547 and let Sara Lee know that Sara Lee cannot just cut and run, they must respect worker rights. Sara Lee isn't just cheesecake. Sara Lee also is behind many household brands including: Hanes, Playtex, Champion, Bimbo, and Hillshire Farm. Sara Lee sells itself as a woman-friendly company, but has failed to respect the rights of the women who make its clothes in Mexico.

Tell Sara Lee to stop using sweatshops and recognize workers' right to organize for improved conditions!

You can take action on this alert either via the web at: <http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/saralee/>

—Information from Chicago Jobs with Justice

WORKSHOPTALKS

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enterprise capitalist ventures by freely risking the lives of the workers and the native citizenry who have to live in the wreckage left by those ventures.

Armed with an army of lawyers, the executives at Dow and Union Carbide have, for nearly 20 years, successfully blocked any meaningful compensation for the victims of Bhopal, even though they had won their lawsuit against the corporation for their atrocities in the courts of their capitalist governments. Filing one motion after another to delay settlement, the companies have made redress and compensation a moot point, as many of the original victims of Bhopal have since died from their injuries.

The value of Michael Moore's latest film, "Fahrenheit 9/11," is not in the outrageous conspiracy theories and innuendoes made against Bush, but in the profoundness of its central underlying theme—that America's imperialist wars are fought abroad by first winning its race and class wars back home. Moore portrays how America supplies its modern military-machine with more bodies as fodder for its hi-tech cannons by harvesting recruits amongst the urban ruins the casualties of its race and class wars.

Capitalists like to talk of "risks," but it is the sons and daughters of workers who have to take those risks, and have to die on the battlefield, just as their parents sacrificed a lifetime on the production floors, only to join the "army of the unemployed," as machinery accumulates to represent dead labor produced with the expenditure of living labor.

Capitalism not only thrives on, but its own survival depends on, extracting surplus labor, that portion of the worker's daily labor which remains unpaid, which is extracted as surplus value. It is no wonder then that Marx once characterized labor power as the capitalist's ultimate "commodity of commodities."

Both Russia and China used to call themselves Communist. I don't think it's any accident of history that state-capitalism in both Russia, which renounced Communism, and China, which maintains one-party rule by the Communist Party, have since transformed into havens for private capitalism. Capitalist investors from everywhere are flocking there to exploit their near-slavery working conditions.

It wasn't a change of heart which did this, but the philosophic underpinnings of their Communist ideology—which was an ideology shared by the West, which saw workers as mere "masses" to be controlled, used, and then discarded. With such a tightly-knit collaboration between the state and the corporation, what is in store for a future ruled by the factory clock? There's no escape from this dominance of a single ideology, capitalism, without transcending it—with a genuine socialism where "human power is its own end."

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Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, News and Letters Committees. Jim Mills, Managing Editor. Felix Martin, Labor Editor (1983-1999).

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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

From Marx to Marxist-Humanism

EDITOR'S NOTE

Catching "the quintessential importance and continuity of philosophic moments," from Marx to Marxist-Humanism, was the concern of Raya Dunayevskaya when she addressed her colleagues in News and Letters Committees in 1969. In the talk she discussed "philosophic as well as practical responsibilities" of Marxist-Humanists. At that time, she was in the process of writing *Philosophy and Revolution*, later published in 1973. The lecture, not yet in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, contains one of the first known references to "the philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism. This same phrase she used in 1987 when stating that her 1953 Letters on Hegel's Absolutes were the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism (see "Presentation of the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy" in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (Lexington Books: Lanham, Md., 2002.) Her shortened title for the talk was "Philosophy and Leadership."

I. HISTORIC-PHILOSOPHIC

Let us go back to the beginnings of the history of Marxism, its philosophic origins, and see why there was only one founder—**Marx only, not Marx and Engels**, but Marx alone. It has nothing to do with the idiocies of the state-capitalist age and the "cult of personality." The anti-cultists are invariably the ones who start out with being for "collective" leadership—that's how Stalin started his campaign against Trotsky. Trotsky, in turn, fell into Stalin's trap of talking quantitatively about one versus many and vice-versa, instead of catching the **philosophic moment** when a whole epoch is **summed up** so totally that it has in it all the **tendencies** that will keep developing its contradictions, and, out of them, its new leaps forward.

Thus it was in 1844, when Marx first established the new Humanism. So it has remained—and will remain until we have done away, root and branch, with all ramifications of exploitative capitalism. We all, beginning with Engels, are **followers**. (I don't, as you know, very often agree with Jean-Paul Sartre, but he did catch what is meant by philosophic moment, how rare these creations are, when he said that from the start of modern philosophy, that is, the start of capitalism, from the 17th century and Descartes to the 19th century and Marx, there were only three periods for nearly three centuries: Descartes-Locke, Kant-Hegel, and Marx.)

Again, when we say there was only one, not only do we mean philosophic moment, and not "personality," but we are aware that there were hundreds—and sometimes, at the revolutionary moment of transformation, millions—of talented, creative human beings.

The important thing is to catch the question of **summation**. Summation means so total a conclusion of what is happening in this epoch, that it includes the tendencies for the future, i.e., anticipates what will happen when it does get transformed into actual revolution.

And yet there is only one person who does the summing up. It sounds especially shocking when that refers to the truth that it was only Marx, not Marx and Engels. How could it possibly be just one, when these two men were both breaking with bourgeois thought—in economics Engels, in fact, was the "superior," knew more—and no philosophy known as Marxism had yet been evolved. No greater friendship exists in intellectual history, and at no time was Engels separated from Marx. What Marx had left for him to edit—Volumes II and III of *Capital*—couldn't have been done by any other, and without Engels we would have been deprived of Marx's greatest heritage.

And yet—and yet—because he was the talented co-leader but follower, not originator, it was precisely Engels who, in "rewriting" the 1844 critique of Feuerbach into his 1888 *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*, laid the basis for the Second International's mechanistic materialism. (We cannot go into this here, and I have heretofore not even mentioned it because the "learned" who have discovered the differences between Marx and Engels misuse them for their own purposes. [This is true for] none more so than Sartre, who had the audacity to attribute "today's Marxists"—that is to say, Communist perverters with whom he collaborated all too easily—to, as he put it, "that unfortunate meeting of Marx with Engels in 1844." All that concerns us here is to catch the quintessential importance and continuity of the philosophic moments.)

II. THE THEORETIC-AMERICAN—LEON TROTSKY IS NOT THE HISTORIC-PHILOSOPHIC CONTINUATOR OF MARX AND LENIN

The whole point, insofar as our age in our pragmatic America is concerned, is that the Humanism which Marx laid down as the foundation of Materialism, Historical Materialism, is the Humanism which we singled out **theoretically, philosophically**, in the mid-1950s. The fact that the East European proletariat, in a full revolution [in Hungary in 1956], and the American proletariat, in its battles with Automation, were both doing **in practice** what we were doing in theory, is no accident. What we were doing had been done by none

other, and made it necessary to break not only with Stalinism and Trotskyism, but also with those with whom on the economic-political plane, we were as one—the state-capitalist tendency.

In a word, the theory of state-capitalism without the Marxist-Humanist philosophy, like materialism without dialectics, **ends both in vulgar materialism and purely negative opposition to the bourgeoisie without the live revolutionary subject to do the reorganization of society**. Organizationally the state-capitalist tendency, as we all know, was broken up in a most unprincipled manner, verging not only and not merely on cliquism but actual betrayal [by C.L.R. James and Grace Lee in 1955]. It was **only after** that that we could spell out the Absolute Idea—the unity of theory and practice, the movement from practice—as Black production worker (as well as white, at first) as editor, as columnists, as the new voices to be heard above the din of the glib, and which we spelled out in our Constitution as worker, youth, women, and that extra dimension of Black as color

And I'm sorry to have to add that if Engels had published Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts* instead of bringing it "up to date" and "simplifying" or "popularizing" dialectics (we all loved his *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*; whole generations were raised on this one booklet) we would have had a foundation with which to fight Kautsky and Plekhanov. Instead, the heritage was left to Kautsky. All the rest of the story of the collapse of the Second International and Lenin's need to return to Hegel for himself need not be gone into here. But let us not forget that it took a revolution as great as the Russian, with scholars as great and persistent as Ryazanov, to pry those manuscripts from those vaults. **And in our age it took as great a revolution as the Hungarian to make that Humanism live.**

The fact that the transition point from Lenin—Trotsky—was not the philosophic point of continuity is what makes it so difficult. The fact of the Second International's betrayal [in 1914] was easy to see. But with Lenin and Trotsky—because Trotsky did not betray, he was always a great revolutionary—the philosophic void is not easy to comprehend. Trotsky's position was "Yes, I had differences with Lenin. But the fact that Lenin and I were on the same side of the barricades in 1917 **erased** all differences between us." No, it didn't. The revolution proved that Trotsky was a very great revolutionary, and **despite** the fact that he had not reorganized his philosophic conceptions as had Lenin, he was on the right side of the barricades. We now know that it was sufficient only because Lenin was there and Lenin had made a philosophic break with his past.

I wasn't aware of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks* when I was Trotsky's secretary in 1937, and didn't know that Trotsky had not committed himself on the *Philosophic Notebooks*. There was no discussion between us on that question.

Now, for you to grasp how serious it is, and how important it is for us to see that Trotsky wasn't the philosophic continuator, **as we are**, means to see that Lenin himself left us a dual heritage. In other words, his philosophic notebooks were private. If you read *Imperialism* alone, it wouldn't mean anything—he had just found the latest stage of capitalism. In fact, that's what the bourgeoisie always tells you, that all he did was steal from J.A. Hobson's latest figures, and then he made some concrete conclusions about what the proletariat would do about it. You would have seen the transformation into opposition in *Imperialism* that became his new category. But what would result from the opposite? **The new universal**, the Subject, "to a man"? You have to read *State and Revolution* to see that. [Dunayevskaya's critiques of Lenin's thought can be read in *The Power of Negativity*.—Ed.]

When you catch the economic moment of break, and the economic new stage in the world development, **that's only the beginning**. You can't do without that beginning, **but it's a beginning only**. It just won't do, unless you get the positive, the negative, the new universal—and through the dialectic as well as through the actual movement of history. So we had 1915-1917. Lenin operated on the basis of his great new discovery,

but he kept these *Philosophic Notebooks* "private," unpublished. In other words, he gave us the **results**. We must begin anew—and show the **process** so everyone, "to a man" will have the dialectic as unity of theory and practice. This is the new. This is what no one caught, though the state-capitalist tendency at least tried. With the outbreak of World War II, it was clear that Trotskyism, as opposed to Stalinism, also didn't answer the problem. We were back again in a war. But we had nothing that Lenin had when the war broke out and he was betrayed. We had no one who had gone back to Hegel, who had gone back to Marx, and forward with these philosophic foundations to the new.

The first thing that evolved was the state-capitalist theory. We said that we had reached a new stage, not just monopoly, but a world state-capitalist stage; Stalinism was but the Russian name for it. But the real question was: What is the role of labor? How could such a thing happen? Not only how could

a workers' state get transformed into its opposite, but how could it be that a revolutionary leader who opposed Stalin, who stood for world revolution, "permanent revolution," nevertheless did not grasp the philosophic moment both of transformation into opposite and the new **concrete universal**—the Subject for total resolution of differences? [See *The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism*, News and Letters: Chicago, 1991—Ed.]

