

NEWS & LETTERS

"Human power is its own end"—Karl Marx

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WORKSHOP TALKS

Waste Management lockout is first battle

By Htun Lin

Waste Management locked out 500 workers after their contract expired on June 30. The workers, members of Teamsters Local 70, collect garbage in Oakland and several other northern California cities. They had not voted to strike, and had pledged to stay on the job under the old contract.

As garbage started piling up after a week, alarm spread through Oakland over the growing health hazard. City officials have taken Waste Management to court over its failure to meet its contractual obligations. The company resumed some garbage collection, especially in wealthier neighborhoods, by recruiting 200 scabs.

Many from the community have come out to support the locked out workers, as have other unions in a 24-hour picket line.

Waste Management waged this pre-emptive strike in order to try to set an example for southern California. They hoped to come in with a precedent-setting settlement to present as a fait accompli for even larger contracts coming up there. The company is hell bent on expensing and imposing new disciplinary measures for safety and health violations.

Despite the real health risks they have caused, Waste Management had the gall to declare, "We want nothing more than to get an agreement with the union that will keep our drivers and our communities safe." Using words to deceive, for the capitalists "public health and safety" is nothing more than public relations.

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BLACK/REDVIEW

'Brown' no more

By John Alan

On the last day of its 2006-07 term the Supreme Court of the United States handed down a decision that banned race-based integration of public schools. This decision has come 53 years after the court unanimously outlawed school segregation, in the famous *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, in which mandated race integration of schools "with all deliberate speed."

PERSISTENCE OF SEGREGATION

In the years since *Brown*, some schools are integrated, but many have remained segregated. In an ironic twist of logic, the Supreme Court now has declared that in order not to discriminate based on race, one must become race-blind.

According to the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, whites make up 58% of the nation's public school enrollment. African Americans, who are 17% of all students, are going to schools that are 53% Black. The new mandated race-blindness taken to its logical conclusion would prevent even collecting such data.

The U.S. Supreme Court did not present a single rational reason why it needed to disrupt efforts to integrate races in the public schools. The need for this integration is an old problem that will not go away by saying that the "United States Constitution is color blind."

Though the U.S. was supposedly founded on the abstract equality that declared "All men are created equal," the inequality of color was part of U.S. law from the start, including the Constitution that referred to slaves, who had no rights, as three-fifths of a person.

The Constitutional Convention raised the issue of whether Blacks were property or humans, but the

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DRAFT FOR MARXIST-HUMANIST PERSPECTIVES, 2007 - 2008

Challenging the dominance of capital in theory and practice



VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA demonstrate at the U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta in June, against racism and government's insufficient response to people's needs.

Introduction: Two worlds in the U.S.

A striking duality defines U.S. society today. While discontent with Bush's war in Iraq grows daily, the Republicans and Democrats have failed to lift a finger to put a stop to the bloody carnage. Although Bush's insistence on continuing the war has led to deep fissures within the U.S. ruling class and in society as a whole, in June the Democrats in the Senate withdrew their effort to insist that he set a timetable for a withdrawal from Iraq—by the end of 2008!

Fewer than 30 senators voted to cut off war funding. Never in U.S. history has there been such a disconnection between the aspirations of broad sectors of the populace and the spinelessness and do-nothingness of its political leaders.

Although the Democrats won control of Congress largely because the public has become disgusted with the war in Iraq, they have refrained from mounting any serious or principled opposition to Bush. This is leading many youth especially to conclude that the U.S. political system is a sham and a snare.

This is all the most striking in light of the carnage that is devastating Iraq. Since 2003, hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed. Four million have been forced from their homes. As many as 100 Iraqis are being killed each day by suicide bombers, home-grown militias, and U.S. troops.

A study in *Lancet*, Britain's most prestigious medical journal, shows that Iraq has become the largest international conflict of the 21st century. Along with the ongoing slaughter in Darfur—which the U.S. and Western powers have done nothing to stop—the Iraq war shows every sign of equaling or surpassing such conflicts of the late 20th century as East Timor, Congo, and Vietnam. A recent report of the London-based Minority Rights Group shows that entire communities in Iraq face outright extinction.

A system that cannot manage to adequately address, let alone resolve, such a crisis has clearly outlived its usefulness. It is time to dispense with any illusions about this system and work to create a totally new society that uproots both capitalist-imperialism and religious fundamentalism-terrorism.

A basis for achieving this is contained in the force and reason of ongoing mass struggles. One expression

Our "Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives" is published here to promote the widest discussion on the political, philosophic and organizational challenges facing Marxist-Humanists. We invite you to join in the process of developing our perspectives for the coming year, as part of the effort to work out a unity between philosophy and organization.

was the demonstrations in June of tens of thousands in Germany against the G-8 Conference of the major industrial powers. The banner carried by some demonstrators, reading "Total Freedom," shows that the passion for a total uprooting of the system is alive and well.

This is not restricted to protests overseas. While the anti-war rallies in the U.S. have yet to reach the level attained on the eve of the invasion of Iraq in 2003, anti-war sentiment continues to grow and is prominent in many high schools and colleges. Women's groups are increasing their activity in light of the Supreme Court outlaws a procedure for late term abortions.

Outrage is expressed across the U.S., especially among Black Americans, over the Supreme Court's ruling in June that public schools can no longer take explicit account of the race to achieve integration. This attack on one of the central gains of the civil rights Movement may immediately affect as many as 1,000 schools around the U.S.

The less capitalism proves capable of improving the living conditions of the masses, the more it makes use of racism to target minorities. Struggles against racism therefore remain at the vanguard of the challenge to existing society.

This was reflected at the U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta in June, attended by 10,000 people—most of whom were people of color. A large number of Black and Civil Rights groups that had not been previously involved in the anti-globalization movement held a series of important workshops and events. Hundreds of residents of New Orleans who were victims of the government's disregard after Hurricane Katrina also attended.

Especially crucial is the immigrant rights movement. Over 200,000 marched in Chicago on May Day and smaller but significant marches were held in a dozen cities. Many of these immigrant marchers have been impacted by "free trade" agreements, cutbacks in social spending, and political repression in their native lands. They have an understanding of the ravages of globalization that U.S. workers increasingly face in the form of declining real wages, layoffs, and cuts in health benefits.

Although anti-immigrant attacks and the recent defeat of legislation to provide legal status to undocumented workers are being used as a wedge to pit worker against worker, immigrant struggles are helping to reawaken worker, immigrant struggles are helping to reawaken a spirit of unity between U.S. labor. Campaigns are underway at UPS, Smithfield Foods, and Verizon to extend collective bargaining to thousands of workers in subsidiaries of these companies that are not covered by union benefits. At Smithfield's Tar Heel plant in North Carolina, the UFCW has built up a sizable network of labor and community supporters, including immigration rights activists. Important lessons have been learned by the victory of

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Need to dig into revolutionary theory

By Terry Moon

The 28th National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Conference, June 28-July 1, was held just outside Chicago. Of the over 1,400 who came, 600 were first-time attendees, highlighting how many young women first meet feminism through women's studies.

Having attended NWSA Conferences for over 20 years what was striking to me was that the Conference had no plenary that took up an important topic of the day. Last year, for example, one plenary was on "Empire, Global Political Conflicts and Resistance," other years took up "Women and Globalism," women and war, the state of feminist theory, etc.

This year heard an inspiring talk by breakthrough Chicana feminist writer Sandra Cisneros, which contained explicit feminist and anti-racist messages but didn't set forth a view of the world or a specific topic that the body as a whole could discuss. Neither did the second night's "Tribute Panel: Bridge Inscriptions: Radical Women of Color Envision-Pasts, Presents, Futures," where several women of color gave moving accounts of their encounter with the groundbreaking 1981 book, *This Bridge Called My Back*.

NO POLITICAL PLENARY

The political plenary was replaced with four "Engaging Scholarship Sessions" held at the same time, billed as offering "scholarly perspectives on the various conference themes." The best was Barbara Ransby's on "Past Debates, Present Possibilities, Future Feminisms," the theme of the entire Conference. But even here, the emphasis was on trying to re-create "teaching like [civil rights activist] Ella [Baker] did, by quilting strands together" among the academy and communities on the move for freedom. The stress was on ameliorating our present circumstances, not envisioning how to create a totally new world. (For more reports on NWSA see Readers' Views, page 9.)

The lack of a plenary, the dearth of explicit workshops on revolutionary theory, and NWSA's emphasis on "performance" which dominated the agenda, reveal a serious depoliticalization and show how both post-modernism and pragmatism have pervaded women's studies. This retrogression in theory can't be separated from the retrogression in the movement itself. NWSA

Title IX still threatened

George Bush and his right-wing friends have been fighting to undermine Title IX, the 35-year-old law banning race and sex discrimination at institutions receiving federal funds. In 2002, he created a Commission on Opportunities in Athletics to "study" Title IX. Women, however, are low on his opportunities list.

Before Title IX, fewer than 32,000 women played college sports. Today that number has risen to 160,000—including a large number with world class status—because federal funding was there for scholarships, equipment, coaching and facilities. In high schools, girl's participation in sports increased from 300,000 to three million.

Despite this history of women's unmet interest in engaging in sports, colleges are still required to "prove" they are meeting women's interest or risk losing federal money. Consequently they have to judge what women's interest is; but male students never have to prove interest in sports to get funding.

To destroy the effectiveness of Title IX, in 2005 the Department of Education said that universities can rely solely on student surveys—even through email—to gauge women students' interest in playing sports. Schools can treat a lack of response to an email survey—which are notorious for being ignored—as a lack of interest! In May, a heated debate ensued at a U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearing looking into the legitimacy of this most controversial method.

The NCAA had already unanimously passed a resolution advising schools not to use the survey method to prove compliance with Title IX. The Women's Sports Foundation is calling for restricting email survey use. Allowing such surveys as compliance "creates a major loophole through which schools can evade their legal obligation," said Jocelyn Smith, vice president of the National Women's Law Center.

The Civil Rights Commission had 30 days from the hearing date to accept public comments before they decide whether to submit a report to the Department of Education. NCAA President Myles Brand cut to the heart of the matter: "We don't need repeated efforts to undermine the law. Mandatory equal opportunity for male and female athletes and clearly stating that sex discrimination is wrong remains essential. Title IX has worked, continues to work, and indeed has more work to do."

is struggling with being the "academic arm of the Women's Liberation Movement" when women's liberation can hardly be characterized as a movement.

Yet many were looking for a more radical direction and were interested in revolutionary theory—as seen by those attracted to three Marxist-Humanist workshops and the News and Letters literature table where a number came to engage in further discussion. The workshops were titled: "From Consciousness Raising to Creating Revolution: The Building of Future Feminisms"; "G. W.F. Hegel's Philosophy Debated Within Feminist Theory"; and "Revisiting the Relation of Feminism to Marxism."

DON'T SHY AWAY FROM PHILOSOPHY

At these panels and many others, conference attendees shared their experience in every aspect of the struggle: abortion rights and fighting the theocratic Right—Muslim or Christian; mobilizing an entire community to stop the savaging of immigrants; environmental justice; post-Katrina reconstruction (see article this page); queer issues and much more.

While NWSA has always been good on trying to bridge the gap between academia and the struggles of women worldwide, what needs to be comprehended is that can never be done by shying away from revolutionary theory and philosophy.

No one can manufacture a mass movement, but NWSA—as an explicit intellectual segment of feminism—needs to do more than reflect the present state of women's liberation. When a movement is quiescent, or struggling to throw off retrogression, theoreticians don't help by retreating into do-nothing theories of postmodernism, or a pragmatism that is incapable of challenging what is. Rather, now is the time to dig deep into revolutionary theory and philosophy that take off from the highest point reached by the women's movement and in thought. One of those high-points was when women were confident in our ability to transform all of society, including the Left's narrow concept of revolution. We demanded so deep and total a transformation that all segments of society would be free. That is still what needs to be done, but it will be impossible if revolutionary philosophy is no longer on the agenda.

Next year's NWSA conference title shows promise: "Resisting Hegemonies: Race and Sexual Politics in Nation, Region, Empire." Time will tell if that challenge will be met.

Katrina Warriors

As we approach the second anniversary of the horror that was Hurricane Katrina, survivors attending the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) conference showed us what we already feared—that the devastation is far from over, especially for women.

Crystal Kile, who works with Newcomb College Center for Research on Women at Tulane University in New Orleans, informally discussed the formation of "Katrina Warriors and a Future for Feminism in Post-Disaster New Orleans" at a workshop whose audience included young college women who had gone to help in New Orleans after Katrina, older women who had lived there years ago and mourned what was lost, and others concerned with if and how the victims were healing.

Crystal told us how all of the infrastructure to aid women in the area was destroyed—especially help for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault which skyrocketed drastically starting with the time people were waiting to be rescued.

The idea for the formation of the Katrina Warriors network emerged by International Women's Day 2006—more than six months after Katrina—because little had improved. It was dedicated to ending violence against women and girls in greater New Orleans and to addressing their needs in the post-disaster area.

Charity Hospital—the major medical facility that served New Orleans' poor—remains closed and may never reopen. According to Crystal, "Charity operated in the Lord and Taylor [department store] to help sexual assault victims." Homelessness is still exploding, mental health issues are unaddressed and post-traumatic stress is affecting many and remains untreated.

Despite this devastation, Katrina Warriors came from the recognition that women had emerged among the leaders in the recovery effort—in families, in what was left of their organizations, in churches and schools, in all racial, ethnic and economic areas; and included women from New Orleans' "aristocracy," academic and women's studies communities, YWCA, church women whose groups had been a mainstay in feeding and helping the poor and homeless before Katrina, residents of the Ninth Ward, and the Mardi Gras Indians whose rich African-Caribbean history was the soul of the Black community.

More than 1,000 gathered together in the auditorium at Tulane University in May 2006 for the first Katrina Warriors get together to share stories, music and culture; to begin to make new connections and reweave the social fabric that had been New Orleans.