Seeing the error does not mean you see the new concrete universal. In part, it is because the proletariat had not yet shown it from below. In part, it is because you as theoretician had not worked out the break. So, as state-capitalists, we saw the error of Trotskyism, the **need** for new beginnings. When we finally started as an independent grouping—not just as a tendency remaining as parasites within Trotskyism, but responsible to the public, the proletarian public—with *Correspondence*, the world confronted also the death of Stalin [in 1953]. The proletariat, in East Germany specifically, did have an answer, an affirmative answer, to the question: Can man win freedom under totalitarianism? And it is within that same crucial three months intervening between the death of Stalin and the East German revolt that I first wrote those letters on the Absolute Idea, and discovered the movement **from practice** some six weeks before the revolt [of June 17, 1953] actually broke out. I believe that Johnson [C.L.R. James] did understand what, **philosophically**, that meant, and began at once to conspire to break with me, to break the organization from England whither he had departed. Grace [Lee Boggs], with her usual hyperboles, did say that my letters on the Absolute Idea were the equivalent of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks*—but then he got her back into line precisely because we had not built leadership on philosophic foundations.

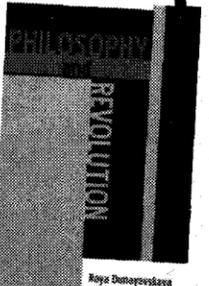
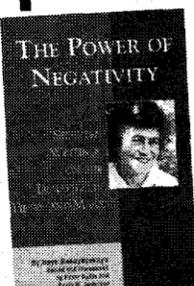
Along with our establishing *News & Letters*, and working out *Marxism and Freedom*, we took great trouble to see that we were not known by a "name"—Trotskyite, Johnsonite, or, for that matter, Johnson-Forestite—but by that philosophic moment, Marxist-Humanist. The unique, the new, the philosophic moment, expressed itself in the Black dimension of editor of *News & Letters* [Charles Denby was the editor from its founding to 1983.—Ed.] as well as Marxist-Humanism as philosophy; in **concretization** of that philosophy as **forces of revolution**—proletariat, national minorities, youth, women, the "outside" in "Readers' Views," as well as in every facet; the **internationalization** of these forces of revolution by the tours (and the editions of *Marxism and Freedom* as well as current articles) not merely to Europe but to Africa and Asia; and the manner in which this was reflected in the leadership, and in the ranks, in relations with other organizations.

By Raya Dunayevskaya, two works on *The Algebra of Revolution...*

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ESSAY

The challenge of anti-humanism today

by J. Skolnik

Anne Jaclard's development (*N&L*, June 2004) of the essay by Raya Dunayevskaya from the 1965 collection *Socialist Humanism* raises some very important points about humanism today, a still maligned and much misunderstood concept. I agree wholeheartedly with her judgement about the urgent need to proceed anew to concrete truths in order to meet today's theoretical and practical challenges. I also agree that this task requires concretizing an alternative to capitalism as best we can, as even the possibility of social revolution scarcely registers in most Left perspectives. This type of concretization would go a long way in the theoretical battle against anti-humanism, an enduring phenomenon that continues to pull people away from Marx's humanism. The lack of a clear distinction from bourgeois humanism has given anti-humanists a new lease on life at time when a willful disregard of the rigor of thinking an idea to its conclusion prevails.

THE POLITICS OF ANTI-HUMANISM

Some of the fiercest attacks on humanism come not from the religious fundamentalist Right that wants to subsume humanity and the individual beneath its deity and personal crusades, but also from the Left that shuns humanism by reducing the human subject to a mere juridical or discursive illusion of bourgeois institutions or ideology, leaving only bodies and power. It is thus easy for some on the Left to find commonality with various strains of philosophy overtly or covertly associated with National Socialism, as the German Right formulated its own reactionary denunciation of liberal democracy, bourgeois humanism, individualism and market society. These currently fashionable figures, such as Martin Heidegger, Carl Schmitt, Paul De Man and, to a lesser extent, Ernst Jünger, were the militarists and fundamentalists of their time. Most of them were German Catholics who saw the irrational charismatic warrior hero as the only hope for the continuing prominence of German blood and soil.

Some on the Left see the excavation of such ideas, most recently Schmitt's, as an aid in their exposés of the vacuity of liberalist and capitalist ideology. (1) The controversy between leftist and liberal responses to the NATO bombing of Serbia brings this issue to life, especially when the former deride the latter as "military humanists." In the ideological morass after 1989, it is no wonder, then, that leftists can find some solace in Schmitt who once famously remarked "whoever invokes 'humanity' lies." (2)

Due to their abstract refusal of this society based on a simple rejection of liberal values, sections of the Left and Right converge on what amounts to a romantic critique of capitalism with abstract appeals to non-alienated forms of life and "community," whether lost or not yet found. The irony is that the very Left which denounces the notion of "human" as nothing more than a "Western Enlightenment" construct—a despotic universal abstraction used to justify imperialist war and to dehumanize populations—holds up its own abstractions such as difference, otherness and power, which often remain ideological reflections of our present stage of capitalism. Today's ideology readily concludes that individual human self-development is liberal mythology and that history is an incoherent mess, an unintelligible series of events signifying nothing.

This theoretical embrace of certain right-wing, anti-modern, and counter-enlightenment ideas seems to mirror the practical ambivalence of other sections of the Left towards the reactionary anti-imperialism of groups like Al Qaeda, of certain stripes of religious fundamentalism, and of an undifferentiated Iraqi "resistance." All else becomes subsumed beneath the need to fight Western imperialism, just as with Western imperialism. Such attitudes, which obscure the capitalist mode of production as the determining factor of imperialism and its racist ideology, have become more pronounced in a unipolar world in which there are no state powers left to tail-end that are sufficiently strong to mount a challenge to U.S. dominance.

The difficulties of envisioning a different future seem to end in either romanticism or else tail-ending reactionary anti-imperialism. What connects these baleful practical-theoretical developments on the Left is a desperation attributable to a conceptual deficiency regarding alternatives to capitalism, which leads to retreat or the fetishization of power as an end-in-itself.

The descent into pure power politics illustrates how urgently we need to concretize the possibility of alternatives to capitalism, towards which this year's News and Letters class series provides the initial steps. The classes illustrated how the salient question we face is not one of political power. Without concretizing the economic, as well as political and human, transformations, needed to ground a truly new human society whose "ruling principle" is "the full and free development of every individual," (*Capital I*, 739), another world will remain out of reach.

LIBERALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Now it is true that liberal legal ideology and bourgeois humanism largely amount to a paper-thin apology for a most inhuman system, a system in which dead labor and the objective factors of capitalist production and reproduction rule over the subjective dimension, a world in which things have power over people. But many anti-humanists on the Left fail to see this domination of object over subject, beginning in the produc-

tion process, as the central contradiction of the system. Some view the effects of this inverted domination as universal. Many see the system as constructing the very idea of the subject, a concept they believe to be secreted by liberal ideology in the first place. It follows, for them, that the way out of subjection to capital is to deny subjectivity, even as they search everywhere for sources of resistance, if not agency.

Yet even chemical compounds are agents and every material body provides physical resistance. What makes us human, what makes us subject, is not our sensuous substantial dimension but our cognitive subjectivity. The retreat from our full living subjectivity not only marks a withdrawal from history and from the need to think concretely through the idea of revolution from the objectivity of where we are today. It also marks an inability to face adequately the ideology of economists and pundits who depict capitalism as promoting freedom, democracy and human creativity, by denying these as goals for liberation movements. This indicates a profound crisis in thought.

Moreover, the legacy of Althusser remains with us via Foucault and others, who take up Schmitt, such as Giorgio Agamben, Chantal Mouffe, and Ernesto Laclau. This milieu associates humanism with, at best, social democratic and reformist tendencies such as the one represented by Jürgen Habermas' call for the global "rule of law and a new normative foundation for a cosmopolitan society of world citizens. They think it radical simply to expose the relations behind such appeals to universal norms. But by focusing exclusively on politics and severing its links to economics, these critics reproduce implicitly the same separation of social interaction and labor which explicitly grounds Habermas' legalistic approach. (3) Thereby both sides eliminate the potential for systemic change.



Martin Heidegger

Neither camp grasps the root determining factor: the mode of labor. The connections that Marx drew between alienated social relations and alienated labor fall away. The liberal ideals that Habermas sees violated by the colonization of society by instrumental reason are simply projections of the abstract equality of commodity production. That is why his project remains as impossible a bourgeois utopia as Proudhon's, only less sophisticated economically. Similarly, by denying the liberating capacities of human reason, his various critics reduce people to particulars incapable of fundamental social change or to objects incapable of freedom.

We must project a revolutionary humanist rejection of both sides of this debate. Its premise, however covert, is the supposed death of the revolutionary subjects capable of emancipating this society. On such a dogmatic basis, the remaining possibilities are either institutional reform or endless (pointless?) struggles over power, never mind that believing that power arises from political domination will leave revolutionaries apt to think that, after the revolution, they will have "captured" power when capital may still dominate.

This interminable debate over humanism and reason rarely leaves the surface of civil society, the realm of exchange, "Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham" (*Capital I*, 280). In contrast to the needed dialectical reasoning, such first negations remain at the level of the object they critique—capitalism. An adequate solution must begin by moving beyond the legal realm of Habermas and the realm of politics advocated by his many critics to the mode of production itself. None of these antagonists address the kind of abstract alienated labor we perform that produces the autonomized value (i.e. capital) that dominates us. There is today such a separation of economics and politics that most who have rejected economic determinism do so to the point of rejecting economics as an explanation for almost anything, opposition to the immediately perceived injustices of "the market" notwithstanding.

While it is not surprising that Left academics who have given up on revolution would be attracted to such ideas, particularly disturbing is the perspective of some independent left activist-intellectuals, self-described anti-vanguardists, who consider their position Marxist, but who also incorporate the views of those like Schmitt because of their attack on bourgeois humanism. This sentiment is shared by the many who post to the autonomist Marxist email discussion list "aut-op-sy." Largely this myopia is a poor excuse for not fully acknowledging or accepting Marx's humanism, and by extending the totality and specificity of his critique of capitalism. Some raised on vanguardist politics, who have perhaps broken politically with their pasts, have not rethought

their philosophical views and find in these right-wing perspectives on liberalism a justification for their deep-seated anti-humanism.

Today's struggle over Marx's humanism involves sharpening our differences with the anti-Stalinist Left. Even in its anti-authoritarian guise, this distortion of the specificity of Marx's work sets back its development, producing a situation not all that different from the history of Stalinist distortions, perhaps all the more sinister for its veneer of openness.

In what amounts to a pragmatic tactical alliance, which presupposes a separation of theory and practice, they claim that they can agree with the philosophies of Nietzsche, Heidegger or Schmitt, while opposing their reactionary politics. However, if they were to develop these lines of thought more deeply they would eventually hit their inherent limits. These contradictions are only ignored or left implicit due to the paucity of theoretical reasoning on the Left today. Dogmatism, as Jaclard rightly points out, "cuts off the dialectic in thought" and in act. By following these ideas to their end they would sooner or later find their positions transformed into their opposite.

It is not that these leftists have acquiesced to fascism, but the excessive focus on liberal ideas without addressing their connection to the economic substratum amounts to an admission that they have nothing to offer in the way of an alternative, just abstract negation. It is not a matter of will or intent. "Ideas," as Dunayevskaya maintains, "think," not sequentially, but consequentially, related to other Ideas that emerge out of historic ground, and do not care where all this might lead to, including transformation into opposite" (*The Power of Negativity*, p. 310).

The old German Right knew very well the force of ideas and saw their philosophy and politics as forming a single integral whole. They knew very well the significance of the words they chose and the consequences of the arguments they made. (4) Similarly, neo-conservatives' influence today, according to one bourgeois observer, "comes not from their position at the apex of the administration, but the power of their ideas, which offered an explanation for the September 11 and a bold prospectus for the future." (5) We would do best to take this commitment to ideas just as seriously as the Right, and to be more militant in our embrace of a philosophy of liberation that is inseparable from our politics and our organization.

UNITY OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

Recreating Marx's philosophy of revolution today involves meeting the struggles of human subjects, which themselves embody reason, yet continue to hit the wall of the capitalist world system. For this an anti-humanist rejection of liberalism and a one-sided critique of modernity will not do. Today's attacks on Marx, on reason, on humanism, on the idea of freedom and the possibility of revolution, and on the self-development of the masses to each person are all connected, whether they come from the Right or the Left. They pose a great danger and remain the legacy of the dissolution of Marxism after 1989. There is a path along which the realms of politics and law become footnotes to larger questions confronting us. Marx and Marxist-Humanism must become a pole of attraction for those looking for something entirely new.

Only the two-way dialectical movement from practice and from theory can break through the false universalism and one-sided individuality of bourgeois law, and the power the economic system has over us.

How can we step up to this challenge posed to creative cognition? We must first recognize that a successful revolution will not only depend on the right political decisions, articulating desires, or different institutional arrangements. All of these changes must be grounded in something else. Only the transformation of the economic relations of production will guard against the pull back to capitalism and guarantee that alterations in the modes of exchange and distribution—not to mention changes in culture, consciousness, justice, etc.—can be maintained. What happens after remains our most important theoretical task—can we answer it? We can begin only by grounding our reappropriation of Marx's Marxism in his critique of political economy. Only in this way can we begin to concretize a society freed from the power of capital, what Marx called communism, or real humanism.

NOTES

1. It is perhaps not as surprising to find similar flirtations by some on the German and French Lefts in the 1920s and '30s. See Richard Wolin, *Seduction of Unreason* (Princeton University Press, 2004), for a discussion of the allure that right-wing thought had for some Leftists during the period of fascist ascendancy in Europe.
2. See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (University of Chicago Press, 1996). The context of this statement was the debate of war and the politicization and false neutralization of just wars by the League of Nations, which purported to represent the interests of universal humanity.
3. See, among other works, Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 2 vols. (Beacon Press, 1985).
4. See Johannes Fritzsche, *Historical Destiny and National Socialism in Heidegger's 'Being and Time'* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) for a philological investigation of Heidegger and his relation to German politics.
5. See "The U.S. goes home: will Europe regret it," by Mark Leonard, *Financial Times*, June 26/27, 2004, p. W2.

THREE YEARS AFTER 'NINE ELEVEN'

This is for the third anniversary of 9/11:

When Hell came knocking, where the Heaven were you?

When Hell came knocking, were you driving your car? All of a sudden did a blue light surround your car? Officers in



blue approach your car, officers yell "Turn down your sound!" But just then the music

was stopped. This is breaking news coming across your speakers. America (i.e. the United States) is under attack! Officers stating we are all American.

Hurry up and pay your ticket, the government needs all the money you've got. For we are at war. Try to have a nice day while you read your ticket saying you are driving too slow in an all white area. Welcome to America. We still have to make that money.

George Wilfrid Smith Jr.
Chicago

HUMAN RIGHTS

Guantanamo prison was illegally constructed, but many allowed the emotional impact of the 9/11 events to determine how they felt about the detainees there, rather than uphold the concept of "human rights" even for alleged terrorists. That greater idealism was negated, and as a result we are surprised once again with the photos of Abu Ghraib. In Gitmo, the interrogations are not photographed or videotaped because of concerns that if those items got out to the public, people in authority could be prosecuted for war crimes in the U.S.

From the Gulag
Green Bay, Wisconsin

The women grinning in photographs of lynching of Blacks in the U.S. are similar to Lindy England in Abu Ghraib. It

raises a question of what it means to be human. When you can grin at a lynching it's a lot more than wanting to be one of the guys. It is a choice of what you want to be as a human being.

Japanese American
California

I would like to answer your question in the July issue of *N&L*, "Did the Chicago police murder May Molina Ortiz?" Yes, they did it with full knowledge—they were murdering a queen for justice. They would not let her speak at the police board meeting on April 22. Was the purpose of her murder on May 26 to deny her speaking at the meeting on May 27? Those of us who care for May know she is no longer with us physically, but spiritually she is still a strength to her family and friends.

Nouveau Toussaint
Chicago

BILL COSBY'S CLASS BIAS

Bill Cosby could have presented any number of success stories from the scholarships he created for education of African Americans. He could have challenged all other wealthy African Americans to match his contributions and to be as responsible to the community. John Alan hit it right on the head in his column "Desegregated schools are U.S. reality" (July *N&L*) when he said that Cosby's remarks, instead, showed his separation from the masses and "expressed a class division among African Americans."

Black activist and teacher
California

BRITISH WORKERS

More than a third of workers here in Britain say they are so exhausted when they get home that they can only slump on a sofa. The ineffective unions and crony-capitalism have much to answer

READERS' VIEWS

for. But is anyone going to question it? We work the longest hours in Europe and have the shortest holidays. It means British workers put in eight weeks more a year than those in France or Germany. One of the results is that the extension of the working life of males to age 70 will ensure that a third will not live to pick up their retirement pension.

Pat Duffy
Britain

VICTORY FOR WOMEN

The article in the July *N&L* on women in Peru winning an over-the-counter morning-after pill is an amazing victory for a conservative Catholic country. Just contrast that victory to the recent disapproval by Bush's FDA of the morning-after pill here in the USA.



Women's Liberationist
New York City

UNEARNED INCOME?

What they call "unearned income"—that is, what you receive from invested money, the extra amount of cash that makes the whole thing worthwhile—is really stolen wealth. Some worker in South America may produce thousands of dollars a day for some company like Ford Motor Co. but, if he is lucky, will make \$2 or \$3 an hour. You may want part of that action and will invest money in Ford Motor Co. for one of the best returns on your dollar. The fact is that it's all theft. When you're waiting for your 401K plan to pay for your retirement, in reality some Third World worker is really paying for it. Most Americans think the extra interest they get off their stocks appears by magic. They don't see that someone has to do the work to cre-

ate the surplus value for the capitalist to pay for it all.

S.R.
Iowa

JACEK KURON

Possibly because of editing for space an impression was created (in the article about Jacek Kuron in the July issue) that he was a great revolutionary when he was a Marxist and was not when he repudiated Marxism.

In fact, Kuron's greatest activity, as a member of KOR (Committee to Defend Workers), his most consequential in developing the mass movement that became Solidarity, came when he no longer considered himself a Marxist.

The critical question is not whether he called himself a Marxist. It is "what is" Marxism? Kuron's Marxism was good enough as an analytical tool to expose the nature of the Polish society, but that is not enough to re-create a philosophy to sustain a new movement.

As the article says: the tragedy of Kuron's life is that "the tremendous revolutionary promise for a new social human reconstruction that Solidarity had inspired in 1980, had been transformed into its opposite—an oppressive capitalist regime."

Urszula Wislanka
California

CORRECTION

We regret an editing error in the memorial for Jacek Kuron last month. It recounted that the Soviet Union fell in 1989 and that Solidarity was swept into power. In fact, the Soviet Union fell in the Fall of 1991 and Solidarity was on its way to a negotiated role in governing Poland before then.

On Marxist-Humanist Perspectives: WORLD CRISES AND THE SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVES

The question that begins the Draft Perspectives printed in the July issue of *N&L*—whether it will be the freedom movements or imperialist war that defines the 21st century—is really a question for today's youth. What also spoke especially to youth was pointing to the danger of thinking that the old Left failed because it was attached to ideas, when the truth is the very opposite—that it relied on leaders and power politics instead of ideas. That's related to the way some young activists here don't see any ideas coming out of people like the Immokalee workers, but only out of the heads of college graduates. It's not a question of just showing what's implicit in these movements but seeing what is sometimes explicit and begging to be talked about and developed.

Brown Douglas
Memphis

The connections made in the draft were good as it went around the whole globe. The discussion about capital investments and exportation of capital would be important to elaborate on. What I differ about is the question of the vanguard party. I don't see any other way for revolution to be brought forward realistically. Control and organization is one thing the bourgeoisie has down. There's tremendous suffering, blood and terrorism around the world. Part of it has come from big mistakes the Marxist movement has made.

Gabriel
Oakland, California

The quote from Marx on religion was misused in the Draft for Perspectives. Marx was talking about turning critique from religion to law, from theology to politics, but we live in a world in which religion itself is totally politicized. It is politics and totalitarian politics as in the counter-revolution that came from within the 1979 revolution in Iran. Dunayevskaya was not afraid to go directly against religion in this form, calling it an even deeper form of false consciousness than bourgeois ideology.

We may prefer a bourgeois republic to a theocracy; but is choosing a lesser evil really an option when everything is in the balance? We have to face how capitalism and fundamentalism reinforce each other, how they are the same and yet different.

Ron Brokmeyer
Oakland, California

I saw a bumper sticker last week with a prominent U.S. flag and the words "God Bless Our Overseas Troops." How sad that there are so many stuck with this religious-patriotic illusion. Our only hope is the unchaining of our illusions and facing up to ruthless realism. It is within our collective power to develop a truly human civilization, one of true freedom. Some people are like those in "Waiting for Godot"—they are waiting for a God to come and make things right. Consider our present election farce, as if one man will make a difference or a real change, when it is the system that needs changing.

Longtime socialist
Wisconsin

What is needed in the Perspectives is not more "debunking" of Reagan but a positive declaration of our vision, which implicitly debunks Reagan and explicitly lays out the map of the journey and the destination at the end. What is needed is more development of the concept that a revolutionary philosophy "cannot be built on what it is against, it has to be built on the basis of what it is for."

Anti-war activist
Tennessee

There is no use in pretending that the U.S. project in Iraq has anything to do with either democracy or human rights or that either the U.S. or the Iraqi puppet's state has the best interests of the common people in Iraq at heart. We should concentrate on ending the war in Iraq while building support for other "people over profits" projects. Neither John Kerry nor George W. Bush repre-

sents the interests of the working people or the poor of this nation, or plans on ending the war soon. We are on our own.

Longtime reader
Louisiana

When the Draft mentions that the U.S. is trying to keep control of natural resources, from oil to water, it is very true. That is one way of exerting its power. One thing it didn't mention is that there are 20,000 black market water mercenaries in Iraq making thousands of dollars per day. It brings to mind what Marx said about the relation of British to Irish workers which translates today into a relation between U.S. and Iraqi workers: that for U.S. workers to be free, the Iraqi workers have to be free.

Iranian exile
Hayward, California

The discussion about the emergence of a new Iraqi labor movement will be exciting news to many *N&L* readers. It includes a Union of the Unemployed (UI) that has enrolled 300,000 members over the last year and is demanding the hundreds of thousands of reconstruction jobs that need to be filled. Many in this country do not know that before Saddam came to power (with U.S. help) in 1979, there had been a strong labor movement in Iraq. The truth you are shedding about the labor and women's organizations there today, and the importance of building solidarity with and between all these forces of liberation is one of the most important parts of the Perspectives draft.

Strong supporter
Detroit

There could usefully be discussion of movements among soldiers in the Draft. To me, they seem key at this time. There was also very little about movements in the U.S. working class. Seems strange to omit it.

Supporter
New York

In the section of the draft on "The matrix of global politics and economics" you have a phrase that reads: "since 1998, a period in which global industrial production rose by more than 20%" I think the word to use is "productivity" not "production." All the data I have seen is that world output has been static for years in every major category (oil, cars, steel, rubber, chips, etc.). That is, the ratio of costs to output (major cost decrease is labor). The output has not changed much but the cost of labor has declined to create the increase of productivity. But the overall spirit of the draft is right on.