They have expanded their network to the internet to discuss and share information and ideas with women around the country and the world: <http://sophie.tulane.edu/katrinawarriors/>

—Conference participant

Protesting anti-gays



Two dozen protesters gathered, July 17, in front of "Love in Action" (LIA) a fundamentalist, anti-gay organization in Memphis, Tenn. It runs a three-month live-in program of religious indoctrination claiming to help gay people—at a price of \$7,000—"break out" of "homosexual attraction and behavior." Sponsored by Soulforce, with help from the Queer Action Coalition, this protest was the latest in a series begun two years ago by local youth when a 16-year-old blogged about being sent to LIA (see story in September-October 2005 N&L). Two former LIA clients, Brandon Tidwell and David Christie, read statements about their experiences. We present excerpts of Christie's statement:

I am a survivor of ex-gay therapies. From ages 15 to 28 I was constantly involved in some form of therapy designed to thwart my homosexual orientation. Believing I would eventually manage or even overcome my homosexual desires, I got married at the age of 21. When that fell apart two and a half years later because of my sexual indiscretions, I became profoundly committed to ridding myself of homosexuality. So much so, that I remained celibate for the next four years.

While married, I discovered Exodus [a Christian group advocating "therapy" to "cure" gays]. For five years, I attended weekly support meetings in one of their affiliated programs. I lived for one year within an ex-gay residential program, LIA.

I had to move, change churches, change friends. I dropped out of a promising graduate school and took on a dead-end office job in order to minimize conflicts with my ceaseless schedule of therapy, support groups, and related events. I threw out old letters, photographs, books, and music—things I loved, but which I had come to believe were negative influences.

I battled feelings of worthlessness, self-hatred, and guilt. The doctrine of God's unconditional love was useless to repair the damage done by the doctrine of homosexual sin. This led to chronic depression for which I took costly medications from my late teens until I finally came out, at the age of 28. On a few occasions, in panicked despair, I contemplated suicide.

At LIA, I became mutually infatuated with another client which clashed with the program's teachings, cultivating even deeper disgust with myself. I was later beaten by a staff member who lost his temper. Although he and the organization apologized, the physical, mental, and emotional damage was done.

Since coming out nine years ago, I have moved to New York and gone back to school; I have new friends and reconnected with some I had lost; I have a wonderful partner of seven years; and am friends again with my ex-wife; I no longer have need of anti-depressants. I now value, respect, and trust myself in a way that seems common to straight people, yet a way that as an ex-gay I never could.

WOMEN WORLDWIDE

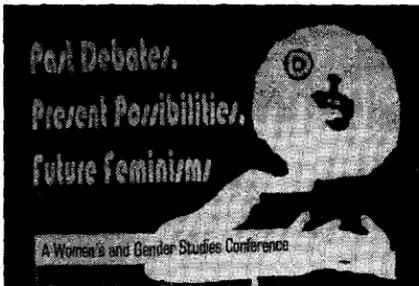
By Mary Jo Grey

The International Criminal Court in the Hague recently agreed to investigate human rights violations committed in the Central African Republic (CAR) in retaliation for a coup attempt in 2002 and 2003. The investigation is focusing on organized sexual violence which has been rampant in many African countries in the past 15 years, but rarely prosecuted. "Rape is the most notorious issue here," said Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the Hague prosecutor. "There were four times more rapes than killings—mass rapes, gang rapes, hundreds of cases that took place within a few days." Edith Douzima, a lawyer and human rights advocate in the CAR capital of Bangui, responded "We have been waiting a long time for this day—too long. Rape has been used for too long as a weapon of war wielded with impunity."

After reproductive rights advocates in Georgia launched a statewide campaign to raise awareness about the denial of access to emergency contraception by individual pharmacists, the Kroger grocery chain pledged to disperse such medication on request in all of its stores. CVS, Rite-Aid and Walgreen's have supposedly committed themselves to the same policy.

Recently near Guatemala City, the body of an 18-year-old indigenous woman was found raped, tortured, murdered and decapitated—the latest of more than 3,200 Guatemalan women abducted and murdered in the last seven years. At least 600 were killed in 2006 alone. The victims are often from poor, rural families and looking for work in the cities. The government, from local police up to the country's president, has done little to stop the atrocities. Instead, they tell women, for their own safety, to stay at home.

WOMAN AS REASON



—MJG

Tehran bus drivers' leader kidnapped and jailed

TEHRAN, IRAN—On July 10, Mansour Osanlou, leader of the Syndicate of Workers of Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, was kidnapped by unidentified plainclothes agents, according to information the International Alliance in Support of Workers in Iran (IASWI) has received from activists of the Syndicate in Iran. It is certain that the attackers are the agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

There is a new wave of repression in Iran against labor activists as well as women's rights and student activists. People of Iran not only suffer from economic sanctions imposed by U.S. imperialism and their other allies and fear of foreign intervention, but also are under attack by the Islamic government of Iran. It has taken advantage of the current world situation and is trying to destroy any basic freedom which people have achieved in their struggles against Iran's regime.

Iranian women are under severe attack by the Islamic government of Iran. Numbers of women activists have been beaten and arrested. Youth, students and their universities are also under attack with a number of students arrested just during the last few weeks. We need to protest against the kidnapping of Mansour Osanlou, and condemn recent suppression in Iran, in any way we can.

—Ali Reza

When Mansour Osanlou, the leader of the Iranian Bus Drivers' Union (Syndicate of Workers of the United Bus Company of Tehran) was abducted by plainclothes Iranian government agents on July 10, he was later found at the notorious Evin Prison in Tehran.

In 2004 Tehran's bus drivers attempted to reactivate their union, which had been disbanded after the 1979 revolution. This was the first effort by Iranian workers to launch an independent trade union after the Islamic Republic had banned workers' independent trade unions created during the 1979 revolution and had replaced them with state-sponsored, Islamic Labor

Councils and the House of Labor.

In December 2005, 3,000 members of the officially unrecognized Syndicate went on strike to demand better pay. Since then Osanlou and other Syndicate members as well as their families have been viciously beaten, intermittently arrested and continually harassed by the Iranian government.

Below is the excerpted translation of a speech made by Osanlou to the International Trade Union Confederation in Brussels, Belgium in June, just before his abduction. The Persian original is posted on the Syndicate's website: www.syndicavahed.com —S. Sahar

According to Article 26 of the Iranian Constitution, our union is legitimate. However, our government has not recognized our union since its reactivation in 2005. We are grateful for the recognition granted to our union by the International Federation of Transport Workers and also for the support of union associated with ITUC and global unions.

As I am speaking to you today, 40 members of our Syndicate have been unjustly fired by the company's administration for their union activities in defense of workers' rights. Therefore, we ask for your support in demanding that they be given back their jobs and assisted in overcoming this pain and suffering.

It took us seven years to build the foundation of our Syndicate. We regularly held Syndicate classes on weekends and discussed International Labor Union (ILU) documents about workers' rights. We discussed working conditions based on the situation of the workers. Some cases concerned health and safety, long working hours and the administration's corruption. This struggle may not be unlike climbing a mountain. If you rush, you run out of breath but if you do not proceed with strength and discipline, you will never achieve the goal.

I could not have spoken in Brussels at a better time. I welcome the report prepared by the Free Association Committee of the ILU. In this report, it has been stressed that the House of Labor could not follow through on the demands of the bus drivers. This is not surprising, considering that the House of Labor and Islamic Labor Councils had been created by the government for the principal role of watching workers, and not defending them!

It is not only the bus company workers and their families in Tehran who suffer from this system. The government is now discussing the plan to privatize over 80% of industrial companies, including banks, the media, transportation and mining. These are currently managed by the government. This is a revision of the economic "principles" that are clearly stated in the Constitution. This will increase the gap between poor and rich. The poor will get poorer and the rich will get richer.

That is why we have witnessed protests in the oil industry, among teachers, in the textile industry, food industry, construction and transportation. Even the unemployed workers and women have joined the protesters.

Worst of all are the revisions in the labor laws that will legitimize firing workers and paying lower wages to temporary workers. This revision will leave the door open for firing permanent workers and replacing them with temporary workers. Workers hired by companies

that employ fewer than 10 will no longer be covered by the labor law.

Even now, many workers have lost their jobs. The unemployment rate is very high. Some unemployed workers have resorted to becoming street vendors, smuggling drugs or selling their children to human traffickers for \$150 U.S. dollars out of desperation or because of drug addiction. I know that this is unbelievable. But I myself have seen such a case.

That is why our aim is to rebuild a wider workers' movement in Iran and not only a movement of the bus company workers of Tehran. We hope to start a nationwide federation of unions. As I am speaking to you now, I can say that in different sectors such as construction, painting, baking and even some sectors of large industry, workers are in the process of creating free and independent organizations of their own.

In this path, some of us have gone to prison. The imprisoned comrades and their families need any kind of humanitarian and financial and technical support. In fact, we are asking you not to deprive us of your support and solidarity as workers in this struggle against suppression. This support will give us greater strength to withstand to reach our goal. We will be grateful for your support.

I want to thank the secretary general of the ITU . . . If you had not so quickly acted during the December 2005 Christmas holiday when I was arrested for the first time, our situation would not have received the international support that it has received up to now.

We look forward to your continuing solidarity with our struggles as we step forward in this path. . . I feel confident and strong because I know that the international labor union movement is behind me. Iranian authorities know this as well. Instead, we will remain an inspiration as part of the international labor union movement for global peace and justice.

—Mansour Osanlou

Defying governor for California healthcare

OAKLAND, CAL.—Many neighborhood meetings are being held all across California supporting SB 840, the California Universal Healthcare Act. This bill passed last year, but Gov. Schwarzenegger vetoed it.

There is a push to get it passed again. We attended one of those meetings here on July 15, where a hundred people came to hear nurses from California Nurses Association recount their experiences with the broken healthcare system, offer their analysis of the problem—private insurance companies, who need to deny care to make a profit—and offer their insight into why only a single-payer system makes sense.

Michael Moore's movie "Sicko" has provided a new impetus to discuss the problems with healthcare in the U.S. nationwide. Each nurse testified to how the movie reflected their experiences with patients.

Much of the economic analysis boiled down to the slogan, "Healthcare YES, Insurance companies NO." The campaign for SB 840 has as its motto a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., which shows how prescient he was: "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."

Any law that keeps capitalism intact will neither fully solve the problems of inequality nor address how capitalist commodity production distorts any human service like healthcare. Yet when workers fight for a law like this it reflects many years of struggle over alienation in the workplace.

—Urszula Wislanka

WORKSHOPTALKS

Waste Management lockout is first battle

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Waste Management's first priority, in its concern for health and safety, is to blame individual employees for all health and safety violations. The people who genuinely care about health and safety and public welfare are those who actually do the work, the garbage workers—just as in other workplaces it is housekeepers, nurses or teachers.

I've worked in a hospital for 20 years. I've seen many nurses and service workers blamed every time something goes wrong with a patient. If it weren't for the strong nurses' union, standing up to management's deceptive use of the quality-care concept, and if it weren't for our contracts which spell out formal disciplinary procedures which guarantee workers a modicum of union rights and a proper investigation, many more of us would not be working here today.

That's because the first thing managers do whenever a patient is harmed is to blame individual workers, even though we workers have been pointing out problems and risk patterns leading to deficient care for years, warnings which went unheeded.

Waste Management is out to scapegoat individual workers for health and safety violations while simultaneously trying to cut back on workers' healthcare. For management, workers' health care is nothing more than a cost. They see nothing immoral about their "cost-shifting" or "cost-cutting" which has resulted in the deterioration of many a worker's health. But once there's a particular "health and safety violation" supposedly by an individual worker, he is to be punished.

Waste Management's twisted logic includes a demand for a no-strike clause. Their logic is that strikes harm customers and cause unnecessary inconvenience and headaches. That's why they want a no-strike clause for the new contract. They intend to do anything to get it, including locking out workers. If the lockout causes tons of garbage to pile up, it is because they don't really care about community health.

Employers are sensing a total retreat when there are labor mis-leaders like Andy Stern of the Service Employees actively promoting no-strike clauses in sweetheart deals with nursing home mega chains.

Stern parrots the capitalists' own banalities about globalization, calling for a global union movement—but by surrendering to capital. His idea is to give capital what it wants, including exporting jobs. All this twisted logic—through which Stern subscribes to health take-backs, concessions on working conditions, and the erosion of job security—is just part of capital's ongoing war on labor.

The only effective way out of this is through thoughtful rank-and-file self-activity. This includes holding firm to labor's key leverage, the right to strike. It also means working out our own concept of cooperation and community well being that doesn't tail-end capital's logic.

On the 100th anniversary of Charles Denby's birth

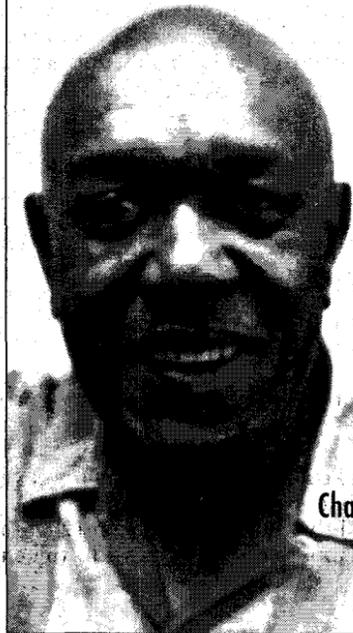
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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

EDITOR'S NOTE

As part of our continuing exploration of Marx's *Capital* and the capitalist law of value, we are reprinting the conclusion of a series of lectures that Raya Dunayevskaya gave on Marx's *Capital* in 1945. The lectures were reprinted in 1979 in the pamphlet *Outline of Marx's 'Capital.'* All references to *Capital* are to the edition published by Charles H. Kerr publishers in 1906. For the text of all 14 lectures, see the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 385-420.

All science, wrote Marx, "would be superfluous if the appearance, the form, and the nature of things were wholly identical" (*Capital*, Vol. II, p. 951).

Marxian science separates the essential production relationship from its fetishistic appearance as a relation between things. At the same time it shows the dialectical relation between essence and phenomena. For essence must manifest itself, and its manifestation does reflect the true relationship, once you are aware that the underlying essence has an irrational form of manifestation.

Just as Marx's abstract method of analysis is derived from the concrete history of developing capitalism, so his analysis of the use-value and value of a commodity is derived from an analysis of the dual character of labor. This, says Marx, is "the pivot on which a clear comprehension of political economy turns" (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 48). "I was the first to point out and to examine critically this two-fold nature of the labor contained in commodities."

It is evident that what makes all sorts of commodities—from apples to steel—commensurable are not their use-values, but the something that is common to all of them—the homogeneous human labor embodied in them. All understanding of the facts, and Marx underlines the word, all, depends upon a comprehension of this dual character of labor—concrete labor creates use-values; abstract labor creates values.