A. L.
Memphis

In your Draft you refer to Raya Dunayevskaya as the one who worked out the *N&L* philosophy and as the founder thereof. It has been 50 years; if the perspectives on *N&L* as philosophy center for movement; based on democratic and creative interaction of workers and other intellectuals is correct, then the statements about her should be anachronistic. If not, that suggests a deep problem of approach. In fact, I think that in the last few or so years you have been making some progress on this—but I'm not sure how much worker involvement there is in that process now.

Sam Friedman
New York

It seems to me that one of the major questions of this moment is not only how our organizations will vertically organize in a non-vanguardist way but also how organizations can work together horizontally. No one organization can evolve to encompass the whole. The whole by definition will always be an issue of inter-organizational relations. We need to start talking about what and how we organize across organizations that way.

Anti-war activist
California

REAGAN'S DAMAGE

The Workshop Talks column in the July *N&L* on "Reagan's Damage" showed that giving credit to Reagan for the downfall of Russian Communism is like giving credit to the rooster for the sunrise. I'd like to ask if the rooster is also responsible for the sunset?

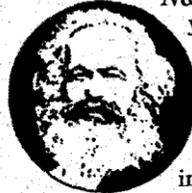
Observer
Hayward, California

Reagan started the "Star Wars" program and George W. Bush promotes the Strategic Defense Initiatives—both mean the proliferation of nuclear production. As we mark another anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki this August we had better not forget that nuclear weapons can be made from nuclear power plants.

Basho
Los Angeles

MARX'S HUMANISM TODAY

In her essay on "Marx's Humanism Today" (see May, June and July issues of *N&L*), Raya Dunayevskaya has a special way of presenting theory, which is very scholarly but uses language that any worker could sit down and have an intelligent conversation about with her. The liberation of the intellectuals from dogmatism can proceed only when they go to the concrete truths. The word revision is not strong enough to describe the academic debates about Marx. They are outright distortions of Marx's ideas. Workers can understand alienated labor and its relation to expropriating our surplus labor. At the forefront of the debates about Marx stands the worker who has to see himself as a new form of theory.



Hospital worker
California

In her essay, Dunayevskaya also says that it was on account of the dialectic of Hegel that Marx was able to work out the dialectic of his own time. But she says *Capital's* discussion of alienation is more concrete and worked out than any stage in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Marx examined the point of production as

where value was created not by machinery but by the worker. It is that human activity that can change it all wherever the point of production happens to be, the factory floor, the hospital, the docks.

Still studying
California

HELP ACHEH FREEDOM FIGHTERS!

Acheh Human Rights Online has received disturbing reports that since July 20 the Indonesian military air force, using two U.S.-made Bronco OC-10 warplanes, has been attacking villages along the edge of hilly areas, targeting Free Aceh Movement strongholds. Many people are now leaving their homes and fleeing further into the mountainous jungles to avoid the sudden air strikes. It is expected that food supplies will soon be severely short and many people, especially children, will go hungry, while the elderly will suffer from multiple complications from the food shortages. It is imperative for the international community to intervene immediately. Call 717-343-1598 or email achehcenter@yahoo.com

Free Aceh supporter
New York

HIDING THE TRUTH

It was stunning to see how the virulent racism against Muslims who are Black was revealed in the way state television in countries like Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and networks like Al Jazeera reported on the genocide in Darfur. Far from dwelling on the mass murder of women, children and men taking place there now, their emphasis was all on how the U.S. (which itself is refusing to call it genocide) is supposedly using the situation in Darfur to invade and dominate Muslim countries. Not one word was mentioned that the Black non-Arab people being massacred are Muslims!

Anti-war activist
Tennessee

At the recent international AIDS conference in Bangkok, the major thrust was on drugs to cure AIDS instead of on

efforts to prevent it. All the drug companies were showcasing their wares. There was little emphasis on the social factors that cause AIDS, which are especially poverty and gender discrimination. No wonder there were demonstrations by AIDS activists outside the conference.

African participant
Kenya

PRISON VOICES

The reality of the prison-industrial complex has come to haunt me personally. First, if you don't have property you



can't get bail. Next, if you don't have money you can't get proper legal representation. Without legal representation you go to prison. The massive numbers in California who receive the maximum sentence are responsible for deflating the unemployment figures and increasing the welfare rolls. The worst part of the entire system is the complete disregard for human rights. At one point I requested access to a veterinarian to provide my health care, as someone who would show compassion and professionalism. Racism, sexism, anti-Semitism and every other form of ism is rampant. How can we justify 33 state prisons, countless more city and country jails, and an unknown number of military and federal lock ups in a state of 36 million people? Worst of all is that there is absolutely no attempt to rehabilitate offenders. The system is broken and there is no attempt to fix it in sight.

Prison-industrial complex victim
California

My whole life's philosophy has been modified due to incarceration. I am not as material as I used to be and can take pleasure in the simplest things like seeing people smile. I don't regret ever putting my children first. But I also need to never again lose my self-worth, to know that I am an independent, strong, capable, loving, kind, fierce woman and that I love myself and others with eyes open in a healthy way. The

loss of the life I had has been like hitting a brick wall head on at 100 mph. I've learned to communicate and that my one single voice is important and needs to be heard. With others I can make little differences to improve life as a whole. There aren't real differences between those incarcerated and free world people; our poor choices were just caught. We laugh, love, cry, get angry, have needs and wants, goals and dreams alike. We all have basic rights.

Woman Prisoner
Chowchilla, California

I have read 1984 by Orwell and *Of Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and both books make an accurate prediction of the American situation today. It reminded me a little of so-called Communist Russia. It's only a matter of time, I fear, before people who speak against the government start disappearing in prisons with no right to an attorney, trial, or habeas corpus, just like the U.S. is doing with all those suspected terrorists in Guantanamo.

Incarcerated
Mississippi

N&L is a great paper which I read to advance myself in the history of the U.S. and other countries. I always read the *Black/Red View* first and then the *Readers' Views* inside. You really get a view of what open minds can show us. Please thank the donor who made my subscription possible. Every issue I get is read by at least 20 others here who send their thanks too.

A voice from inside
Florida

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Japanese American internees draw strength from pilgrimage

OAKLAND, CAL.—As I rode the bus this July 4th weekend on my fifth biennial pilgrimage to Tule Lake (near the Oregon border) everything seemed pretty much like previous times. As before, we introduced ourselves over the PA system, folded origami cranes, and watched videos in preparation for our visit to the dry lake bed where the largest of ten War Relocation Authority internment camps once stood. But by the time we met the other six buses at the dorms of Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) in Klamath Falls, I had a feeling things were only the same on the surface.

That night in the OIT auditorium the theme of our pilgrimage, dubbed "Citizens Betrayed," was introduced: renunciation. It was the first time the Tule Lake Committee solicited participation of internees who had renounced their U.S. citizenship during World War II through a special government program that replaced lengthy court actions with the mere signing of a statement. The theme was not without risk, as renunciation created a rift in the Japanese American (JA) community that remains an open wound today.

Shortly after they realized they had been fooled into making a hasty decision, many "renunciants" sought the counsel of ACLU attorney Wayne Collins. Collins managed to get a federal judge to agree that the special program was a scam because the renunciants had not signed out of free will, as required by law, but under great duress generated by the government. The judge ruled the renunciations invalid. However, his ruling was overturned on the government's appeal to the Ninth Circuit Court. The Department of Justice then developed 22 categories of renunciation, which had the effect of forcing Collins to retry nearly 5,000 cases individually. Just a few years before his death in 1974 he finally completed that Herculean task.

It occurred to me that the government, in an attempt to hinder class action litigation, had inadvertently backed into a truth: that for every renunciant there was a unique motive for the action. Thus every story deserved a hearing, at least by the pilgrimage attendees if not the JA community as a whole.

Perhaps "hearing" is the wrong word, for it suggests that some sort of accounting or justification is forthcoming. In the panel discussion on renunciation later on in the pilgrimage, none of the former renunciants offered an explanation. Rather they spent most of their time honoring Wayne Collins. One panelist recalled correspondence in which Collins maintained that he was only doing his job and that the real heroes were those who demanded their citizenship back. Indeed, the court battles and community confrontations took more than a modicum of inner strength. Only in recent years have some of them felt safe enough to speak about themselves in a public way.

Even though the blame rested squarely on the shoulders of the federal government, no amount of legal confirmation that the renunciants were victims of a racist, vindictive policy could ease the sense of guilt for making a decision they would later regret.

I met a man who said he was still ashamed of emulating the Hoshi Dan as a five-year-old kid. The Hoshi Dan was a militant group of renunciants whose rejection of the U.S. was total. In their anti-America/pro-Japan zeal, members of the Hoshi Dan frequently badgered other internees into joining their ranks. Collins argued in court that this harassment went on with government consent and even encouragement. Why were acts in defiance of a government that

betrayed these citizens remembered with such regret? In one group discussion, I opined that renunciation was what Hegel might have called a first negation. Renouncing citizenship is a total "negation of what is," in the sense that the country you belong to means everything in wartime, particularly when you look like the enemy. As with negation in and of itself, there was little if anything for JA renunciants beyond renunciation. "Repatriation" to Japan was basically deportation to a foreign land. Very few, even among the Hoshi Dan, had dual citizenship.

I had hoped to catch a glimpse of a second negation in the lives of the former renunciants who attended the pilgrimage. To be sure, regaining citizenship was a negation of renunciation. Of course, it was not simply a matter of picking up where they had left off. They probably felt like new immigrants, except in this case there was no JA community in which to immerse themselves. That was partly because there were no such communities to speak of in the postwar period and partly because, even if there were, former renunciants would not have been welcome. Still, it was at least a new beginning.

Marx said time is the space of human development. This must be so especially when one spends time with others. I think it is the development of a new "we" that makes every pilgrimage unique, no matter how familiar things look. Even if your fellow pilgrims are the same ones you saw last time, we have all absorbed two years of personal and collective history.

Some attendees could barely finish something they started to say for all the sobbing that unexpectedly overtook them. Nothing of the sort had happened to them on previous pilgrimages. Why this time? No one knew or cared why, any more than we cared why the renunciants did what they did. What matters is what they made of their lives afterwards, just as what matters to us is what we make of our time together, whether it's at a place we've been to before or not.

—David Mizuno'oto



"Freedom"

BLACK/RED VIEW

Continued from page 1

the idea of freedom, which had organized the great migration out of the South to the urban North. As Hegel said: "Freedom alone is the purpose which realizes and fulfills itself, the only enduring pole in the change of events and conditions, the only truly efficient principle that pervades the whole." In their struggle for freedom, African Americans were engaged in finding their own self-consciousness.

PERIOD OF SELF-DISCOVERY

The Harlem Renaissance has been called a period of "Negro self-discovery." Hughes saw in the process of this "self-discovery" an alienating social relationship when he came to New York in 1921 to enter Columbia College as a freshman with a secret intention of going to Harlem. He saw the "Negro Renaissance in full swing." Writers were writing, dancers were swaying, Louis Armstrong was playing and Alain Locke's book *The New Negro* was about to be published.

During this glorious time when African Americans were engaged in their "self-discovery," the young Hughes soon learned that Harlem did not run itself, nor did African Americans own any of the famous night clubs or theaters. They were all owned by whites. And, because at that time African culture was in vogue, white people were going to Harlem in droves and filling expensive night clubs to hear "Negro Jazz." Many of those clubs catered to white patrons exclusively.

Hughes "soon learned that it was seemingly impossible for blacks to live in Harlem without white downtown pulling the strings." He thought that the Harlem Renaissance's writers and artists should choose as their main subjects "the low down folks, the so-called common element," because they form "the majority of the people in Harlem" ("The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," *The Nation*, 1926).

DEAFNESS TO CRY FOR FREEDOM

The division between upper and lower class African Americans created a rocky road for him. Yet "we younger Negro artists now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful. And ugly too. The tom-tom cries and the tom-tom laughs. If the colored people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, their displeasure don't matter either. We build our temples for tomorrow, strong, as we know how and stand on top of the mountain free within ourselves."

Kerry can only hear in Hughes' poem the tom-tom laugh without hearing it cry at the same time. This has been a cry for every generation of African Americans since the white founders of the U.S. agreed to write a compromise in the Constitution of 1789 to keep African Americans in slavery. All the social manifestations of racism spawned by that compromise kept African Americans busy in a long historic struggle for freedom.

The Harlem Renaissance was a creation of the Great Migration of African Americans from the South. Those new African Americans wanted to make a new beginning both in actuality and in thought, that is, to negate the old practices of racism and to experience living in a society where they were equal and free. Langston Hughes through his poems spoke to the deepest layers of that population who will continue to deepen the idea of freedom beyond party politics.

Prisoners say 'all of us or none of us'

OAKLAND, CAL.—We hear that once again in 2004, Florida voter rolls have been "cleansed" of the names of African Americans on the suspicion they may be former prisoners. This practice, of course, was critical in the outcome of the 2000 elections. However, being deprived of the right to vote, in many states for the rest of their lives, does not begin to scratch the surface of the ongoing punishment former prisoners continue to suffer long after they "paid their debt" to society.

Last year, 50 former California prisoners decided to start shining a spotlight on the issue. They formed the organization All of Us or None. On July 31 they held a public meeting announcing their efforts in a Community Peace and Justice Summit. Several hundred former prisoners, prisoner families, community activists, and even some local politicians filled the church to hear former prisoners testify about the discrimination they face because of felony convictions.

Dorsey Nunn opened the meeting by talking about the problems of getting out of prison and not being allowed to integrate back into one's own community, being denied housing, food stamps, jobs, and so on.

Tony Coleman, the co-founder of the youth organization Third Eye Movement and Books Not Bars, told how he came to realize that it's not just about him beating the system on his own, but that he can help himself by helping others. Getting arrested can become a culture, in and out of prison. He stressed how impor-

tant it is to work on principles, to eliminate life-long punishment after conviction, to effectively advocate for alternatives to incarceration, and other issues.

Emani Davis, an advocate for the rights of children of prisoners, stressed that visitation should not be a privilege. Children have a right to survive and develop. Even if there is a question about the incarcerated parents' rights to their children, there should be no question about the children's rights to their parents.

Harriette Davis, founding member of Network on Women in Prison and Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, told how she was denied custody of her granddaughter because of a conviction for which she finished her sentence 20 years ago. She spoke against Child Protective Services, who place light-skinned African-American children up for adoption and dark-skinned ones in group homes and orphanages. She compared it to the system of slavery, which also separated families even when they wanted to stay together.

Elder Freeman, an organizer for homeless people, said when he was released in 1978 he got \$200, a bus ticket back to the town and an order to report to a parole officer. Today, prisoners get the same \$200 upon release. Housing program do not accept people with convictions or who have had a drug problem. So former prisoners are forced to be homeless, which is often seen as a violation of their parole.

Starr Smith had a drug conviction on her record. After she got out, she got pregnant and her boyfriend abandoned her. After her son was born, she could get welfare for him, but it's impossible to live in San Francisco on \$325 a month. Yet she managed. She pleaded with the audience to not take her success as a "proof" that there is no need for the social safety net.

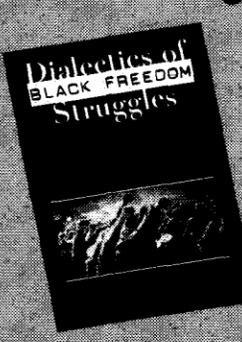
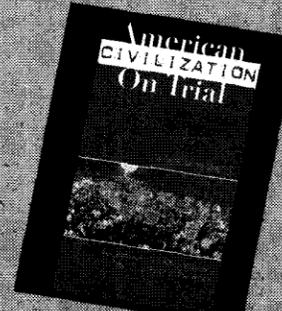
The most stirring were the speakers talking about youth in prison. Ise Lyfe asked us to imagine what it does to a young person's mind to be driven to the prison by his mother every week, and go home again for the weekend. How messed up the society is that we are afraid of our youth!

Yolanda Vega described the ordeal of her daughter in California Youth Authority. She was on drugs and pregnant. Yet besides vitamin pills, she received no medical care, no pre-natal visits. When at five months she started bleeding, she was told she could not be seen because "the infirmary was too busy." A doctor finally saw her after another 24 hours, took her to the hospital where she gave birth to a baby who had no chance to survive. He died within 30 minutes. Despite her mental anguish and grief, they put her right back in her unit as though nothing had happened.

The summit deliberated on what actions we should take. There are laws that can be enacted, but above all, more organizing is needed to bring into public discourse that a "tough on crime" stance, which translates into life-long punishment of felons, is hurting all of us.

—Urszula Wislanka

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EDITORIAL September 11 report reflects damage control

The reports of the Senate Intelligence Committee and September 11 Commission, issued in July, reflect concern in ruling class circles over public outrage over the war in Iraq as well as a desire on the part of the political establishment to steer such opposition into manageable channels.

Both reports contain a wealth of damning information concerning Bush's rationale for going to war against Iraq. The Senate Intelligence Committee Report found that Bush's assertion of Saddam Hussein's possession of weapons of mass destruction were unfounded and that his claims of a connection between Hussein's regime and Al-Qaeda were at best "tenuous." Moreover, it concluded that Iraq did not pose a serious threat to either regional stability or U.S. interests, as Bush had long insisted.

The report of the September 11 Commission had less to say about the Iraq war, though it also found "no connection" between Al Qaeda and Hussein. It noted that initial claims concerning a connection between them were based on testimony from a captured Al Qaeda operative who soon retracted his statements. Of the handful of reported contacts between Al Qaeda and Hussein's regime, the report concluded: "To date we have seen no evidence that these or the other earlier contacts ever developed into a collaborative operational relationship."

The September 11 report did not comment on the Iraq war itself, choosing not to discuss Bush's claim that it was a "central front" in the war against terror.

Both reports focused on "intelligence failures" as the reason why the Bush administration failed to anticipate both the September 11 attacks and the difficulties the U.S. would face in occupying Iraq. While the CIA and other intelligence agencies bear the brunt of criticism in both reports, the Bush administration is not

totally let off the hook. The September 11 Commission found that the White House rarely pressured the FBI and CIA for details and never raised doubts about their intelligence reports—even though it was suggested months before September 11 that Al Qaeda may be preparing to use U.S. jetliners to launch a suicide terrorist attack.

BENDING INTELLIGENCE TO RULERS' NEEDS

Yet clearly the CIA, FBI and other intelligence agencies are the fall-guys in both reports. Both go out of their way not to address the question of whether the intelligence agencies were pressured to tell Bush what he wanted to hear. As *The New York Times* reported on

July 25, "Under an agreement between Democrats and Republicans, the Senate report on prewar intelligence on Iraq did not address in any detail the question of how the Bush administration used that intelligence to justify the invasion of Iraq. It focused primarily on intelligence agencies" ("Behind 9/11: Old Miscues and New Twists," by Donald E. Sanger and Douglas Jehl).

Likewise, the September 11 Commission steered clear of suggesting changes in U.S. foreign policy. It never mentions Bush's 2002 "National Security Strategy" that calls for preemptive war and limits itself to suggesting that "in addition" to military acts the U.S. should place more emphasis "on diplomacy and political actions...The government must define what its message is, what it stands for."

The biggest recommendation of the September 11 Commission is to "overhaul intelligence gathering" by

creating a cabinet-level director controlling all 15 federal intelligence agencies. This follows the procedure used to overhaul the Pentagon in the mid-1980s, when it formed a joint operational command. The report did not discuss how civil liberties would be affected by this change.

Kerry immediately endorsed the conclusions of the September 11 report, while also saying little about civil liberties. Bush has been slower in his response, in part because implementing its suggestions will undermine the power of his National Security Council, but it is likely that he will endorse its basic recommendations relatively soon.

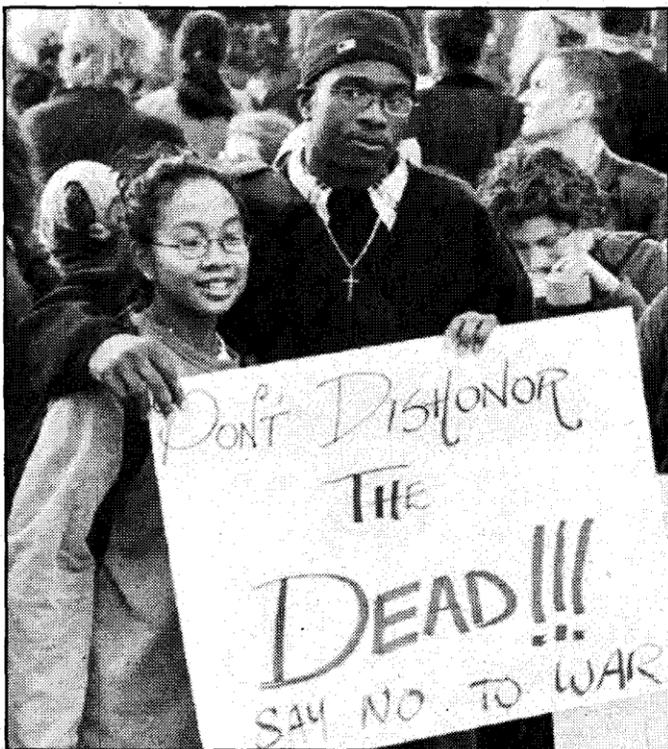
What is striking is the degree of unanimity expressed by Democrats and Republicans on both commissions. As Thomas H. Kean, head of the September 11 Commission put it, "We have been unified by a sense of history, by our friendship, and by our responsibility to the American people."

SINGLE WORLD DOMINATION

Such unanimity may conceal splits within establishment circles. Significant sections of the U.S. ruling class are worried that Bush's over-reaching on Iraq and domestic surveillance threatens to undo their two-decade effort to forge a national consensus based on acceptance of the U.S. drive for single world domination. Yet it is precisely their concern that the American people may come to reject, not just the Iraq war but the entire political and economic policies on which it was based that has leaders of the two political parties rushing to seal off and coopt the opposition by focusing on "intelligence failures" rather than the internal political and economic dynamics that drive U.S. policy.

We witnessed this approach at the Democratic convention, where Kerry draped himself in the garb of a tried and true military leader in a way that would have made even Reagan blush. While much of the ruling class is worried about Bush, they are even more worried that opposition to his policies may lead masses of people to question the entire system on which their power is based. In this sense, the report of the Senate Intelligence Committee, September 11 Commission, and Democratic convention are as much about containing challenges to the status quo as opposing Bush.

Given this situation, it is urgent to develop an independent pole of opposition that speaks to the growing dissatisfaction of workers, women, youth, and minorities by showing that a fundamental alternative to capitalist society can arise in our lifetime. That task begins by showing that another world is possible by conceptually developing a vision of a new, human society to replace the present one.



Protest in New York ten days after September 11 attacks.

Peter Hodlerness / Independent Media Center

Supreme Court slows destruction of some civil liberties

George W. Bush's attempts to replace the U.S. Constitution with his own dictatorship were partially set back by three Supreme Court decisions in June. The same Court that upheld Bush's theft of the 2000 election, finally drew the line on executive power during the "war on terror" by invalidating his policy of unreviewable, unlimited imprisonment of Americans as well as foreigners.

Declaring that "a state of war is not a blank check for the president," the Court held that people who are detained in the U.S. and declared "enemy combatants" in an attempt to evade their Constitutional rights, must be permitted to consult with lawyers, to have the courts review their confinements, and to be charged and tried. Even foreigners taken prisoner in Afghanistan (and by extension, in Iraq), are entitled to some kind of review of their continued detentions in Guantanamo prison and elsewhere, the Court said.