This, then, is Marx's original contribution to political economy. What is the significance of this "contribution" to political economy? A great advance in the evolution of political economy as a science was made when the source of wealth was recognized to be not in objects outside of man—precious metals or the earth—but in the function of man. The result of man's labor was the source of private property. How is it, then, that the living embodiment of labor, the laborer, continues to remain poverty-stricken and the products of his labor are not his "private property"? Here classical political economy could offer no answer.

ROLE OF LABOR IN SOCIETY

It is true, as the young Marx wrote in 1844, that "When one speaks of private property, one thinks of something outside of man. When one speaks of labor, one has to deal immediately with man himself. The new formulation of the question already involves its solution." However, that new formulation of the question involved its solution, not when bourgeois economists tackled the problem, but when the revolutionist, Marx, did.

The difference between the science of economics "as such," as a science of objective elements—wages, value, etc.—and the Marxian science of economics is that for Marx all economic categories are social categories. Thus Marxism incorporates into the science of economics the subjective element, the receiver of wages, the source of value, in other words, the laborer.

It is impossible to disassociate property forms from production relations. The laborer, whose function, labor, creates bourgeois wealth and his own impoverishment is opposed to his domination by a product of his own labor. He rebels against the **mode of labor**, and thus becomes the gravedigger of bourgeois private property. Capitalist private property thus contains within itself the seed of its own disintegration.

It is for this reason that the classical economist, limited by the concepts of his class which blurred his vision as to the **historic** nature of the capitalist mode of production, could not probe the problem to the end. He failed to see that the living embodiment of the source of wealth, the laborer, would bring to a head and to an end all the contradictions inherent in capitalist private property.

In observing the structure and content of *Capital*, we have noted that Marx, first, describes capitalist wealth as it appears—a vast accumulation of commodities. Parts I and II deal with the buying and selling of commodities, including the commodity, labor power. Marx then leaves the sphere of exchange, or the market, and for the next 389 pages—which comprise Parts III, IV and V—he analyzes the pure essence of capitalist society: the production of surplus value. When we next return to a phenomenon—that of wages, covered in Part VI—we no longer deal with a phenomenon abstracted from production relations. We now consider it as a manifestation of that very production relationship between capital and labor.

Marx's theory of value is his theory of surplus value. Moreover, his abstract definition of value is rooted deep in the **concrete history of developing capitalism**. Marx traces in detail the concept of the working day and the history of its limitation; in the beginning the

Marxism and Political Economy

capitalist could extract surplus value from the worker only through lengthening of the working day, with the state intervening on behalf of the budding capitalist. This is the period of the production of absolute surplus value.

The establishment of a normal working day, says Marx, is the result of centuries of struggle between capitalist and laborer. It connects with the highest stage of development of capitalist production, manufacture, which makes possible, **within the same working day**, the extraction of ever greater masses of surplus value. Though the worker now labored eight hours instead of 11, only two of these eight hours are necessary to produce the means of subsistence of the laborer, so that the capitalist gets fully six hours of unpaid labor. The extraction of relative surplus value Marx calls the specifically capitalist method of extracting surplus value because it is here that the inversion of dead to living labor "acquires technical and palpable reality."

Only in capitalist society does accumulated labor dominate living labor. There was dead labor, or machines, or at least tools in pre-capitalist societies, but they did not **dominate** living labor. The savage was complete master of his bow and arrow. The serf was without a tractor and had to use a wooden hoe, but that crude instrument did not have a value that asserted its independence in the process of production as a "live monster that is fruitful and multiplies" so that the energy of the living laborer was a mere means for its expansion.

The machine age has brought about the complete inversion of dead to living labor. Moreover, more and more machines need less and less labor and more and more perfect machines need less and less skill in the general mass of human labor. That is why the capitalist, the agent of value, cares naught about the specificity of the labor of the individual laborer.

SOCIALLY NECESSARY LABOR TIME

Whether he is a shoemaker, shipyard worker or assembly laborer, the capitalist sees that he uses up only as much time as is socially necessary in the production of commodities. The incessantly changing quantitative determination of exchange values—eight hours were **socially** necessary for the production of a commodity; only six hours are necessary today, and only four will be necessary tomorrow—is the law which compels the capitalist to use one factor of production, accumulated labor, against another factor of production, living labor. By means of his factory clock, he bludgeons the worker to produce as many units as is socially necessary—no matter whether the worker be a miner or a tailor."

There is no such thing as an abstract laborer, yet all produce abstract values. The socially-necessary labor time is the solvent which reduces the aggregates of concrete labor into a general mass of abstract labor. Marx calls this the **real** subordination of labor to capital.

Capital has not invented surplus labor; in all class societies surplus labor was extracted from the worker for the master class. What distinguishes one economy from another is, however, the **manner** in which this extraction is accomplished. In capitalist society this is accomplished by accumulated labor, machines, for which living labor is the mere ferment necessary to its self-expansion. The capitalist's domination over the living laborer is only "the mastery of dead over living labor."

Constant and variable capital are not merely the outer covering of an old relationship; they are the innermost essence of the capitalist mode of production revealing that society in what Marx called its "particular distinctiveness." The basic antagonism between use-value and value reside in the commodity, labor power, whose utilization produces all surplus value. That commodity, in the process of production, and not in the market, creates a greater value than it itself is. "It is every bit as important," writes Marx, "for a correct understanding of surplus value, to conceive it as a mere congelation of surplus labor-time" as nothing but materialized surplus-labor, as it is, for a proper comprehension of value, to conceive it as a mere congelation of so many hours of labor, as nothing but materialized labor" (p. 241).

The law of surplus value **seems** to contradict all phenomena based on experience for everyone knows that the baker who uses more living laborers relative to means of production does not get more profit than the steel manufacturer who uses relatively less variable as

compared to his constant capital. Nevertheless, the law not only is true, but competition, which seems to be a matter of will, is, in reality, only a reaction to the inherent law of capitalist production. But, warns Marx, let us not worry about competition and profit, and stick to essentials: "The rate of profit is no mystery, so soon as we know the laws of surplus value. If we reverse the process, we cannot comprehend either the one or the other" (p. 239, footnote).

Surplus value is a **given** magnitude, the sum total of unpaid hours of labor. "The breaking-up of surplus value into fragments," writes Marx, "neither alters its nature nor the conditions under which it becomes an element of accumulation." Neither does the rate of accumulation depend upon either his consumption, or a middle man's commission, or his will. Accumulation, depending as it does on the magnitude of surplus value, the degree of exploitation and the productivity of labor, is fundamentally a simple process of exploitation. But this simple process of production and reproduction is obscured by the process of circulation. This is why, from the very beginning, in his prefaces, Marx states that he is not interested in subjective motivations, but only in objective conditions: "Individuals are dealt with only insofar as they are the personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class relations and classes. My standpoint, from which the evolution of the economic formation of society is viewed as a process of natural history, can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains" (p. 15).

Marx has therefore analyzed the capitalist mode of production from the point of view of the laws of production "working with iron necessity towards inevitable results" (p. 13). The inevitable results are dealt with in the theoretical climax to Marx's work, the **Accumulation of Capital**. This Part VII and the historical illustrations of its genesis in Part VIII we can deal with under the heading of "The Law of Motion of Capitalist Society." It is the discernment of this law, we must remember, which Marx set as the task of his work.

From the beginning of *Capital* we learned of the interdependence of use-value and value. Value, wrote Marx, may be indifferent to the use-value by which it is borne, but it must be borne by some use-value. This bodily form assumes added significance in the question of accumulation or expanded reproduction: "Surplus value is convertible into capital solely because the surplus product whose value it is, already comprises the material elements of new capital" (p. 636).

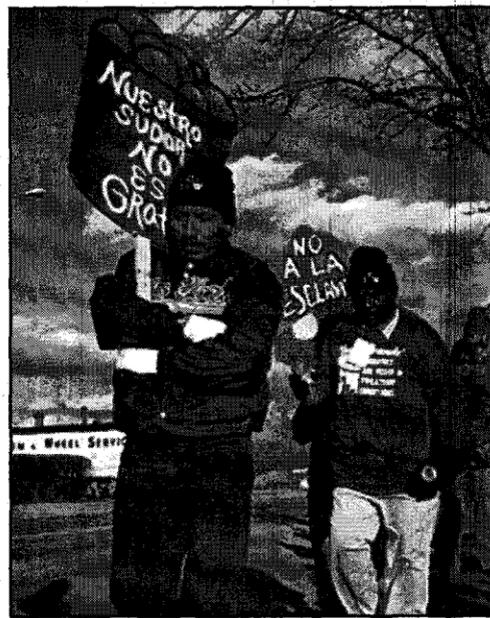
Capital, which is "value big with value," deepens the contradiction between use-value and value. This is so because not only are the material and value forms of capital in constant conflict, but so are the **class relations** which "interfere with" the production process. Capital, Marx held, is not a thing but a relation of production established by the instrumentality of things. Expanded production further aggravates this class relationship which is produced and reproduced by capitalist production. Capitalist private property "turns out to be the right on the part of the capitalist to appropriate unpaid labor of others or its product, and to be the impossibility, on the part of the laborer, of appropriating his own product" (p. 640).

LAW OF MOTION OF CAPITALIST SOCIETY

Out of the innermost needs of capitalist production, whose motive force is the production of surplus value, comes the drive to pay the laborer the **minimum** and to extract from him the **maximum**. The class struggle produced thereby leads, under certain circumstances, to a rise in wages. But that rise is never so high as to threaten the **foundations** of capitalist production. The law of value, dominating over this mode of production, leads, on the one hand, to the centralization of the means of production and, on the other hand, to the socialization of labor.

The centralization of the means of production ends first in trustification and, ultimately, in statification. But big capital which kills little capital cannot kill the workers who produce it. The socialization of labor brings masses of workers into large factories where production disciplines them and prepares them for revolt at the very time that they are degraded to "an appendage to a machine."

This dialectical development is accompanied by centralization reaching a point where the entire social capital is "united, either in the hands of one single capitalist, or in those of one single corporation" (p. 688). This ultimate development in no way saves capitalist production from its "**absolute general law**"—the reserve army of labor. "But in fact it is the capitalistic accumulation itself that constantly produces and reproduces in the direct ratio of its own energy and extent a relatively redundant population of laborers, i.e., a population of greater extent than suffices for the average needs of the self-expansion of capital, and therefore a surplus population" (p. 691).



Protest of Immokalee workers, 2006

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the Immokalee workers' boycott of McDonald's that the U.S. needs a new kind of union movement that combines workplace issues with social and community activism.

While voices of opposition exist in the U.S., what is missing is an effort to meet them with a philosophy of liberation that spells out an alternative to both capitalism-imperialism and religious fundamentalist terrorism. In its absence, activists can easily become discouraged and burned out when faced with the refusal of the system to listen to their demands.

However the loss of illusions about the system can be an opening to go beyond activity that lacks a **philosophic** foundation. The end of illusions about the forces aligned with existing society can lead to a new beginning if we also transcend the illusion that radicals or the arrival of some revolutionary "Event"(1) will on its own surmount the seemingly insuperable contradictions facing today's freedom struggles.

Practice by itself cannot surmount the divide between reality and the idea of freedom today any more than it could in the revolutions that spanned the globe in the 20th century.

Today's crises compel us to engage in the hard philosophic labor of articulating a liberating alternative. It is inseparable from responding to the cries for solidarity coming from the genuine forces of liberation in Iraq and elsewhere.

Samir Adil of the Iraqi Freedom Congress—which opposes the U.S. occupation and the fundamentalists—stated in a recent open letter to Cindy Sheehan: "Think about us in Iraq. The occupation forces are committing hundreds of crimes every day. They arrest, torture, indiscriminately kill, destroy, burn houses, rape and unleash gangs and thieves as long as they are not in their way... What can we say when they try to take our hope away from us every day? Despite all those calamities and difficulties created by these forces, we have decided to continue our struggle to end the occupation...we have no choice; either ascend to the highest hills and watch how the fire expands and ravages large areas or carry on the struggle to save humanity in Iraq and the U.S."

I. Economic roots of political & cultural retrogression

A. The drive for single world mastery

To grasp today's realities we must explore the **objective** factors that explain Bush's refusal to withdraw from Iraq and the failure of the Democrats to take a firm stand against him.

Although the administration is indicating that it may have to search for an "exit strategy" from Iraq if its current "troop surge" fails to tamp down the insurgency, Bush arrogantly insists on seeing the war through to its end—even though much of the ruling class has concluded (as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid put it) that "the war is lost." Bush's insistence on continuing the war despite massive opposition—including from active-duty soldiers and former generals—recalls Nixon's prolonging the Vietnam War long after it became clear that it was a lost cause.

Bush's decision to throw ever more lives into the sinkhole of the Iraq war seems so shortsighted that it may appear he has lost all touch with objective reality.

However it is a dangerous illusion to attribute Bush's intransigence to subjective or personal factors alone. Objective factors make it hard for U.S. imperialism to admit defeat and leave Iraq. Foremost in this is the U.S. drive for single world mastery.

Bush did not create the U.S. drive for single world mastery; it created him. It has been an integral dimension of world politics since at least the end of World War II, when the U.S. emerged as the most powerful nation and competed with the other major pole of global capital, the USSR, for global dominance over the next 40 years.

The collapse of the USSR in 1991 did not end the U.S. drive for global hegemony. It just took on a new form. With the September 11, 2001 attacks U.S. imperialism found an opening to pursue its drive for global dominance under the guise of a "permanent war" against all real and imagined adversaries.

Although many assume that the U.S. chose to invade Iraq to obtain its oil, far more important issues were involved. Nor did the U.S. invade at the bequest of Israel or Saudi Arabia; the Saudis **opposed** the invasion. Bush invaded because he wanted to show that U.S. power had become so hegemonic that it will crush even mild opposition from relatively minor figures like Saddam's Hussein's hated regime. This, he imagined, would solidify U.S. control throughout the Middle East and send a message to the rest of the world that it will have to listen to U.S. dictates.

Instead the U.S. became stuck in a quagmire. Iraq represents U.S. imperialism's most serious military and political setback since its defeat in Vietnam. Yet

the U.S. cannot easily withdraw since Iraq is far more vital to its strategic interests than was Vietnam. Bush does not want to withdraw from Iraq since doing so would undermine the U.S. drive for world domination, and yet he cannot remain there over the long term because of the war's drain on troop morale and U.S. economy.