These decisions are no great surprise—the Court was not going to eliminate its own power by voting away the right to judicial review, and was unlikely to eliminate habeas corpus, the constitutional right of those arrested to be brought before a judge. But so conservative has the dominant attitude become, that Bush got away with these unlimited detentions without charge for nearly three years, and it will take many more years for all the people he jailed since September 11 actually to be tried.

MORE POWER TO EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Meanwhile, Bush shows every intention of arrogating more and more power to the executive branch in order to promote both his foreign and domestic agendas. He and his chief henchman, Attorney General John Ashcroft, are at this moment trying a criminal lawyer, Lynne Stewart, for allegedly conveying a political message out of the jailhouse for her client, a convicted Islamic terrorist (additional charges against her were thrown out by the court).

Prosecuting lawyers is meant to intimidate them so they will not take unpopular cases, and is common in countries with weak criminal defense systems. Other recent modes of intimidation include Justice Department subpoenas of anti-war protesters and of records of abortion clinics and of Drake University's National Lawyers Guild chapter.

Also at this moment, the Republicans are attempting to get a law through Congress that would compensate for their failure to obtain a constitutional amendment outlawing same-sex marriage. The "Marriage Protection Act" would limit marriage rights and dis-

criminate against GLBT families by prohibiting any judicial review of the Defense of Marriage Act. Also before Congress is the "Son of PATRIOT Act," which will further decimate everyone's civil liberties, already horribly eroded by the post-September 11 PATRIOT Acts. The new law would permit even more wiretapping of phones, e-mail and internet; allow warrantless searches of homes and computers, and compel libraries and businesses to turn over information about you to the FBI without any notification to you allowed. And Congress is inclined to pass anything labeled "anti-terrorist," no matter how irrelevant it is to real security interests.

APPOINTMENT OF RIGHT-WING JUDGES

The greatest long-term danger to civil liberties comes from Bush's appointment of extreme right-wing judges to the federal bench, where they serve for life. He has begun to appoint some during Congressional recesses because Congress refused to approve the most outspoken racists and misogynists. And the Supreme Court will lose its last vestiges of concern for civil rights, including the right to abortion, if just one justice dies or retires while Bush is in office to appoint his or her replacement.

Remember when you were taught in school that U.S. democracy rests on the separation of powers, the "checks and balances" of three branches of government? You would never know it from these and other recent events. In addition to declaring that national security allows it to jail anyone and throw away the key, the Bush Administration is actively intervening in civil cases on behalf of itself and the capitalist system it serves.

In one case, Achehese villagers sued Exxon-Mobil for complicity with the Indonesian military in human rights violations, and the judge asked the State Department whether the right to sue a U.S. corporation in the U.S. should be set aside due to foreign policy considerations. Recently, Ashcroft started to intervene in lawsuits by injured consumers against the makers of drugs and medical devices; the government claims there is no right to sue for damages if the products have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. If successful, this would be an enormous change in the law.

Bush's disregard for traditional law is like his embrace of phony science and medicine. We now have junk law on a par with junk science. For example, the administration ordered up a legal memorandum to support its view that torture of military detainees is

legal, and then cited the memo to justify Abu Ghraib and the abandonment of the Geneva Conventions against torture. Bush argues that existing treaties on torture, environmental protection, etc., can be broken at any time—in other words, there is no more international law, only U.S. rule of the world.

Bush's legal assaults against civil liberties, as well as against women's and GLBT rights, arise only partly to prove his credentials to his Christian-Right base. Nor do they arise largely from any real needs in fighting terrorism, since police agencies already have the tools to investigate and arrest anyone they have a reason to believe is a threat.

The main reason for the assaults on civil liberties and legal rights is to intimidate people from joining the anti-war and other opposition movements, and to tape our mouths closed to prevent the spread of ideas that could encourage mass movements against the capitalist order. This reason can be seen everywhere, from Georgia's "state of emergency" and mass arrests of demonstrators during the G-8 meeting in June, to Boston and New York's attempts to hobble protests at the political party conventions this summer, to Charleston, W. Va.'s recent arrest of two people for wearing t-shirts that said "Love America, Hate Bush."

New York may be shut-down or see a bloodbath during the coming Republican Convention. Hundreds of anti-Bush events are planned, from street-theater to camp-ins to marches. For months, we fought the city for permission to hold the major rally, Aug. 29, in Central Park or Times Square, but in July, the group United for Peace and Justice gave up the fight and agreed to a rally on a highway, so now the speakers will be three miles from the convention site. I would not be surprised if even that is cancelled on the pretext of security. Since it will be impossible to keep small demonstrations from appearing everywhere the delegates go, I expect much of Manhattan and the subway to be shut down.

CONTINUED THREATS TO CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Bush agenda has been slowed by some courts for now, but we cannot "rest assured" that traditional civil liberties will survive continued assaults. Marxist-Humanists have no reason to believe that our rights to hold public meetings, publish radical ideas, or even to remain out of jail, will last long if "anti-terrorism" measures continue under Bush or any capitalist successor who seizes the opportunity to foreclose the possibility of mass revolutionary discussion and action.

—Anne Jaclard

'We can come together to end police corruption'

Continued from page 1

Department on May 26 is an incredibly significant event. I don't think you can understand how significant it is unless you see it in a historical perspective. The closest thing that I would compare it to is the deaths in 1969 of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark. There are a lot of similarities. They are people who were confronting the Police Department directly, who were killed by the police. In the case of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, the police put out a story saying, "Well, look at these bullet holes in the wall. We were justified in firing and pouring the fire-power on these guys because they shot at us first."

Some seriously intrepid reporter went to look at the wall and they turned out to be nail holes. The incident was exposed as a police murder. That reverberated through the politics of Chicago for decades. It's no coincidence that when there was a big electoral movement in the 1980s with Harold Washington and Jesse Jackson they appropriated the term "Rainbow Coalition." That term came from Fred Hampton originally in the Black Panther Party. That was the kind of thing he was killed for.

When May Molina died, the papers were filled with reports of "80 bags of heroin were found" on her. All I heard from the right-wing talk shows was "Why should we be concerned about this drug dealer?" You didn't hear very much of the follow-up to that: They analyzed these "80 bags of heroin" and they turned out to be supplies to make candles. The parallel is very clear.

People in the media are not necessarily aware of this. At the press conference put on by May's family, some activists and all the reporters wanted to ask was, "What about the drugs?" These same reporters need to realize that they've been lied to. That was their "weapons of mass destruction." We must make sure they can't get off the hook for it. These cases are pushing the torture cases of former Police Commander Jon Burge, former detective Kenneth Boudreau, and detective Reynaldo Guevarra into the open.

MILDRED HENRY

This is a power struggle for greed and power, and they've got us divided. A lady spoke on TV about what happened to the late Emmett Till who was lynched in 1955. She said her father, a Black man, told her about it. They asked her, "Why didn't you say something? Do you believe there was a Black man mixed up in his murder?" She said, "I know for a fact there was." He watched as Emmett Till was murdered. He took it for a prank at first. They didn't know that they were going to end up shooting and drowning this young boy. Then they asked, "Why do you come forward only now?" She stated because that's the way it was back then. The way I see it, that's the way it was back then, but it doesn't mean that's the way it has to be today. We can come together.

My son Kilroy ran into a little problem in the institution he was in. He said, "I was standing in the cell door and I asked a guard if I could make a phone call." Without telling him to step back, the guard slammed it on his arm. I will be filing a grievance. He doesn't know what was going to happen to him because he's in the middle of a transfer, which hasn't gone through because of the budget.

I became nervous and called Ms. Johnson and all over Chicago, saying "They're trying to hurt my son because I'm out here doing public speaking." But I know, if I don't do it, no one else will, nor would they understand. No one here knows that child like I do, or can speak of him like I can. We're all humans and we make mistakes, but they have set up a prison that is holding them, stripping them from their lives for 30 to 50 years. You are arresting them as young, Black males and Latinos between 19 and 21; you give them sentences of 30 to 50 years; what can they come out here and possibly do?

All I ask is that we somehow try to get together, in unity and in strength. Take away the color; do whatever we have to do; just go out here and strip these people of their power. Mayor Daley is Jon Burge's power. People in Chicago read about it, they see about it; yet, nothing has been done. That's the way it was back then, but that doesn't have to be the way it is now. We can bring this man down.

MARY L. JOHNSON

I've been out here talking about police brutality since 1970. That's when I first complained. There was a time I thought it was wrong, the way people were treated by people in authority, but somehow I had been conditioned to feel that they must have done something wrong. That's the trick. Who could blame Santa Claus if he put sand in your eyes; you had no business being awake. But when it happens to someone you know, someone you care about, someone in your family, it's a whole new ballgame. You know that this person may not be perfect, but he doesn't deserve to be treated less than human. This is what I woke up to.

When it happened to my son the first time, when he was brutalized by the police, I ran as fast as I could to the police to tell them. I thought they'd care because my son had done nothing wrong. But after I went to them and complained, they targeted my whole family.

I went to all the organizations that I had contributed my little spare time to, marching. I felt sorry for Black people in the South. They couldn't ride the bus with

whites, couldn't drink out of the water fountains. I thought it was a shame; I thought they all should move to Chicago.

I was secure in my community, because we had doctors, lawyers, politicians. We could identify with Black people. There was no status code then. Well, there's not now, but some of them think there is. And that's the sad part. They had gotten to the position where they don't even consider themselves one of us anymore. I went to people of color in the organizations. They looked at me as if to say, "You're complaining? He's still living! All they did was beat him? That's part of being Black. Where do you think you are? You're living in America."

After I got over the pain and the anguish, I started going out and getting with people who had some understanding of what I was talking about. It was very often a small group. When I said what had happened to me and my family, they were looking and I could see that they were understanding that this does happen. It wasn't like the people of color I had gone to.

When I started to read my history, which was something that I didn't get in school, I started to identify with the plight of all people. I learned that over the years there were people who were fighting, who had gone through all kinds of suffering and pain. Very often I heard people of color say, "I see you you're with somebody white." I say, "Harriet Tubman was a smart woman, but in the Underground Railroad were white people who were conscious of what was going on."

It was a white woman who told her, "Whenever you get ready to stand up, get in touch with me. I'll do all I can to help you." So I got the same mind she had. I don't care what color the hand is. When it reaches for me, I'm grabbing it because if I wait around going by the color of people, I'll do the same thing that they're doing to us—stereotyping, assuming.

I was so helpless with my son's case. Who would want to believe that they would give somebody a life sentence after he refused to take a three-year plea bargain? Who would think that they would actually do this? They do it all the time, but people don't talk about it. They're ashamed. They tell their children, "I did the best I could and that's all I can do." It's not all we can do, but that's the way we're made to feel—like we're just hopeless and helpless.

So I got the idea: Let me join this Coalition Against the Death Penalty. That's when I started going to Death Row. I started visiting guys who were helpless and hopeless. They were bitter. They were angry. But I started going in and they started feeling comfortable with me. They said they were used to people coming and looking at them like they were animals, like they were visiting a zoo: they were making a study of Black people; they were doing a dissertation about urban living; they study law and this is one of their assignments. They were tired of being used so people could make their Ph.Ds.

In talking with these men, I learned that many of their stories were similar to mine; and they were waiting on a death day. One guy said, "The only reason why I signed a confession was they forced me." Like him, they showed my son a statement and told him that if he didn't sign the confession that they would go on my job and drag me out handcuffed. They couldn't beat him enough to make him say anything, but they knew that if they said they were going to get his mother, that would do it.