The Democrats face the same dilemma. Their shilly-shallying isn't just driven by fear of being accused of not supporting the troops. It is most of all driven by not wanting to undercut the U.S. drive for world domination that they long supported.

While the rulers are deeply divided over Bush's policies, they are as one in favoring a permanent U.S. presence in Iraq—just as they have no intention of having the U.S. withdraw its troops from the dozens of other countries in which it has bases.

B. Reversal of Reaganism?

Bush's policies have their origin in concepts championed by Ronald Reagan, who reversed 50 years of New Deal legislation by breaking unions, cutting social welfare, and presiding over a massive redistribution of wealth from labor to capital. The disaster after Hurricane Katrina was its end result. Reagan attacked abortion rights while extending his blessings to the Christian Right. The end result was the Supreme Court ruling outlawing a procedure for late term abortion—a prelude to a possible reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. And Reagan embarked on a major military expansion, attacking revolutionary Nicaragua and Grenada, as well as Libya. His expansive globalism, continued by the first President Bush and Clinton, led to the war in Iraq.

Does the rising discontent with the Iraq war and Bush's domestic policies therefore mean that we are finally beginning to emerge from out of the shadow of Reagan's retrogression?

In many respects Bush faces a different situation than did Reagan. Reagan largely got his way; there was a sense that the wind was in his sails. Today, in contrast, the U.S. is unpopular and has lost much of its ability to influence events. Bush lacks the political opportunity to use much of his power, which is why he is considering opening discussions with Syria and Iran and even signed a nuclear arms deal with North Korea.

However although Reaganism's edifice is wearing thin in some respects, it is hardly dead. While many who initially supported Bush's "war against terrorism" have broken ranks with him over Iraq, most Democrats are as committed to the conceptual underpinnings of Reaganism as are the Republicans insofar as capitalism is concerned.

This was seen not just from Clinton's policies, which went further than Reagan in gutting welfare, promoting a surge of the prisoner population with his racist "three strikes and you're out" policy, and his promotion of "free trade" agreements. It is also seen in the deal that congressional Democrats made with Bush in May to promote a series of free trade agreements that, if passed, will outsource thousands of U.S. jobs, force millions off the land in Latin America and Africa, and weaken environmental standards.

Despite their divisions on other issues, the ruling class is one in agreeing that "there is no alternative" to "free trade" and globalization. This is because they all support some form of Reaganism, which was a response to serious economic contradictions that remain unresolved.

C. Transformations in state-capitalism

The roots of today's economic predicament go back to the Vietnam War of the 1960s, when U.S. capitalism could no longer afford the high costs of both militarization and the welfare state. A crisis point was reached in 1974-75, when a global recession showed that capitalism was suffering from a decline in the rate of profit.

Capitalism responded with a three-decade long effort to cut wages, benefits, and social programs in order to obtain the surplus value needed to meet capital's thirst for self-expansion. Central to this was globalization—the taking down of barriers to the free movement of commodities and capital in order to make use of lower wages and more efficient production techniques.

Since the mid-1970s, it has become clear that welfare state policies conflict with the expansionary

requirements of capitalist value production. This has eliminated the economic basis of progressive liberalism. The Social Democratic or liberal Left has proven unable to effectively challenge the Right because the objective basis upon which its policies were predicated has seriously eroded. One expression of this is that even the one presidential aspirant who has presented a plan for universal health care—John Edwards—does not support a state-funded system. His proposal instead would require the uninsured to buy health insurance from a pool of privately owned plans.

That adequate social services and a rising standard of living for workers is no longer compatible with the accumulation of capital on an ever expanding scale is dramatically shown by Nicolas Sarkozy's election as France's president. He has proclaimed the goal of making a "clean break with the past" by ending Gaullist policies that favored a strong state role in the economy. He advocates weak trade unions, tax breaks for big business, and cuts in the national health system. He has viciously attacked immigrants and citizens of non-European descent, calling for hiring more police, building more prisons, and taking punitive measures against the restless, unemployed Black and Middle Eastern youth. Just prior to the election he stated that the legacy of the French student-worker revolt of 1968 must be "liquidated."

Although Sarkozy is likely to face much opposition from the French masses to these moves, "what Sarkozy's victory

means for France is something closer to the so-called 'Reagan Revolution' in the U.S. that began in 1981 the process of dismantling and destroying the institutional New Deal legacy of Franklin D. Roosevelt."(2)

The decline of welfare state policies is also evident in the developing world,

where secular nationalism and socialism is in decline. The state's role has been hollowed out in much of the Third World to the point that it funds little more than the military, police, and prisons.

The erosion of the welfare state does not mean, however, that the nation state is no longer an important factor. Nor is the epoch of state-capitalism—which emerged from out of the Great Depression of 1929—at an end.

The state-capitalism that emerged in the 1930s represented a new **world** stage of production. It took three basic forms: the New Deal in the U.S., fascism in Italy, Germany and Japan, and Stalinism in the USSR.

While some of the **phenomenal forms** of state-capitalism have by now been eclipsed—as seen in the collapse of the USSR, China's turn to the "free market," and the erosion of the welfare state in the West—the role of the nation state in the operation of the general law of capitalist accumulation has not been eclipsed or become irrelevant.

The state today keeps wages low by encouraging global competition, providing corporate tax breaks, and maintaining tight control over a rebellious reserve army of labor through the prison industrial complex. The "free" market is largely a creation of state power, imposed from above in order to deal with a declining rate of profit.

The state also maintains a huge military-industrial complex. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reports that global military spending rose 3.5% in 2006, to \$1.2 trillion. The U.S. and Russia were the largest arms suppliers in the world from 2002 through 2006, each accounting for 30% of the global shipments of arms. And debts incurred by the nation state—which Marx said is the only part of the nation-



Chicago protest against the U.S. war on and occupation of Iraq.

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al wealth that is "shared" with the people—have never been higher, in the U.S. especially.

In sum, the state maintains a critical role in today's economy by facilitating the transfer of surplus value from labor to capital—not by providing for social welfare.

Whether it is the U.S. or France, West Europe or Japan, South Africa or India (which is now experiencing levels of economic growth comparable to China's), the world's rulers are committed to the policies of capitalist globalization. This is not a matter of ideological posturing on their part. They must pursue the policies of state-imposed "free market" globalization because the capitalist law of value demands it.

We are therefore not likely to see a reversal of the legacy of Reaganism unless social change comes not from above but from below, from masses of people who contest and find a way to uproot capitalism in major parts of the world—which would have to include some of the industrially developed countries.

II. Global crises and revolt, from Gaza to Latin America

A. Palestine in crisis

The need to develop an alternative not just to capitalism-imperialism but also to fundamentalist forces that target women is especially critical when it comes to the Middle East. The victory of Hamas in the civil war that broke out between Palestinian factions in Gaza, and the subsequent efforts of Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas to cut all ties to Hamas-controlled Gaza, has created the most serious setback to the Palestinian struggle in decades.

Much of the blame for this debacle rests on the U.S. and Israel. For years the Bush administration ignored Abbas and the PA in order to allow Sharon, and then Olmert, to solidify Israeli control of the West Bank and avoid entering into peace negotiations with the Palestinians. This played into Hamas' hands, since it has long argued against any attempt to reach an accommodation with Israel.

A turning point was reached last summer, when Israel launched a massive invasion of Lebanon and Gaza in response to the capture of some of its soldiers. While the world focused on the battle between Israel and the Islamic militants of Hezbollah in Lebanon, Israel launched a devastating attack on Gaza. Hundreds of Palestinians were killed, and already impoverished Gaza saw its economy contract by 25%.

The PA—long compromised by corruption and an utter failure to provide basic services—was further weakened by these events since Hamas was able to present itself as being in the front lines against Israeli aggression. As a result, PA authority in Gaza in June collapsed much faster than even Hamas had anticipated.

It has long been clear that Arab nationalism is no longer a pole of attraction for the masses of the Middle East. The main beneficiaries of this are the Islamic fundamentalists, who are filling a void left by the decline of the secular and radical Left. A similar situation now faces the Palestinians, which until recently possessed the last secular nationalist movement with a mass base in the Arab world.

Bush may imagine that his offer of economic aid to Abbas will create a viable West Bank that will undermine Hamas' support in isolated and impoverished Gaza. However his support of Abbas may be the kiss of death, since Bush and Olmert are as detested in the West Bank as in Gaza. A further erosion of the PA's authority and more fratricidal civil war looms as a serious possibility.

The deep crisis facing the Palestinians makes it imperative to rethink the principles of social transformation. As we argued last year, "Israel's murderous invasion of Lebanon and its ongoing attacks against the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank must be opposed, and totally opposed not by supporting Hezbollah, Hamas, or Iran, but by working to make the content of Marx's and Marxist-Humanism's notion of a new society real for today's forces of liberation. Anything short of that, including 'a plague on both your houses,' is retrogressive."(3)

B. Freedom struggles in South Africa

To meet today's challenges we must keep our eyes focused on new struggles that are reaching for the future. Especially important are the labor and township struggles in South Africa, where a million workers went on strike in June—the largest labor action in the world this year. A general strike also broke out in Nigeria in mid-June over the government's effort to increase fuel prices and a tax on consumer goods.

The struggles in South Africa have to be viewed in light of the succession crisis in the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and the increasingly regressive role

played by South Africa on the African continent.

South Africa is playing an increasing dominant role on the African continent. Its influence extends from Angola to Nigeria and from Mozambique to Sudan. Despite its origins in a liberation struggle, this year the ANC stood in the way of UN efforts to punish Sudan for its genocidal war in Darfur; it embraced Umaru Yar'Adua as the president of Nigeria, despite his having come to power in a fraudulent election; and it has provided cover for Mugabe's dictatorship in Zimbabwe.

As an activist with the Ogoni people's struggle in Nigeria who lives in Cape Town wrote, "Despite what the ANC government claims, South Africa's foreign policy towards Africa is not based on Pan-Africanism or anti-imperialism; it is rather based on promoting South Africa's expanding business interests on the continent. In reality, the South African state's interests, in both the domestic and African area, have become fused with those of South Africa's capitalist elite."(4)

The ANC's commitment to "free market" economic restructuring and capitalist globalization was challenged by a million public sector workers in June demanding a pay increase and improved working conditions. Workers employed in the private sector also joined in strikes and protests.

One South African trade union activist wrote, "I must say I am amazed at the stamina of the South African organized workers. Despite theories of how globalization has tamed organized workers (given all their expenses and credit debt), I have seen workers here out on strike for two to three months at a time. Their strikes are not even covered by the media. Our media is largely state controlled and many of us in labor are saying that we are going the Zimbabwe route in terms of the oppression of the opposition forces and social movement activities. This also explains why the government is so timid with regard to Mugabe."

Some union leaders are trying to force President Mbeki to enable his populist adversary, Jacob Zuma, to become the next president when Mbeki's term ends in 2009. Although Zuma is supported by much of the labor leadership and the South African Communist Party, he is just as pro-capitalist as Mbeki. The unprincipled support for Zuma on the part of some traditional leftists has infuriated South African feminists and many labor activists, who oppose Zuma for being a demagogue and male chauvinist. (He was tried for raping a woman last year.)

It still remains unclear as to whether the labor struggles in South Africa will coalesce with the new social movements that have arisen over the past decade in its impoverished townships and shack towns. In a country with over 40% rate of unemployment, many youth have no prospect of finding a job, let alone obtaining a pay increase. Yet the township struggles are a key arena, since many of them oppose any tendency to appeal to the state or to make compromises with the existing system.

As S'bu Zikonde, an activist with Abahlali baseMjondolo—a key group in the township struggles—stated, "What we have learnt is that the government currently in power cannot understand IsiZulu nor English nor Xhosa. We have written letters, but they cannot understand the language of pen, faces, and telephones. The only language they can understand: guess what? Putting thousands of people on the street...what we need to do, is to conquer this capitalist system, because each second you turn your head, the capitalist system is there."(5)

C. Battle of ideas in Latin America

Intense discussion and debate is occurring in Latin America, where many are searching for a nonhierarchical, anti-statist path to liberation that avoids the dead ends of the past.

One expression of this is efforts to establish worker-owned cooperatives, especially in Argentina. Workers began taking over scores of factories in 2001 and some continue to be run as independent worker-owned cooperatives. Such experiences have produced important intimations as to what it would mean to create a society based on freely associated labor.

A worker involved in these occupations stated, "I'm talking about production, but more than that. There are new ways of thinking [in the cooperative]. You're a person, instead of an object." Another declared, "The

issue is no longer a theoretical problem concerned with the way theory up to now has been considered merely an intellectual exercise. No. Thoughts and ideas are not solely the product of cerebral cognition...Thought emanates from a practice that creates a radical rupture against that which has been established. We establish the theoretical framework with this place...In fact, it's from practice that theories are constructed"(6).

True as this is, it is also true that while movements from practice are a form of theory, theory is not yet philosophy—a philosophy that can spell out how to transcend capitalism and create new human relations. Eschewing "abstract" philosophy and steering clear of the attempt to offer a comprehensive vision of a new society has often left a theoretical void that has strengthened statist and vanguardist tendencies.

A new society cannot arise by eliminating the personifications of capital and taking



PROTEST AGAINST G-8 and capitalist globalization in Germany in June.

over the forms of labor and association that characterize the presently existing labor process. Marx opposed this Proudhonist fallacy, writing: "If cooperative labor is not to become a sham and a snare; if it is to supersede the capitalist system" it must "be under [the workers'] own control."(7)

And production is not truly under the workers own control so long as the law of value and world market continues to exist.

The problem of escaping the pull of the world market is no less pressing when it comes to efforts by popularly elected regimes in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador to obtain control of natural resources by nationalizing industries under foreign control.

These efforts represent a crucial step in the struggle against imperialist exploitation. Just as it is vital for workers to demand a more equitable redistribution of the surplus value that is robbed from them each day, so the nations of the South have every right to demand a redistribution of wealth from the magnates of global capital.

However just as a worker who obtains a wage increase still lives in a capitalist context in which those gains can be taken away, so a regime that makes demands on multinational corporations still exists in the context of the world market and capitalist social relations. Socialism is not the same as nationalized industry and property—even when a co-management scheme operates between workers and the state.

Many in the movements against global capital skip over such distinctions, as seen in their uncritical embrace of Chavez of Venezuela. Although Chavez has considerable popular support because of the massive social spending and aid that he is providing to many cooperatives, his policies are generating intense debate in Venezuela, including within the revolutionary Left. He did not come to power as a result of a spontaneous mass movement, and some question the paternalistic and top-down approach often taken by the government. Others worry that the cooperatives, while important, may be used to sidetrack demands for genuine workers' control of production.

Moreover, Chavez's nationalizations and fostering of cooperatives operate within the confines of a statist structure which itself operates within the confines of the capitalist world market.

Marx spoke to this situation in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* of 1875. The Gotha Program, which was an effort at organizational unity between the followers of Ferdinand Lassalle and the German "Marxists" of the time, called for "the establishment of producers' cooperatives with state aid under the democratic control of the working people. The producers' cooperative societies are to be called into being for industry and agriculture on such a scale that the socialist organization of the total labor will arise from them." Marx sharply attacked this, writing: "Instead of arising from the revolutionary process of the transformation of society, the 'socialist organization of the total labor' 'arises' from the 'state aid' that the state gives to the producers' societies which the state, not the worker, 'calls into being.' It is worthy of Lassalle's imagination that with state loans one can build a new society just as well as a new railway!"(8)

Marx's comments speak to issues facing Venezuela and other countries in Latin America. The movements against global capital have not suffered from a lack of insights when it comes to the need for decentralized and non-hierarchical forms of organization and decision-making. What we are suffering from is a lack of discussion of how such formations can enable humanity to break decisively from the capital relation and the law of value, thereby laying the basis for a totally new, human society.

As Dunayevskaya wrote in her criticism of the state-

Continued on page 7

Challenging the dominance of capital

Continued from page 6

capitalist regime in Castro's Cuba, "Even where a state like Cuba is protected from the worst whims of the world market and where state planning is total, the price of sugar is still dependent upon the socially necessary labor time established by world production. In a word, to plan or not plan is not the decisive question. The state of technological development and the accumulated capital are the determinants, the only determinants when the masses are not allowed their self-activity."(9)

The restructuring of global capital has undermined not only the basis of liberalism but also versions of radicalism that reduced "socialism" to nationalized property and state control of industry. Yet many in the anti-vanguardist, autonomist and anarchist Left stop dead at affirming the need for workers' control without considering how value production subordinates the workers' activity to an alien power even when workers have political control over some aspects of the labor process. This reluctance to concretely address what is needed to transcend capitalist value production has left the door open for narrow tendencies to step in and offer various false alternatives.

III. Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program as a philosophy of revolution

"When subjected to the dialectical method from which, according to Hegel, no truth can escape, the conclusion turns out to be a new beginning. There is no trap in thought. Though it is finite, it breaks through the barriers of the given, reaches out, if not to infinity, surely beyond the historic moment."

—Raya Dunayevskaya(10)

The movements against global capitalism have posed a serious challenge to revolutionary theory—to show that "another world is possible." Since 2004, we have sought to respond to this by taking seriously Raya Dunayevskaya's call to make Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* (CGP) "new ground for organization."(11)

The effort to help develop a liberatory alternative on the ground of the CGP is unprecedented. As Dunayevskaya stressed (p. 154, p. 157), Marx's CGP "was never fully internalized" nor studied as "actual perspective for the whole movement." This despite the fact that it was an organizational document in which Marx "worked out his whole theory of human development" from the end of capitalism, through the lower phase of communist society and finally to the truly human, higher phase.

The CGP does not contain "the answer" to how to transcend capitalism. Yet it responds profoundly to poorly thought-out answers put forward in Marx's day that focused upon the outer forms of appearance of capitalism while leaving its inner structure intact.

The Gotha Program had called for "fair distribution" and the "equal right" to wealth. Marx repudiated the program in no uncertain terms, not because he disagreed with these goals, but because it sowed illusions about "what would be required to make [the supposedly socialist program] real," as Dunayevskaya put it (pp. 156-57). To "make it real," Marx showed, nothing less than the whole course of human development culminating in the higher phase of communism is required.

Marx's critique rests on his concept that a society's legal relations, notions of right, and income distribu-

tion depend on and correspond to its mode of production. He begins by challenging the notion that income distribution under capitalism is "unfair." He wrote, "[i]f it not, in fact, the only 'fair' distribution on the basis of the present-day mode of production?"(12) Do we not get back what we contribute—to capitalist society, measured in terms of its standards and requirements?

Marx then turns to the first phase of communist society, "not as it has developed on its own foundations, but just as it emerges from capitalist society" (p. 85). He here envisions a sweeping revolutionary transformation of the relations of production. In this first phase, the "individual labor no longer exists in an indirect fashion but directly as a component part of total labor." The individual's contribution to society is no longer assessed in terms of the number of products she produces or their value. What she contributes to society is now her "individual quantum of labor" (p. 86)—the actual amount of work she does. Consequently the products are no longer values and "the producers do not exchange their products."

Corresponding to these new relations of production are new relations of distribution: "Accordingly, the individual producer receives back from society—after the deductions [for social consumption and investment] have been made—exactly what [she] gives to it...[t]he same amount of labor"—not the same amount of value or products. This does not imply that income will depend exclusively upon how much work one does. Marx notes that an increasing share of consumption will be public and that there will be "funds for those unable to work, etc."

These new relations of distribution are "fair" for the lower phase of communism since they correspond to its production relations. What workers contribute and receive are both measured in terms of "an equal standard, labor." This is a decisive, qualitative "advance" over capitalism, where "exchange of equivalents...[does not exist] in the individual case"—since one sum of value tends to exchange for an equivalent sum, but one individual's hour of work creates more or less value than another's.

However equal remuneration for equal amounts of labor remains a "defect" from the vantage point of the higher phase of communism because it implies unequal remuneration for unequal amounts of labor. Thus human equality is recognized only imperfectly, in the form of equality of all human labors—which does not imply that humans are recognized only as laborers.

But, Marx writes, such defects are "inevitable in the first phase of communist society" because "[r]ight can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby" (p. 87). Given the structure of the lower phase, it remains necessary to link what an individual receives from society to what she contributes to society. A much higher level of economic and cultural development will be needed before this link can be broken, such that each individual contributes according to her ability—without regard to what she receives—and each individual

receives in accordance with her needs—without regard to what she contributes.

To make this a reality will require the willingness of individuals to contribute **without regard to what they materially receive in return**. This can become a reality only when labor is finally transformed so totally that it is no longer drudgery, but "life's prime want" (or, as Dunayevskaya put it, "the creative self-activity of humanity") and the "all-round development of the individual" progresses to the extent that all divisions of labor, including "the antithesis between mental and physical labor," is overcome.

What will also be required, of course, is a level of productivity and an abundance of wealth sufficient to allow individuals to receive from society in accordance with their needs—**without regard to what they have materially contributed**.

Thus "from each according to [their] ability, to each according to [their] need" depends crucially upon and corresponds to the production relations of the higher phase. Only on its basis will contributing according to one's ability and receiving according to one's needs become "fair," much less possible.



Youth in France protest retrogressive employment laws.

This will also require a profound transformation of the human personality. Marx wrote that capitalism "makes us so stupid and one-sided" that we think something is important only if we possess it. The need to have becomes all consuming. To reach

the higher phase of communism, the very meaning of human needs must become broadened and redefined. As Marx put it in his *1844 Manuscripts*, capitalism "does not know how to change crude need into human need"—the need for association, for new human relations—central to which is the need for new man/woman relations. A new society entails "a new enrichment of human nature."(13)

Marx's CGP suggests that a viable alternative to capitalism must be grounded in a thoroughgoing transformation of production relations, which entails abolishing alienated labor. The transcendence of alienation, inequality, and exploitation are neither possible nor "fair" as long as labor continues to be only indirectly social—and when labor power continues to be a commodity and the law of value continues to compel producers to maximize production and minimize cost.

Yet how can these capitalist production relations be overcome? It is an illusion, born of despair over the prospects for total social transformation, to believe that cooperative projects and autonomous zones can gradually be stitched together and enlarged, thereby gradually shrinking the space in which capitalism operates.

Some argue, "[t]hrough autonomy, we can create zones that aren't governed by the logic of capitalism. This isn't the same as claiming that the capitalist system isn't the dominant social order....What we can do, however, is build and create different things without following the logic of the capitalist system. We can attempt to create the revolution in our day-to-day living. The day when all these things succeed, when we truly succeed in all these things, we will have arrived."(14)

However in the *Grundrisse* Marx called capital "the all-dominating economic power of bourgeois society." This is even truer today. The capitalist drive to expand value limitlessly and inexorably, overcoming and integrating into itself all obstacles in its path, dominates life throughout the world. The operation of the world market makes it impossible for alternative ways of producing and distributing to thrive against competitors who produce and sell as cheaply as possible, as the law of value requires.

It is hard to envision total societal transformation, but there is no alternative to trying to do so. The law of value must be uprooted root and branch on a global scale, which would create the space for new human relations in all facets of life and labor.

Surely, overcoming capitalist production relations requires that workers own and control the means of production. They must direct production themselves, producing for use, not for exchange or profit. To extricate themselves from the law of value, they must break free from the world market that enforces it.

However these statements are a **specification** of what it means to overcome capitalist production relations, not **the answer** as to **how** to do so. They have traditionally been taken as an answer because of a contradiction that has pervaded post-Marx Marxism. On

Karl Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program as considered by Raya Dunayevskaya

The Power of Negativity

Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx

"What is true was that only with the 1875 'Marginal Notes' we know as the critique of the Gotha Program did he express his views directly on the 'program' of a workers' party. Those 'Marginal Notes' stressed the impossibility for serious revolutionaries ever to separate philosophy of revolution from the actual organization; when a principle of philosophy and revolution is not in the 'program,' one should never join that organization, though one could participate in individual joint action against capitalism."

Rosa Luxemburg

Rosa Luxemburg Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution

"The Critique itself, is, of course, not just a criticism of a program, but a comprehensive analysis of Lasalle's doctrines. It contains a theory of the state and, more importantly, of the non-state-to-be (as he called the Paris Commune), which was to be the model for the future breakup of the capitalist state and establishment of a commune form of nonstate. Furthermore, not only was capitalism a transient stage, but so was 'the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat,' which was to replace it."

THE POWER OF NEGATIVITY

Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx



To order, See page 12.

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the one hand, post-Marx Marxists have asserted that political, legal, and distribution relations depend upon and correspond to the society's mode of production. On the other hand, they have believed and acted as if the mode of production can be transformed by political and legal means, thereby effectively making the former dependent on the latter.

But the experience of the state-capitalist regimes that called themselves "Communist" shows that workers neither own nor control the means of production simply because "the law" says they do and that their labor does not become directly social simply because the State Plan "recognizes" it as such. And as we have showed, "We also know from history that cooperatives and worker-run enterprises, important as they are for prefiguring the actual abolition of the opposition between capital and labor, do not constitute the abolition of capitalism."⁽¹⁵⁾

If capital remains the all-dominating economic power, economic and political decision-making will necessarily operate within the strict limits and conditions imposed by it, no matter what one calls the society and no matter which persons or forms of organization are nominally in control. The actual relations of labor at the point of production must be changed; it is there that the change must begin.

IV. Our tasks in the historic mirror

Near the end of her life, in 1986, Raya Dunayevskaya wrote that no generation faces a more difficult task than ours when it comes to working out what Marx's Marxism means for today. The difficulty has become even more palpable by 2007.

One reason for this is the widespread tendency, in U.S. society especially, to substitute individual opinions and subjective judgments for ideas whose objectivity has been proven by history. Ideas are objective not only insofar as they are generated by mass struggles but also insofar as epochal philosophers comprehend the meaning of history.

This issue is spoken to in one of the greatest works in the history of philosophy, written 200 years ago this year—Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In it Hegel traces out the journey of consciousness through its myriad stages of development. He aims to show that the "absolute," the transcendence of alienation, is not external to the standpoint of "ordinary consciousness." Hegel does not dogmatically counterpose the "absolute" to the journey of consciousness through its various stages. The absolute instead emerges from a development through its myriad contradictions.

However no single stage of consciousness represents the absolute. Each one is "defective." As Dunayevskaya put it in her "Notes on Hegel's *Phenomenology*," "In the struggle to realize freedom, we confront various attitudes of mind that sound heroic, but are in fact adaptations to one or another form of servitude." Until the alienated soul has "stripped itself of its Ego," it "will not be able to execute the leap to Reason." Hegel shows that many become wary of the long trek to the goal and take refuge in an "appeal to the 'heart' which 'inwardly' tells what they mean." Dunayevskaya notes, "Hegel hits out against this form of self-expression." While the "absolute" is immanent in each stage of consciousness, "the human spirit has not been able to shake off alienation" until consciousness makes itself the object. It is only when we reach "the unity of the real world and the notions about it" that we attain the "organization of thought and activity" which "anticipates the

future."⁽¹⁶⁾

Hegel, Marx and Marxist-Humanism all stress the objectivity of cognition. Marx wrote, "The practice of philosophy is itself theoretical. It is the critique that measures the individual existence by the essence, the particular reality by the Idea."⁽¹⁷⁾

Achieving this begins by working out theory by tackling a specific problem that hasn't yet been answered in light of a body of ideas. That is very different from repeating conclusions that have already been worked out. Practicing philosophy theoretically requires approaching issues with the assumption that we don't know the answer and by tackling yet-unresolved theoretical problems that have us discover something new about history, philosophy, and the world.

We have pointed out, "Thinking through the logic of an idea is central to the creativity of cognition; it is how cognition not only reflects the objective world, but creates it....Experiencing theory isn't a matter of either using the conclusions of Marxist-Humanism to attack others or to justify a series of prearranged conclusions. That just treats the body of ideas as a thing. But the body of ideas [of Marxist-Humanism] is not a thing. It is a process. Treating the ideas as a process entails taking up a problem that hasn't been answered yet by going into the body of ideas, into objectivity, into the ideas of others by thinking out the logic of an idea to its ultimate conclusion—not in an enclave removed from the world, but in an organization that engages movements, involves itself in ongoing events and organizations, works to fuse theory and practice."