He was going to sign the confession, but the lawyer told me that she was going to be with him when he signed. So I told her, "You tell him that if he signs anything, he done already destroyed me 'cause he done took every reason for me to fight away." I said, "Don't sign nothin'!" I know that if he had signed that confession, he would have been executed because I do know people who were executed after they signed and plea bargained.

I told myself to get the best attorney in Chicago. I

went to Eugene Pincham, but he was too busy. He referred me to one of his partners, Ed Jensen, one of the best attorneys in Chicago. But the first day I missed court, he told my son to plea bargain in spite of the fact that he didn't do it. "Your poor mother's working so hard," he said, making him feel guilty because I was working. But he didn't give me back any of my money. He just settled the case like that.

* * *

Very often I talk to people whom it hasn't happened to, people in universities, schools and churches. I tell them, when they show you someone's picture on television, if you could see that person as garbage, less than human, you'll think he deserves whatever we do to him. If you could take that color off his face and identify with him, he's a human being.

We got the attention from going all over to places people had never heard of someone talking about people in jail before. Maybe two or three people out of the crowd would come up after we talked and wanted to know what they can do. I would tell them, "You might not ever go into the penitentiary like I do. You might never get out on the street and protest. But you can write a thing as small as a letter and it will have an impression on those politicians" That's because the only thing they want to do is keep their positions.

We got so many people that we thought, "They're trying to help us." For a lot of them, this is the way they make their living. Crime pays. It pays big, to the point where it has started to pay even the people out here who are supposed to be struggling. I have been in a group without anyone working in the beginning. When they started getting staff, they started mistreating me. I tell the guys when I go back into the jails, "You can't expect for other people to have the same

kind of mind and heart that I have."

I'm not a volunteer. I was drafted. When they got my son, they got me. We got a permanent relationship. I'm going to be there fighting as long as I can.

* * *

When Death Row sentences were commuted by then-Gov. Ryan, it promoted some people's careers. They are more famous now than ever, but the man who really should be in the history books, when they talk about abolition of the death penalty, is attorney Dan Sanders. When the Coalition Against the Death Penalty had a big meeting and said it's too late to do anything for Death Row inmate Anthony Porter, I went downtown to Dan Sander's office. The information on Anthony Porter's case pointed to his innocence. After reading the transcripts, he said, "There's one technical thing that was never brought up. And if we can stop that execution, it might be enough to save his life, and that's that they never brought up that his IQ was only 51." And that's what we went to work on.

Two days before he was to be executed I was at his cell with him, crying. He said, "Sister, I could understand if I had done this. But how can they kill me for something I didn't do?" I said, "We're still fighting. Don't give up." On the way home from that visit, a guy came out of the gas station and said, "Anthony Porter got a stay of execution." It was because Dan Sanders didn't know that you could just take people's money and do nothing. He went against the norm. He made all those judges, who said it was all right to kill this man, look wrong. He made all these attorneys, who had worked on Porter's case, appear incompetent. It brought the case to the attention of the governor and everybody else that had heard people talk about it, and people started getting involved; and all of a sudden they said, "We're killing innocent people."

* * *

Until we can stand up for the incarcerated person and until we can stand up for his rights, we're going to jeopardize everybody's. There are some people in jail that I used to bypass in their cells because they looked so wild. But when they saw that I really cared, they changed. You can't make excuses for people, but sometimes, if you really understood what has happened to them, it would change the way you feel about them.

We have to keep talking. You can get people to have, not sympathy for you because you have just a sad, sorry story, but empathy. How would you feel if it were your son? Get people to write letters that would influence people to look at these people's cases, to treat the sick people in these institutions. The only way they're going to change is that people out here get involved. I try to get people involved. Anything you can do to help us on this journey I believe in the end will benefit you. Some good will come out of it for you.

A News and Letters Committee Discussion

What Next for the Movement Against Police Torture and Wrongful Convictions?

Monday, July 12
6:30 p.m.

The movement against police torture and wrongful convictions has a long history and deep roots in Chicago. Countless Black and Latino victims of beatings and coerced "confessions" remain imprisoned today, even though many others have been released following years of struggle by their families and communities.

Following the death of activist May Molina in police custody, and their attempt to slander her through the media with false insinuations of drug involvement which they have been forced to retract, what is the future of this movement?

Join us for an important panel discussion with three distinguished activists:

Mary L. Johnson of Families of the Wrongfully Convicted;
Mildred Henry of Enough is Enough;
and Yvette Cruz of the Comité Exigimos Justicia.

News and Letters library, 36 S. Wabash, Room 1440
(Chicago Loop)

For more information: (312) 236-0799; nandl@ic.org



Two new films focus on war and exploitation

FAHRENHEIT 9/11

DIRECTED BY MICHAEL MOORE

"Fahrenheit 9/11" is about conformity in the current state of America, a state-of-mind where independent-minded Dixie Chicks receive death threats for daring to criticize Bush, while complacent America, deftly depicted by Michael Moore with Britney Spears, expresses a prevalent mindless attitude: We should just trust the President. We don't know what he knows. And we don't need to know it. We should just let him take care of things. And with that, the pyromaniacs have ruled. What Moore has done is challenge that rule by asking controversial questions explicitly and unapologetically in his trademark "in your face" manner.

How does Moore do it? What's his ammo in attacking Bush? Moore comes from a working-class background, and that's where he returns to in this new film supposedly about "9/11" and the war in Iraq. In order to examine the roots of this war, how the U.S. can carry on such a huge venture, where it finds the manpower and resources to do so, Moore returns to Flint, Mich., the location of his original film he produced on a shoestring budget. Called "Roger and Me", it depicted the misery and struggle in the lives of recently unemployed autoworkers when Chairman Roger Smith closed GM plants in Flint in the '80s.

With "Fahrenheit 9/11", Moore closes the circle, and brings his latest work "back home" by not focusing so much on the latest atrocities in Iraq or on terrorism necessarily, but with a focus as the central theme, the class war that is inherent in present America. So, the film literally returns to Flint. Moore makes a philosophic connection where no other documentaries have—that fundamentally, the wars that the Bush regime has launched all across the globe in his purported "War on Terrorism," isn't so much about the battles in foreign lands, or even about terrorism necessarily, but really is about the war back home—the continuous war against the poor, against the unemployed as well as the working poor, a chronic condition suffered disproportionately especially by African Americans.

But it took Moore's unique creativity to present on film in such a vivid way, how that class war has already brought so much damage all across the American landscape, before 9/11. He does this when he follows two Marine recruiters premeditatedly targeting poor neighborhoods to literally pick up and consign scores of



Michael Moore and Lila Lipscomb, mother of a soldier deployed to Iraq in "Fahrenheit 9/11."

poor inner-city youth into military conscription, the casualties of America's class-warfare, hanging around the empty asphalt of shopping mall parking lots. These are youth who have nothing to do, who live in such urban decay that there's nothing left but the military as a life-option—encouraged by no less than their own parents, teachers, and clerics, since these authority figures fear these young lives may be swallowed up by a life of crime with rising urban gangs. These are people whose backs are up against the wall. In other words, Moore successfully portrayed in vivid colors how America's imperialist wars are fought abroad by first winning its class wars and race wars back home.

Such a method should remind one also of how Al-Qaeda recruiters must also be skillfully ensconced in the poverty-ridden ghettos of so many Islamic neighborhoods all across the globe, where their recruitment schemes thrive—from London to Paris, Riyadh to Karachi, Manila to Jakarta. We can't forget that detainees like Jose Padilla and the British "shoe-bomber" were petty urban gangsters first, potential terrorists second.

Somewhat atypical of most of his films, Moore stays mostly out of this one. Instead, the lingering presence comes from an unexpected "star" whom Moore relies on for most of the masterful story-telling—Lila Lipscomb, a quintessentially patriotic mom from Flint who sends all her kids into the U.S. Army for the opportunities it can provide, and lives to regret it as she mourns the loss of her son. This mainstream mom who never used to question authority, becomes the top anti-Bush figure in the film, delivering Moore's central message better than the director himself could. Lipscomb's public grieving becomes an irrepressible political statement, more pungent and more compelling than that any politico could make, as she reads us posthumously her son's final letter to her, full of misgivings and deep antipathy towards the misbegotten war the misbegotten leaders have gotten young men like him into—a war based on so many lies.

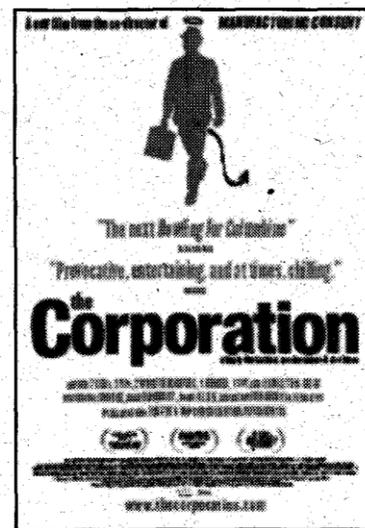
—Hun Lin

THE CORPORATION

DIRECTED BY JENNIFER ABBOTT AND MARK ACHBAR

"The Corporation," the newest filmic manifestation of the global justice movement, represents a step beyond its previous treatment of "corporate greed." The framework of most of the movie rests on taking seriously corporations' juridical status as persons, diagnosing their behavior as pathological. Although moral

arguments and reformist platitudes are presented by its narrator and commentators such as Noam Chomsky, the main thrust of one of its chapters rests on showing how the corporations' "decisions" have little to do with the personalities, the views or the wills of the people who run them. While meant as ironic commentary,



the film shows how upside down it is for corporations to be conceived of as living entities able to buy and sell property. In doing so, it brings us closer to conceiving the abstractions that rule over us and the upside down essence that characterizes this mode of production.

The reasons why this upside down world of appearances reigns, however,

are lacking in this film. But although it ends by telling us that we can supposedly take back our government and reign in capital—perhaps even revoking corporations' charters if need be and stripping them of their legal personhood—it does a good job for most of its duration by showing how politics is subordinate to the mode of production and how the state really does operate as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie. For this it is a valuable depiction.

Besides mentioning unemployment and campaigns against sweatshop labor (though mostly via the global inequalities of pay), there is not much about the labor process, its historical relation to the rise of corporations, the concentration and centralization of capital, or the subordination of the labor process to the advancing needs of valorization. The link between labor and capital is not made—the corporation is conceived merely as a legal entity.

Also somewhat missing from this documentary are the forces of revolution necessary to overturn these social relations. Although it shows youth protesting both Shell Oil (with mention made of Ken Saro-Wiwa) and the FTAA negotiations in Quebec City (2001), as well as the mass uprisings resisting the privatization of the water supply in the Bolivian town of Cochabamba in early 2000, when we get to the U.S. the only actors seem to be non-governmental organizations and those attending town hall meetings airing their complaints. So while the documentary tackles the personification of capital, it remains at the juridical level for much of the film.

—Josh Skolnik

YOUTH

by Brown Douglas

Resisting militarism

War doesn't only express the need for capitalist governments and markets to expand and dominate. The subjective contradictions—that is, the people caught in the middle or taking part in the war's destruction and confusion—sometimes show themselves in ways that can open up new space for the possibility of revolt against the leaders and possibly even the very system and "logic" that began the war in the first place. This can be seen in the way that a growing number of soldiers are becoming dissatisfied with the war in Iraq and are expressing it in various ways, sometimes refusing military service.

The question of being a soldier is one that confronts young people when we turn 18 (at least young men turning 18; women aren't required to register, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't affect them as well). We are mandated to register for the draft as a reminder that we are always at the beck and call of the leaders and when they want us to go fight a war somewhere we are to nod our heads, take our thinking caps off, and pick up a gun to kill on command. Of course, there is no official lottery-style draft anymore and the act of registering is pretty much a token act, "just in case" we ever need it again.