We concluded, "Our primary responsibility is to create space and time for concretizing the Marxist-Humanist organization of thought...our philosophic responsibility above all demands concretizing the Marxist-Humanist organization of thought in relation to today's realities and theoretic debates."⁽¹⁸⁾

Dunayevskaya addressed a critical challenge facing us in a discussion with the Resident Editorial Board of News and Letters Committees in May 1984, in which she said: "When I established as a principle that a workers' paper was to be where theory/practice were broken down and insisted that if intellectuals were serious about theory they not only had to submit to a critique by the rank and file but had to begin where the masses were by contributing the highest kind of theory to illuminate, not 'popularize,' the objective situation Marxistly, they all went the other way. Now, when it comes to ourselves, we seem to all agree. In fact, however, we do not work hard at theory and keep taking it for granted, as if repeating conclusions can be called theoretic development. What is worse, we portray activity as if that is theory. Theory is a very hard taskmaster...this needs further serious development."

Today we need to take stock of how to reorganize in light of this critique. This is especially important given the fact that this year marks 20 years since we faced the task of developing Marxist-Humanism without the presence of our founder.

Over the past 20 years we have kept the foundational works of Marxist-Humanism, the "trilogy of revolution," in print. We have secured new translations and international editions of them—Persian and Chinese editions of *Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution*, Slovakian and Russian editions of *Philosophy and Revolution*, a new Spanish translation of *Marxism and Freedom*, a German edition of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, and forthcoming Arabic and Russian editions of *Marxism and Freedom*. We have edited and gotten published a collection of her major writings on dialectics, *The Power of Negativity*; a German edition will appear this year. We have also issued a new edition of Dunayevskaya's *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* and published it alongside a statement on contemporary Black America—John Alan's *Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles*.

We have taken these ideas out to newer audiences in the U.S., as seen in our work in the prisoner solidarity movement, in struggles against racism and sexism, and in discussions with youth involved in the fight against global capital. We have also taken these ideas out to new audiences overseas, as seen in our participation in meetings in Mexico, Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, China, England, Holland, France, Italy, India, Finland, the Philippines, Germany and South Africa.

No less important is developing our ideas in the face of unforeseen objective events in a way that bears the distinctive stamp of Marxist-Humanism. We sought to do this by working out a series of original analyses of the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992, the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, and in our analysis of the September 11, 2001 attacks and critique of Islamic fundamen-

talism. These political analyses have shown that Marxist-Humanists have something of unique importance to say about today's crises. We still have much more work to do in this regard, both in analyzing new political and economic realities and responding to ideas being debated by today's revolutionaries—especially in feminist theory, autonomist Marxism, and radical theory.

All of our tasks depend on deepening our understanding of the totality of Marx and Marxist-Humanism. This was the core of our classes on "Marx for Today," which is part of our preparation for putting together a new collection of Dunayevskaya's major writings on Marx, from the 1940s to 1980s.

None of these tasks are separate from measuring ourselves in the historic mirror in terms of where we stand on "the dialectics of organization and philosophy"—the basis of which is contained in the "philosophic moment" of Marxist-Humanism, the 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."

Practicing philosophy theoretically is an organizational challenge, since our reason for being is to alter

prevailing ways of thinking by not just asserting that another world is possible but developing a conceptual awareness of that world and how a revolution can create it. This cannot be achieved by having an assortment of individuals working on separate interests and agendas in lieu of coming together as an organization. It takes working on a common problem, a common project, through face-to-face interactions between



May Day 2007 immigrants rights demonstration in New York City

individuals inside and outside the organization.

We have argued, "It is not possible to address and build upon the quest for universality that shows itself in ongoing freedom struggles without the active work of restating, redeveloping, and re-creating a body of ideas. We do not aim to simply repeat the conclusions of prior philosophic breakthroughs. We seek to internalize those breakthroughs in such a way as to restate for our day Marx's vision of a new society. In other words, concretizing the 'creativity of cognition' defines News and Letters' Committees historic reason for being and explains why we ask all whom we can reach for their help in developing new beginnings in Marxist-Humanism."⁽¹⁹⁾

—The Resident Editorial Board
July 11, 2007

Notes

1. For a critique of Alain Badiou's notion of "the Event," see "Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 2006-2007: Theoretic Preparation for Uprooting Capitalism," *News & Letters*, August/September 2006.
2. "French Elections: What Sarkozy's Victory Means," by Doug Ireland, May 6, 2007, http://direland.typepad.com/direland/2007/05/french_election.html.
3. "In the Aftermath of Israel's War in Lebanon," by Peter Hudis, *News & Letters*, October-November 2006. One sign that many in the Middle East are searching for a new beginning is that the Persian-language editions of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* and *Philosophy and Revolution* are now being widely read in Iran.
4. "South Africa's Role in Nigeria and the Nigerian elections," by Shawn Hattingh. For the full text of this important essay, contact the Ogoni Solidarity Forum, 41 Salt River Rd, Salt River, PO Box 1935, Cape Town 8000, South Africa, www.ogoniforum.org.za.
5. "Shackdwellers Movement of Durban," *The Accumulation of Capital in Southern Africa*, edited by Patrick Bond, Horman Chitonge, and Arndt Hopfmann (Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, 2006), pp. 164-65.
6. Quoted in *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina*, edited by Marina Sitrin (AK Press, 2006), p. 97, p. 106.
7. *Civil War in France, Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 335.
8. *Critique of the Gotha Program*, MECW, Vol. 24, p. 93.
9. *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (Lexington Books, 2003), p. 225.
10. Raya Dunayevskaya, "Hegel's Absolutes as New Beginning," *The Power of Negativity* (Lexington Books, 2002), p. 184.
11. *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 153; All page numbers in the text are to this edition.
12. MECW, Vol. 24, p. 84.
13. MECW, Vol. 3, p. 307.
14. *Horizontalism*, p. 115.
15. "Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 2006-2007: Theoretic Preparation for Uprooting Capitalism," *News & Letters*, August/September 2006, p. 7.
16. "Notes on Hegel's *Phenomenology*," *The Power of Negativity*, pp. 36, 38, 47.
17. "Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature," MECW, Vol. 1, p. 85.
18. "Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 2004-2005: World Crises and the Search for Alternatives to Capitalism," *News & Letters*, July 2004, p. 8.
19. "Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 2005-2006: Developing a Philosophically Grounded Alternative to Capital," *News & Letters*, July/August 2005, p. 8.

NEWS LETTERS

Globalized Capital,
global struggle,
global philosophy of
revolution

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ANTI-WAR ASSEMBLY IN JAPAN

We express our thanks for your message last year, and would be happy to again receive a message from you to Japanese workers and youth to be read at our 45th International Antiwar Assembly. The Assembly's central meeting in Tokyo and regional meetings in Sapporo, Kanazawa, Nagoya, Osaka, Fukuoka and Okinawa will be held on the same day, August 5, 2007.

**Executive Committee
International Antiwar Assembly
Tokyo, Japan**

Editor's Note: We have joined in solidarity with the anti-war assembly since it's founding, in commemoration of the infamous bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the U.S. six decades ago. Our greeting this year will again include sharing with the assembly our *Draft for Perspectives for Marxist-Humanism, 2007-2008*, published in this issue.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Sandra Cisneros' talk at the National Women's Studies Association's annual conference reminded me of D.H. Lawrence's observation that a truly great work of literature escapes its author. Cisneros read several of her pieces, dedicating two to the late Gloria Anzaldua. Her last reading was an exploration of her own family history that was both personal and universal. Although Cisneros does not project a role for herself in developing political theory, her work about the realities of Latina's lives is an inspiration for working out revolutionary theory and practice in today's world.

**Susan Van Gelder
Michigan**

The panel on "Women's Studies: Past, Present and Future Feminism for Women of Color" explored the problematic relation between feminism and poor women and women of color, who view it as a white middle-class concept disconnected from their lives. One important conclusion was that having feminist women of color as leaders and teachers could make a difference. But the struggle to bridge this gap is by no means easy, especially in a time of reaction.

**Women's liberationist
Detroit**

At the panel on "The tangled threads of backlash against feminism in contemporary Japan," presenters told the story of how an official ban on gender discrimination, which was supposed to make Japan "gender free," backfired when anti-feminists equated feminism with one celebrated case of a boy whose penis was cut off during circumcision. While a psychologist recommended he be raised as a girl, claiming nurture is primary over nature in identity development, the boy eventually chose to live as a man. Feminists were blamed for "suppressing" the outcome of this "experiment," as though it proved that sexual difference is biologically determined. Feminists were charged with wanting humanity to be "hermaphroditic snails," and eventually the ordinance banning discrimination was repealed. The last speaker in this session compared "gender free" with "race free" and brought in the Supreme Court decision, which she said equated race free with race blind.

**Urszula Wislanka
California**

Barbara Ransby had responsibility for one of the four "Engaging Scholarship Sessions." She said her 2003 biography of Ella Baker inspired her current work on a model of pedagogy called "Ella's Daughters." She envisions "teaching like Ella did, by quilting strands together" among the academy and the community on the move for freedom. Ransby's concept puts academia at the service of grassroots leaders and movements; she quotes Baker saying, "strong people don't need strong leaders." Although I would say strong people do need strong leaders, I see in Baker's statement her concern that there is a separation between leaders and ranks. But if leaders remain root-

READERS' VIEWS

ed in the movement their strength remains ours.

**NWSA participant
Michigan**

NUCLEAR GLOBAL WARMING

Dying to make money off global warming, the nuclear industry and its skills have been touting nuclear energy as the "clean" alternative. The July 16 earthquake in Japan reminds us of the truth. The company that runs the biggest nuclear power plant in the world said it found over 50 problems with the plant, including a radioactive leak into the ocean, and possibly other leaks. But at first they denied everything, as usually happens with nuclear accidents. This is supposed to save us?

**Long-time environmentalist
Tennessee**



LABOR FIGHTS BACK IN SOUTH AFRICA

The month-long strikes in South Africa that took place throughout June are now over, but the importance of what was gained should not be passed over. After refusing for months to listen to workers' demands for higher wages, the ANC-led government was forced to give in and grant the public service workers a 7.5% wage increase. Even more important than the pay increase was the spirit of solidarity that developed from the strikes. This is bound to have further ramifications in the future.

**Observer
Illinois**

It was great to see so many in-person reports from workers and women in the June-July issue of *N&L*. I had no idea that there was such a ferment of struggle and ideas taking place in that land. Printing these kinds of in-person reports is central to revolutionary solidarity.

**Longtime Marxist
New York**

AMERICAN REALITY

The contradictions in the American economy are multiplying and worsening. Take the simple fact of pay equity—it has gone down to women making 62 cents for every dollar a man makes, from 69 cents 10 years ago. High-paying jobs are gone. We have more speed-up and pauperism. There is speculation in the *Detroit Free Press* that Michigan might become a right-to-work state! It reflects the weakened labor unions ripple effect. We are also seeing give-backs of pensions and health care benefits. Gains were made when unions were strong. Now it is not a question of giving concessions, but "how much?" The rate of profit goes up and the executives make millions, while the gap is widening between rich and poor like during the Great Depression.

**Ex-miner
Detroit**

If anyone is going to get a better sense about value theory, they have to confront what is going on in this country the way the Lead article in the June-July issue of *N&L* presents it as "Spying campaign provokes distrust in Bush' agenda." I've been following the factory takeovers in Latin America but I wish they were happening here so I could be a participant. We have to keep focusing on things happening in this country so we can confront the reality. There was just a decision that anyone who uses an internet server relinquishes all privacy rights. The Supreme Court turned "Brown vs. Topeka" on its head using the language of "Brown." If the court is now willing to be that reactionary it is very scary. We won't have any rights in a few years.

**Mitch
California**

The June-July Lead traced the national security state as having been in reserve since the days of the Palmer raids. It has always been there to bring out the repressive power of the state when capital is in crisis.

**Ron
Bay Area**

The Supreme Court's decision on school desegregation effectively restores the myth of "separate but equal." Its real meaning is shown by the outrage being perpetrated every day in New Orleans, where activists rightly call the "reconstruction" a privatization—a massive takeover by elites of whatever they can grab from Blacks and all the poor and workers. This disaster is not caused just by Hurricane Katrina plus corruption and neglect in maintaining the levees, but by an ongoing racist attack, which is at the same time a class war against the poor. Keep your eye on the fightback, which is not heard in the media but has never stopped.

**Environmental justice activist
Memphis**

REVIEWS FROM IRAN

I especially liked the two reviews in the June-July issue written by Iranians of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*, which has just appeared in a Persian language edition in Iran. One of the reviewers critiques Dunayevskaya for being too philosophical, but he explains why she is philosophical and encourages the reader to dig into the book. It is the kind of review that would have convinced me to read it.

**Reader
San Francisco**

STATE EDUCATION?

After 100 years of state education, something is very wrong here in Britain. It is estimated one in five of the population could be called illiterate and about 15 million cannot add simple sums. This is at a time when there is an overflow of information. It's exactly the time when more resources should be allocated to developing adult literary and numeracy skills. The government's response is to cut library books and services and, in some instances, libraries as well. The fascists burn books, but what to say of governments that restrict ideas, books and association? Poorer families are further penalized. It is shameful for a Labor government to act in such a mean and stupid way.

**Outraged
London**

VOICES FROM WITHIN PRISON



I would like to congratulate you on putting together a newspaper with insight that is informational. I like the fact that it isn't just a U.S. paper, but focuses on issues around the world.

**Prisoner
Iowa Park, TX**

It's great to know there are movements teaching about Marxism. I've been teaching for years to anyone who will talk with me about the evils of the capitalist system: 1) Capitalism is based on profit; 2) Profit is based on greed. 3) Greed is a psychological disorder. Bill Gates has \$50 billion and at the same time thousands are starving every day, with half of them kids 15 years old or younger. For a man to have billions and yet stand back and watch other human beings starving to death has got to be a psychological disorder.

**Prisoner
Pontiac, Illinois**

Your publication serves as a vital component of Marxist education and development. It is a pivotal expression of the theoretical foundations of the new society and new social relations that must be forged and cemented out of the ashes of modern industrial global capitalism and its vulturous tentacles of imperialism.

**Prisoner
Jefferson City, Mo.**

VALUE PRODUCTION AND CAPITALISM

On the column by Dunayevskaya in the June-July issue of *N&L*: tracing the categories of labor power, surplus value, value, etc. to their prehistoric and/or pre-ancient world forms is eminently feasible, as hinted at by Engels—and a certainty in the mind of Marx (see the *Ethnological Notebooks*).