In my opinion, we probably won't need it because there will always be plenty of people to recruit into the poverty draft. Because of unemployment and especially underemployment, as well as the rising costs of higher education, many young people, especially young people of color, see the military as a way to grab an opportunity to get some money for college and develop a skill to use in the civilian workforce. It's a smart ploy developed by capitalist armed forces to play on the fears and hopes that a capitalist society plants in working people. It reeks of exploitation and manipulation. It's dirty.

Even dirtier is not even waiting for young people to get out of high school before bombarding us with recruitment and brainwashing methods meant to smash critical thinking and decision-making skills. Recruiters set up stations in high schools all over the country to peddle the armed forces as a viable career choice for young people scared about the bad economy and college education.

So, many of us find ourselves in times of war fighting in a foreign land when all we wanted in the first place was to go to school and raise a family. Of course, there are always apologists from within that wave the flag and do what they're told and mask it in patriotic and violent, macho sloganeering. But those who don't do that and harbor sentiments contrary to those that made the war in the first place represent something that shouldn't be ignored.

Some examples of this include the young Filipino-American Stephen Funk who was a reservist when he decided that repeatedly yelling "kill!" while in training was teaching him to be a murderer and not a liberator, or Camillo Mejia, who served in active duty in Iraq and came home on furlough and decided not to go back, and who is now in jail. These people are not run-of-the-mill peaceniks, they are soldiers who thought through the totalizing war ideology and said "Hell no."

If not "Hell no," a growing sentiment seems to be in the form of the question "Why are we here and what good are we doing?" The question itself is rebellious because you're not even supposed to think about why you're there. Staff Sgt. A.J. Dean—currently serving in Iraq—said, "I don't have any idea of what we're trying to do out here. I don't know what the (goal) is, and I don't think our commanders do either."

This goes directly against everything we are being told by the liars and killers in office and their supporters in society, from George Bush's "mission accomplished" to every unthinking "support our troops" liberal or conservative. What should become more and more apparent is that "supporting the troops" means something different when you see that the troops themselves are actively questioning their duty.

It is encouraging to know that resistance to war from the inside soldier's perspective is an international phenomenon. It is most prominent today in the Israeli refusenik movement, which is composed of brave young men and women who refuse to serve in the Occupied Territories, or refuse to serve at all in the Israeli Defense Forces.

Ideas and feelings such as these are universal, and their expression in different countries only proves that you can't limit something that comes from the subjectivity of young people attempting to shape the world as we want to see it.

QUEER NOTES

by Suzanne Rose

GLOBAL—While gay activists in the United States are fighting for gay marriage, gay people in many countries are fighting for their lives. Recently there has been an increase of international anti-gay violence including recent incidents in Jamaica (see Queer Notes, July 2004 *N&L*), India and Nepal. In India, a 21-year-old transsexual was arrested and tortured by police after reporting that she had been raped by several men. In Nepal, several gay men and cross dressers reported being harassed and beaten by police officers in the street. A local gay rights organization staged a peaceful demonstration to protest the abuse and were beaten by police to disperse the crowd. More than 70 countries have laws that criminalize sex between same sex people including some who are close allies of the U.S. In several countries, homosexuality is punishable by death.

SEATTLE—Micah Painter was attacked by three men with a broken liquor bottle as he was leaving a gay bar. The men attacked after asking Micah if he was gay. Two of them are charged with a hate crime as well as first-degree assault. The incident shocked the local gay community and caused it to organize itself to help Micah, who has not been able to return to work because of his wounds.

ATLANTA—Nodak Enterprises openly admitted to firing a veteran auto glass worker because he has HIV. During his interview with the company, the man reported his HIV status to the district manager. After being hired, he also told his direct supervisor. Three months later, after news of his HIV status made its way up to the company's leadership, he was fired. His direct supervisor said he did his job well and wanted to keep him on. In what is considered an unusual move, Nodak Enterprises gave the man a termination notice on the day of the firing, documenting the company's own illegal actions which said, "HIV status is a direct threat to the safety of others. It is in the best interest of this Company to terminate employee at this time."

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

Global failure in face of Darfur genocide

by Kevin A. Barry

The past weeks have seen no letup in the horror unfolding in Darfur, the western region of Sudan whose non-Arabic-speaking Black population has been subjected to genocidal attacks. On July 18, Amnesty International documented what has been known for months from journalistic reports: Rape has been "used as a weapon of war...a form of collective punishment of a population whose members have taken up arms against the central government."

We know these facts because the courageous African women of Darfur have refused to remain silent. Defying both tradition and the murderous Janjaweed Arab militia, they have given their names and publicly recounted gang rapes by the Janjaweed to reporters and human rights groups. These women, from the Muslim but non-Arab Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa peoples, have also described the mass killings of adult males, the burning of villages, the destruction of mosques, and the poisoning of wells. Additionally, they report statements of genocidal intent by the Janjaweed, who

Capitalist offensive

This summer, European capital has gone on the attack against labor, rolling back hard-won gains in the work week, pensions, and wages. This offensive has been centered in Germany, the region's largest economy, with a \$2.5 trillion GDP and where unemployment has stood at over 10% for more than a decade.

In June, the Siemens conglomerate set off shockwaves when it forced workers to accept the 40-hour week without any increase in pay, up from the 35-hour week they had won over the past two decades. Siemens obtained these concessions by threatening to move 5,000 jobs abroad. Siemens will also eliminate the year-end bonus of one-month's pay. It brags that it has now reduced its labor costs 30%.

In July, Daimler-Chrysler demanded concessions, taking on Germany's strongest union, IG Metall. After the company threatened to move 6,000 jobs abroad from its Sindelfingen Mercedes plant, which employs 40,000, some 60,000 outraged workers from around Germany struck for two weeks. In the end, IG Metall agreed to cancel a 2.7% raise for 2006, to reduce break-times, and to increase the workweek for 20,000 research and development workers to 40 hours. The only concession was a promise of no layoffs until 2012.

Capital is taking advantage of several trends. It has easier access to cheap labor due to the expansion of the European Union, with labor costs in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia averaging only 20% of those in Germany. The Social Democratic (SPD) government of Gerhard Schroeder has embraced "flexibility," i.e. concessions to capital, as the key to an economic turnaround. This has led to a leftist breakaway from the SPD.

IG Metall suffered defeat a year ago when it pulled metalworkers in eastern Germany out on strike for the 35-hour week, as against the 40 hours they are still forced to work in that region. The union came under severe pressure from capital, the mass media, and the government, as well as the lack of sympathy by westerners for their eastern colleagues. For the first time since 1954, IG Metall had to call off a strike without obtaining any concessions.

Similar rollbacks have occurred in France, with one plant adopting the 40-hour week and the rightist government talking of repealing the nationwide 35-hour week gained a decade ago. Even in Norway, the world's third oil exporter, where a weeklong oilworkers' strike issued a strong challenge to efforts by Exxon-Mobil and Shell to roll back wages, working conditions, and pensions, the outcome of negotiations is uncertain.

declare openly that they plan to exterminate the Black males, enslave the Black women, and take over their land. (Sudan's Arabic-speaking dominant group identifies itself as Arab rather than Black.)

The next day Human Rights Watch weighed in, denouncing "the fiction maintained by Khartoum that there is a serious distinction between the Sudanese government and the Janjaweed militia that the government has sponsored." Far from reining them in, as the UN has demanded and the government has promised, the Janjaweed are being allowed to join the police and the military, which are supposedly restoring order in Darfur.

Some 200,000 Blacks have fled into Chad, but at least one million of Darfur's four million people are internally displaced, many of them living in towns or camps cut off from the

outside and surrounded by the Janjaweed. All of these people face the threat of starvation and disease, with 350,000 deaths predicted by the end of 2004. Human rights groups estimate that the Janjaweed and the army have so far killed 30,000 people outright.

As in Bosnia, the Western powers have deplored the atrocities, but taken no meaningful action to stop them. Currently, there are only efforts to bring relief supplies to some of the refugees. At the end of July, the UN gave Sudan 30 more days to rein in the Janjaweed,



Sudanese women stand up to rape and genocide.

Independent Media Center

with an implied threat of some type of mild economic sanctions. Bush's reckless invasion of Iraq has made an intervention in Darfur unlikely, especially since the Sudanese government has used the invasion of Iraq to rally support in the Muslim world.

For all their talk of "values," it is notable that both Bush and Kerry have avoided mentioning Darfur in their speeches. *The New York Times*, which has called for mild sanctions against Sudan's leaders, has not noted this fact, nor have any of the major media.

Evidently, Sudan is banking on the fact that its size, its strategic location along the Red Sea, its links to major Arab powers like Egypt and to Western ones like France, will forestall any serious action from the UN. It can claim to be reining in the Janjaweed, while allowing the violence to continue. The government, which claims to be Islamist, employed similar tactics over the past two decades in the war against Southern Sudan, at a cost of two million lives, almost all of them non-Muslim, non-Arab Blacks. No international court has ever charged a member of Sudan's government with crimes against humanity or genocide. This time, it is non-Arab Muslims being targeted.

Bolivian referendum

Bolivia held a referendum, July 18, on how to exploit natural gas reserves. The demand for nationalization of the industry that had been sold off to multinational companies in the 1990s was, along with opposition to exportation of gas through Chilean ports and an end to former President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada's reign, the main demand of the rebellion of last October that took more than 80 lives.

Despite Carlos Mesa's statements last year that the referendum was to allow the Bolivian people a way to define the state's approach to the issue, it has ended up merely driving a wedge between sectors of the popular movement and assuring the multinationals that their investments will not be threatened.

There were five questions on the ballot, but none specifically spoke of "nationalization." Evo Morales, leader of MAS (Movimiento al Socialismo), supported the referendum and said the time was still not ripe to call for nationalization. He is now being referred to as a "traitor" by the main labor organizations, such as COB (Central Obrera Boliviana) and COR (Central Obrera Regional), as well as by Felipe Quispe, the Aymara indian campesino leader. The latter groups encouraged people to void their ballots, or to abstain from voting. Only about 60% went to the polls, despite its being obligatory.

The questions were deliberately confusing and lend themselves to interpretation. One asked if the old state enterprise, YPFB, should be re-established, without defining what its relationship to the multinationals would be. Another asked if the gas "en boca de pozo" (i.e. in the "well") should be the property of the state. Morales claims the "yes" victory on this latter question means some form of nationalization should take place, but nobody else seems to agree with him.

The referendum seems to have put an end for the time being to any serious speculation that last year's revolt—and the lives sacrificed in it—might have the effect of bringing about changes to the neo-liberal model in Bolivia.

—Mitch Weerth

Iranian prisoners

International and internal pressure has been critical in the recent release from prison of Hashem Aghajari, an Iranian political science professor and veteran of the Iran-Iraq war. Aghajari had received a death sentence in 2002 for giving a speech in which he called on each citizen to interpret religious texts for himself or herself instead of following the Shiite principle of "imitation." After several days of student protests against this death sentence, the case was sent back to the original court. A year later, the court announced the exact same verdict. This time, however, faced with the mass outcry in Iran, the Supreme Court threw out the death sentence. The new verdict sentences him to five years in prison and bans him from teaching and publishing for another five years. He has now been released from prison on \$116,000 bail and will be appealing the verdict.

There are many other intellectuals and students who are still languishing in prison. Ahmad Batebi, a 25-year-old student was jailed after a picture of him holding the bloody shirt of his fellow student was put on the cover of *The Economist* in 1999. Despite having become deaf in one ear and physically disabled as a result of severe beatings, he has continued to speak to reporters during the two brief periods in which authorities have allowed him to visit his family. Batebi and 12 other political prisoners recently held a 21-day hunger strike at the notorious Evin prison. It was led by Nasser Zarafshan, a lawyer arrested in 2002 for representing the families of dissidents murdered in 1998.

—Sheila Sahar

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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