**Jason W. Smith
California**

As Marx always insisted—not only in *Capital* but also in his "Notes on Wagner" (one of his last writings)—his analysis of value production was meant to apply to capitalism and capitalism alone. The production of a surplus product, which existed before capitalism, is not the same as surplus value. A life and death issue is involved here. If value production is held to be the universal law of society that precedes capitalism, it follows that it will continue after capitalism. Which means alienation is here to stay in perpetuity!

**Marxist theorist
Chicago**

FIGHTING BUSH'S AGENDA

When I was on vacation in Rome I attended a demonstration against Bush's visit. There were many youth and tremendous anger. Some had placards indicating they knew there was "another America."

**Composer and Pianist
New York**

In writing on the chapter in *Capital* on "The Working Day," Dunayevskaya said Marx concluded that the simple workers' question, "When does my day begin and when does it end?" was a greater philosophy of freedom than the bourgeois Declaration of the Rights of Man. I consider U.S. democracy today as more than "pompous" when Bush uses it to justify his war on Iraq, but not pompous when used by civil society or the ACLU to struggle for freedom of speech.

**Asian American
Los Angeles**

The streets run red with blood in Baghdad but no WMD's are to be found. Just like in Nixon's war in Vietnam, criminal advisors are raking in billions while the cost to U.S. taxpayers is also billions every month. War is a racket for the rich as the poor suffer just as it has always been. Today is worse than Watergate with the world waiting for a justified impeachment. We get a scandal per week from the criminal White House. Is any realization close at hand?

**Disgusted Veteran
Illinois**

Bush and company are leaders in corruption and bloodspill. They clearly belong in prison. *N&L* continues to contain more information in a few pages than one could get out of the corporate media or anywhere else in months. Please don't stop putting it out. I enclose a small contribution to help out

**Supporter
Louisiana**

Editor's note: Many thanks to our readers who responded to our Appeal for your help to allow us to continue publishing *N&L* and to expand our activities with all the forces of revolt as we try to work out Marx's Marxism for today. Have you sent in your contribution to help us keep going?

Darfur: 'This is not a clash of civilizations'

By Ba Karang

Going by the most recent estimates (*Science Journal* September 2006), in Darfur more than 200,000 people have been murdered and more than two million displaced as refugees. But the world seems to be more preoccupied with other business and values (sic) than the lives of Black Africans dying in the desert.

This is not a clash of civilizations; it is common in war that oppression has created and been mixed with racial arrogance. Yes, it is the Arab ruling class of Sudan who have unleashed the Janjaweed Militia against poor Black Africans. The poverty, decadence, and oppression in Darfur is the result of many years of marginalization; first by the colonial masters, Britain, and then by Arabs. Darfur was effectively an independent state after 1898 following the British war against the Mahdi. During World War I the British invaded Darfur to prevent Turkish influence and in 1916 incorporated Darfur into Sudan.

In an estimated population of 7.4 million, largely engaged in subsistence farming and cattle rearing, the Bedouin Arab migrants are mainly pastoralist, and have established themselves in Darfuran society with easy access to grazing lands. In 1980 they established the Tajamu al Arabi in Darfur, a Pan-Arab nationalist movement, inspired by Moamar Gaddafi. Their main political message was nothing other than Arab supremacy. At the time of the war in neighbouring Chad, a backyard was created in Darfur for the Libya-supported Chadian rebel movement. The Arab vigilante group, Janjaweed, was born out of this political situation in the neighboring country.

ISLAMIC MILITARY COUP

In 1989, the Sudanese Islamists launched a military coup and established the present Islamic State of Sudan. The Islamist government started rearming the Janjaweed, who wasted no time in unleashing their terror against the already marginalized Black population. The Janjaweed, by now very powerful, and winning greater state recognition, was assigned to deal with the Black population who had been in constant confrontation with Arab nomads over pastoral land. By this time, the war in southern Sudan was the preoccupation of the Sudanese government, which was very confident that the low-scale peasant revolt against Arab racism and brutality in Darfur could easily be put under control by the vigilante groups.

In southern Sudan, The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) was delighted by the news of the emerging Darfur resistance movement in 2003, when a military assault was launched against government buildings by the newly formed rebel movement.

Land grabs, the drought, the hunger and an increasing brutality from the armed Janjaweed, forced the villagers of Darfur to form the Sudan Liberation Army (SLM).

JUSTICE AND EQUALITY MOVEMENT

Another political movement emerged, the JEM (Justice and Equality Movement). Led by Khalid Ibrahim, the JEM joined the armed struggle as an independent group. The JEM, marginalized in the Darfur Peace process, brought together groups and individuals

Queer Notes

by Elise

A world-record three million people participated in Sao Paulo, Brazil's, 11th annual Gay Pride parade in June, making it the largest Pride parade among numerous others held the same day. A particularly vociferous anti-gay rally held the previous day failed to keep participants and spectators away from the Pride festivities, which opposed homophobia, machismo and racism.

A June protest by gay rights activists that was given the go-ahead by Moscow city authorities was stopped by police. Most of the activists were dispersed but two were detained after police stopped, among other things, the unfurling of a banner. The good news is that anti-gay onlookers didn't punch the activists and pelt them with eggs, which they did in May. Demonstrators were aiming to have the European Union impose a visa ban on Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, who has banned gay Pride parades and called homosexuality "satanic."

Stop Murder Music and numerous other gay rights groups have finally been able to persuade the reggae groups Beenie Man, Sizzla and Capleton to stop performing anti-gay songs. By signing the Reggae Compassionate Act, the performers agreed to "respect the rights of all individuals" and to reject sexism, including homophobia. Peter Tatchell and his group Stop Murder Music will be monitoring the performers to see if they keep their word.

involved in the armed struggle in April, in the capital of Eritrea, to form the National Redemption Front. This group consists of people who never recognized the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), which was negotiated by the African Union, EU and the U.S.A. and signed in Abuja on May 5th by the Sudanese government and SLM.

Many commentators of the Darfur crisis have observed that at every turning point of the many peace negotiations, new armed factions emerged, formed by rebel commanders who at one time or another felt that their personal agenda was not being taken into consideration. For now, an independent Darfur is not on

either the agenda of the rebel movements, nor that of the state. The conflict, the genocide, is a result of the demand of the Black African Darfurians for their right to the land to be recognized and to get rid of Arab racism. Commentators have also recognized the fact that the conflict in southern Sudan is not yet over and that Darfur poses an interesting puzzle in that conflict. By 2009 there will be an election in Sudan, (as part of the peace plan with SPLM in 2005), and the SPLM is without doubt going to control the South. Bearing in mind that Darfur consists of almost a quarter of the

Sudanese electorate, the Islamist government of Khartoum will be willing to make concessions to the rebel movement. The votes from Darfur will play an important role in the composition of the parliament. By 2011 there is to be an expected referendum (also part of the peace plan with SPLM in 2005) on the question of an independent southern Sudan and as things stand now, there is no doubt that southern Sudanese will vote for an independent state.

RACIALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

No one can any longer be fooled into believing that the violence in Darfur is not racially motivated, as it is a conflict between the Arab migrants and Black African Darfurians. Anything more genuine than the periodic pronouncements on the genocide by European and American leaders will have to come to a direct confrontation with the interests of global capital. This is the backyard of the Chinese and Russian capital and Western Europe and America are very much sensitive to this fact. They have Iraq and Iran to contain and rely greatly on the support of both China and Russia. Recently, Amnesty International accused China and Russia for selling arms to Sudan. There is no hidden secret in the military cooperation between China and the Sudanese government.

China, through China National Petroleum, is planning an investment of \$1 billion to create Africa's largest refinery, which will expand the Khartoum refinery from 50,000 barrels a day to 90,000 barrels a day. And oil revenue has contributed about \$2 billion to the racist Sudanese state coffers. Thus the oil in Darfur, which the Chinese are confident of controlling and which the Russians are sniffing at, will determine to what extent capitalism values human life.

China met with 48 African states in May last year to form a new strategic partnership, with trade deals worth of \$1.9 billion and plans were drawn up to increase it to \$100 billion in four years. But there can be no serious discussion on Darfur while Chinese-made bullets are killing Darfurians and AU members struggling to make a difference. When Amnesty International accused the Chinese government of supplying arms to the racist Sudanese government, the British foreign affairs minister insisted that China is doing all it can to help resolve the crisis in Darfur.

Not only China, but also the U.S.A. is hypocritical in this conflict. The periodic bubbling about Sudan by the U.S. administration in the media does give the impression that they are very concerned. It is time to ask why is it that U.S. sanctions against Sudan are not effective and even if they are meant to be in place? They are not. If the U.S. is serious about sanctioning Sudan, sanctions against the oil industry alone will be enough to bring the Khartoum government to its knees. But the U.S. has never made any serious attempt to hurt the oil industry in Sudan, because of U.S. industrial interest.

Take gum Arabic, a substance used in the production of soft drinks and other consumer products; the company that produces this product was "mistakenly" put on the U.S. sanction list in 1997 only to be removed from the list after a protest from American industries who depend on the supply of this product from Sudan.

Sudan has now agreed to a peacekeeping force of 20,000, which will be comprised of both UN and AU forces. However some weeks back, the newly elected French President Sarkozy organized a conference in Paris on the way forward for Darfur, without a single African nation or even the AU invited to attend. What is actually known to have come out of that meeting is nothing new but just another statement from the West and the U.S. for public consumption, while the terrible condition of millions of Black people remains the same. The U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, at the end of the meeting declared in a press conference that

the world is failing Darfur. But it is not the world that is failing the people of Darfur. It is those who have a direct interest in Sudan who are failing the Darfurians. This suggests that her statement is just a logical extension of the attitude of the West and the U.S. to the suffering of Black Africans in Darfur.

—Hobgoblin Online—2007
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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Continued from page 4

This failure to give "full employment" to labor shakes the whole structure of capitalist society. Marx emphasizes that "every special historic mode of production has its own special laws of population, historically valid within its limits alone" (p. 693). For capitalist production, as we saw, that law was the law of the surplus army, surplus, that [is], to the capitalist mode of production.

The incapacity of capitalism to reproduce its own value-creating substance—labor power in the shape of the living, employed laborer—signals the doom of capitalism. Marx defines this doom in the final part—Part VIII—where he, first, deals with the historical genesis and then with the historical tendency of capitalistic accumulation.

The historic beginnings of capitalism, described under "The So-Called Primitive Accumulation of Capital," has highly charged agitation material. The fact that Marx relegates this material to the end instead of the beginning of *Capital*, cannot be overestimated. It means that Marx wished, above all, to analyze the law of development of capitalism. For, no matter what its beginnings were, the contradictions arise not from its origin but from its inherent nature, which "begets with the inexorability of a law of Nature, its own negation" (p. 837).

The law of motion of capitalist society is therefore the law of its collapse. Marx discerned this law through the application of dialectical materialism to the developmental laws of capitalist production.

We see, furthermore, that the basis of Marx's most abstract theories is the class struggle itself; that an integral part of his theory of accumulation is the mobilization of the proletariat to revolt against the production relations which hamper the full development of the productive forces into "a higher form of society, a society where every individual forms the ruling principle" (p. 649).

It is because Marx based himself on the inevitability of socialism that he could discern the law of motion of capitalist society, the inevitability of its collapse. It was this that gave the force, the direction, and the profundity to his analysis of *Capital*.

BLACK/RED VIEW

Continued from page 1

southern delegates won the day by declaring they were definitely property in their realms.

The Civil War arose out of this contradiction and only solved one manifestation of it, outright slavery, leaving a mountain of other forms of racism. The ensuing 14th Amendment only formally instituted equal protection of law and full citizenship for Blacks.

CENTURY OF STRUGGLE

It took nearly a century of struggle on the ground before the courts addressed the need for school integration, which was just one remedy to help open up U.S. society to full participation of Blacks.

The Civil Rights Movement's struggle for concrete freedoms on the ground gave abstract legalism some content. Civil rights and legal equality, which the Supreme Court showed can be turned into its opposite through making them only an abstraction, is all that a capitalist society can offer.

As Marx put it, we need a movement that doesn't stop at civil rights and continues on to full human emancipation.

At the time of the bicentennial celebration of the U.S. Constitution, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall made the following magnificent attack on all the false and hypocritical hoopla:

"I do not find the wisdom, foresight and sense of justice exhibited by the Framers particularly profound. To the contrary, the government they devised was defective from the start, requiring several amendments, a civil war and momentous social transformation to attain the system of constitutional government... They could not have imagined, nor would they have accepted, that the document they were drafting would one day be construed by a Supreme Court to which had been appointed a woman and the descendant of an African slave. We the people no longer enslave, but the credit does not belong to the Framers. It belongs to those who refused to acquiesce in outdated notions of 'liberty,' 'justice,' and 'equality,' and who strived to better them."

Review-essay: Reclaiming Marx's 'Capital'

By Tom More

"[It] is improbable that [Marx's] deductive powers were so limited that he repeatedly—in case after case, and year after year—drew invalid conclusions from simultaneist premises. Even a theorist of average caliber would be unlikely to blunder so consistently, and Marx was arguably somewhat above average."—*Reclaiming Marx's 'Capital'*

In *Reclaiming Marx's 'Capital'* [RMC] (Lexington Books, 2007), Andrew Kliman exposes many of the ways in which the leading lines of modern Marxist economics departs from the original Marxism of Marx. If he isn't exactly a parody, the Marx that 20th century Marxist economists "correct" founders on an elementary mistake: in Chapter 9 of Vol. III of *Capital*, concerning the transformation of values into prices of production, he values inputs (in values or prices) and outputs (in values or prices) non-simultaneously, whereas Ladislav Bortkiewicz, in a series of papers published in 1906-07, is taken to have demonstrated that Marx's non-simultaneous valuation leads to an "internal contradiction" or a "spurious breakdown" of the reproduction process.

This is the source of what Kliman calls "the myth of inconsistency," which RMC sets out to "refute." Twentieth century Marxist economics "corrects" Marx's supposed mistake, based on Bortkiewicz's "proof," by adopting the analytic tool of simultaneous valuation of inputs and outputs. Today, many Marxist economists even hold that Marx's "inconsistency" is "immediately obvious" (p. 152).

Others have held that, "since sale prices and purchase prices must be equal, it is supposedly obvious that input and output prices must also be equal," although "input and output prices can and usually do differ" (p. 153)! It also "seems obvious to some critics that Marx's solution [of the transformation problem] suffers from dimensional inconsistency," i.e., the idea that Marx measured inputs in labor-time terms but outputs in money terms (p. 153). Kliman writes, "The idea that a serious theorist" such as Marx "could commit such ridiculous errors and never notice that his sale and purchase prices differ, or that his values and prices are dimensionally inconsistent, is so implausible that it is sufficient reason to reject these interpretations."

IS MARX'S THEORY VALID?

The question whether Marx's theory is consistent has to be answered before we can ask the sexier question whether it is true. If Marx's *Capital* is logically invalid, it cannot be sound. If it is unsound, then only illogical people would cling to it. But 20th century Marxist economics seems to offer a way out. Although Bortkiewicz intended his "proof" of "internal contradiction" to be a critique of Marx's theory, he also pointed the way to recasting it in a system of simultaneous equations. If Marx's original theory is inconsistent on account of non-simultaneous valuation, then it can be corrected by adopting simultaneous valuation.

To readers inclined to ask so what, it can be conceded that the issue is technical. But if Marx's theoretical conclusions matter, at least to Marxists, then so do the technical details of the arguments that generate them. In this sense, the scholasticism of value theory is not a mere scholasticism. The 20th century economic theory that calls itself "Marxist" draws conclusions quite different from Marx's own.

For example, with simultaneous valuation (the "correction" of Marx's "mistake"), Marx's three aggregate equalities (total profit equals total surplus value, total price equals total value, and the aggregate "price" rate of profit equals the aggregate "value" rate of profit) either fail to obtain or are at best "preserved in a formal sense only" (1); Marx's law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit falls by the wayside, the law which he deemed to be "in every respect the most important law of modern political economy"; finally, concerning the conclusion that might seem most vital to Marx's criticism of capitalism, that the sole source of surplus value and profits is the exploitation of workers, Marx's original theory must be incoherent as well.

If the crucial point of Marxism in any of its varieties is the notion of exploitation, it may appear that modern Marxist economics is still "Marxist" in the sense that really matters, because it retains what Michio Morishima called "The Fundamental Marxian Theorem" (FMT).

Kliman writes: "The FMT is the crown jewel of simultaneist Marxian and Sraffian economics, for it supposedly demonstrates that the failure to 'solve the transformation problem' in a technical sense is no big deal, because Marx's principal conclusion—the exploitation of workers is the sole source of profit—remains intact. Consequently, proponents of the FMT claim, we can scrap his incoherent and metaphysical theory without doing damage to the essential core of his critique of capitalism" (p. 15).

Yet in the chapter he devotes to the FMT, Kliman demonstrates that it fails, and that the reason it fails is that it is based on simultaneous valuation: "Simultaneist definitions imply that total profit could be positive even though no surplus labor is extracted from workers, and total profit could be negative even though surplus labor is extracted" (pp. 175-76). If the FMT fails, however, then modern Marxist economics based on simultaneous valuation cannot even salvage the notion of exploitation in Marx's sense from his critique

of capitalism.

If the results of RMC are correct, the unavoidable conclusion is that 20th century "simultaneist" Marxist economics is "Marxist" in name only and in fact an economic theory quite distinct from the original Marxism of Marx—better named "Bortkiewiczism" (or for that matter, "Dmitrievism," "Sweezyism," or "Sraffianism"), although these are awkward and unfamiliar names.

There is an alternative, however, called the "temporal single-system interpretation" (TSSI) of Marx's value theory, of which Kliman is a proponent. The TSSI answers to Kliman's refutation of the myth of inconsistency, it tosses simultaneous valuation aside, it substitutes temporal valuation, and it achieves the result of demonstrating how Marx's own major theoretical conclusions follow consistently from Marx's own premises.

In answer to the question how we know what Marx's premises, arguments, and conclusions are, TSSI makes Marx make sense. From a logical point of view, if Marx was inconsistent, then he does not make sense, no matter how sexy or resonant he might otherwise be. In that case, what remains from Marx today are merely the fragments, tantalizing or not, of a moribund theoretical architecture buried in the cemetery of ideas.

If Marx's own presentation of the theory of value were internally inconsistent, then it would not be possible to "reclaim" *Capital* as a coherent, unified whole, for in that case, the massive edifice of Marx's text would be a house divided against itself. If Marx committed a logical blunder in his overall argument, then that argument is invalid, therefore unsound. A sound mind will simply walk away. Kliman offers his own reasons why the question of validity needs to be taken seriously in the first chapter of RMC. Here I will suggest a further reason.

Elsewhere in RMC, we discover that in Marx's theory, the exploitation theory of profit, unlike the FMT, is internally related to the law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit, and that it has "revolutionary implications—the abolition of economic crises requires the abolition of value production" (p. 176). Although it is not Kliman's purpose in RMC to develop the revolutionary implications of Marx's Marxism, we can speculate that modern Marxist economics, in its technical and academic character, may not be fully open to them. On the related topic of Marx's theory of capitalist crises, it is widely believed that Marx thought that their recurrence would lead inevitably "automatically" to the collapse of capitalism. In that case, of course, the need to "make revolution" is substantially diminished, and practice can take care of itself.

WILL CAPITALISM COLLAPSE?

However, as Kliman remarks, "Recurrent economic crises, not a declining rate of profit over the long term, are what Marx's theory actually predicts" (p. 31). Economic crises are means of capitalist regeneration, not of its collapse: they overcome the tendency of the law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit. Kliman quotes Marx against Adam Smith from his 1861-63 *Economic Manuscript*: "Adam Smith explains the fall in the rate of profit [as stemming] from a superabundance of capital...he is speaking of a permanent effect and this is wrong. As against this, the transitory superabundance of capital, overproduction and crises are something different. Permanent crises do not exist." (2)

On the other hand, Ernest Mandel, "a prominent advocate of the view that Marx predicted the collapse of capitalism," appeals to a passage in *Capital* in which Marx writes, "The expropriators are expropriated." Kliman writes, "this passage says nothing about the system's collapse. Marx projects that the system's tendencies will result in social revolution...and not because of any collapse, but because of the centralization of capital and growing revolt of the working class" (p. 31).

Arguably, the centralization of capital happens "automatically." We could say that it belongs to the "objective logic" of the process of accumulation. But what about the "growing revolt of the working class"? In the same context in which Marx projects a social revolution, he writes, "At a certain stage of [capitalist] development, it brings into the world the material means of its own destruction. From that moment, new forces and new passions spring up in the bosom of society" (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. 928). In Hegelian language, the "new forces and new passions" belong, not to "objective logic" but to "subjective logic."

Although the subject of social revolution does not fall within the scope of RMC, it belongs to the first rank of importance in Marx's theory of value. To draw out this linkage, however, we have to look elsewhere in Kliman's corpus. In "Marx's Concept of Intrinsic Value," concerning "the significance of the intrinsic value concept," a concept fundamental to the TSSI approach, he

argues that Marx advances on classical political economy, of which *Capital* is a critique, in that Marx "employed [the concept of intrinsic value] to transform value from a category referring to relations between things to one referring to relations between humans (workers) and things." (3) Although I cannot elaborate his argument here, Kliman draws this conclusion:

"[As] values...commodities relate to one another as products of labor, not as mere things. This simple fact involves a radical change in perspective [from the Ricardian theory]. 'Behind' the relationship of the products to one another is the relationship of the individual product to its producer. The inquiry into value has thus shifted from one that refers to an object-object relation to one that refers to a subject-object relation."

THE SUBJECT/OBJECT RELATION

The theory of value explains the object-object relation of the exchange of commodities in the sphere of circulation by going behind the factory door into "the hidden abode of production," in order to disclose the subject-object relation of working people to the things they produce. In capitalist production, "this subject-object relation is an alienated one. It is because the worker is alienated from the labor she expends in producing the commodity that this labor can take on an autonomous existence 'as an 'objective' property of that article, i.e. as its value.'" (4) Marx adds, "To the producers, therefore, the social relations between their private labors appear as what they are, i.e. they do not appear as direct social relations between persons in their work, but rather as material relations between persons and social relations between things."

In order to grasp the alienated subject-object relation of capitalist production that explains the "objectivity" of value, however, one needs a "subjective logic," i.e., a logic that includes the category of the subject. Otherwise, Marx's reference to the "new forces and new passions" that will bring about the expropriation of the expropriators is simply unintelligible. The passions of what? Machinery? Marx argues, not that the coming social revolution will come about through a nonexistent permanent economic crisis, but that it will come about only through the dialectic of a two-sided subject-object relation: not only "the centralization of capital" (on the side of the object), but vitally and crucially as well, "the growing revolt of the working class" (on the side of the subject).

By contrast, it is difficult to see how Marxist economics based on simultaneous valuation can open onto the horizon of this revolutionary perspective. Kliman writes, "Simultaneous valuation is absolutely incompatible with the principle upon which Marx's value theory is founded, the principle that value is determined by labor-time" (p. 78).

Marx's thesis that the value of a commodity is determined by the socially necessary labor-time required to produce it has a revolutionary implication that may not be readily apparent. As Marx presents it in Vol. I of *Capital*, the determination of value by labor time entails the distinction between "concrete" and "abstract" labor that he "was the first to point out and examine critically," this distinction being "crucial to an understanding of political economy." This split in the category, "labor," seminally contains the fundamental contradiction of capitalist society. However, this contradiction is not an object-object relation, but a subject-object relation, the further investigation of which discloses both the alienation of working people from the work of their own hands and also the key to the transcendence of this alienation (not simply "the centralization of capital," but also "the growing revolt of the working class"). Thus, if simultaneous valuation is incompatible with the determination of value by labor time, then interpretations (or "corrections") of Marx's theory based on such "a seemingly innocuous tool of analysis" (RMC, p. 78) will systematically and permanently obscure the revolutionary horizon within which Marx elaborates the theory of value.

In the TSSI correction of the simultaneist "correction," not only is the myth of inconsistency refuted, but an obstacle is cleared from the revolutionary path of praxis (the unity of theory with practice), which leads from an object-object relation to a subject-object relation, the recognition of the humanity of a worker, the humanistic character of Marx's critique of political economy, the standpoint of "new forces and new passions," "the growing revolt of the working class," and the projection of a new society.

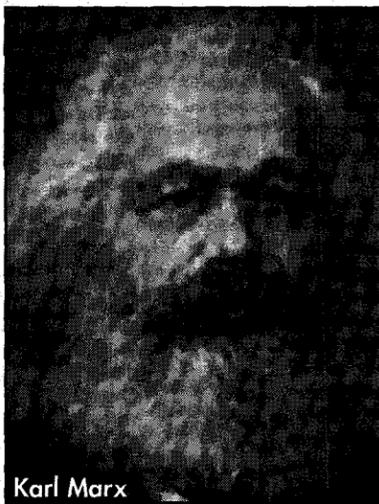
NOTES

1. Dual-system interpretations of "values" and "prices," flowing from simultaneous valuation, fail to preserve the aggregate equalities, but the "simultaneous single-system interpretation" (SSSI) of Fred Moseley and others claims to preserve them. However, Kliman demonstrates that the SSSI preserves them "in a formal sense only" (see pp. 163-65). "The voice is the voice of Marx, but the hands are the hands of Sraffa" (p. 164).

2. From Notebooks XII-XV of the 1861-63 *Economic Manuscript*, in *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Vol. 32, (New York: International Publishers, 1989), p. 128.

3. This and subsequent quotations are taken from *Marx's Concept of Intrinsic Value: On the Unity of Value, Fetishism, and the Analysis of Capitalist Production in 'Capital'*, distributed by News and Letters (2003). It originally appeared in *Historical Materialism* (2000: 89-113).

4. Here Kliman quotes *Capital*, Vol. I, translated by Ben Fowkes, pp. 153-54.



Karl Marx

OUR LIFE AND TIMES

By Kevin A. Barry and Mitch Weerth

After over four years of war and occupation, the U.S. is further than ever from its goal of creating a new Iraq in its imperial image. In fact, the tide is clearly turning against the U.S., with no letup in sight.

In "The Other War: Iraq Vets Bear Witness," a probing article by Chris Hedges and Laila Al-Arian published in the July 30 issue of *The Nation*, veterans recount the daily violations of human rights that have been perpetrated upon Iraqi civilians as part of the occupation.

In raids on homes, soldiers routinely destroy belongings—overturning shelves, dumping out the contents of refrigerators, and other indignities—and then merely say "sorry" if no ties to insurgents turn up. On the streets, U.S. military convoys often move at break-neck speed, injuring and killing Iraqis. When fired upon, U.S. troops are known to return fire indiscriminately.

Along with these brutal tactics has grown a racist ideology to justify it: "You can honestly see how the Iraqis in general or even Arabs in general are being, you know, kind of like dehumanized," said Army Specialist Jeff Englehart. "Like it was very common for United States soldiers to call them derogatory terms, like camel jockeys or Jihad Johnny or, you know, sand n---r." This extends to the dead as well, with soldiers routinely posing for "souvenir" photos with horribly disfigured Iraqi corpses.

Because the occupation lacks any real popular sup-

France's looming confrontation

French President Nicolas Sarkozy has already drawn the battle lines for fall. A new labor law slated for passage this summer would limit the right to strike in the public sector, with workers forced to give a 48-hour advance notice and most provocatively, the requirement that a "minimum level of service" be maintained during strikes. Unions have already threatened a "long and hard strike" if such laws are applied.

Sarkozy also plans to "reform" the university system by cutting the education budget and reducing student representation. In response, Bruno Julliard, president of the National Union of French Students, also predicted a confrontation. Referring implicitly to France's long history of student activism, whether under fascism or in 1968, Julliard declared that if Sarkozy does not back down, "The students will assume their responsibilities when classes resume in the fall."

Sarkozy sent his own brutal signal on July 14, Bastille Day. He refused to pardon a single prisoner, breaking with the tradition of presidential pardons on the national holiday. Jacques Chirac, his predecessor, pardoned 3,500 prisoners last year, a fact that even the guards' union noted, while warning of violence inside the prisons as a result of Sarkozy's stance.

Twilight of Musharraf

Many signs suggest that the U.S.-backed regime of Pakistan's General Pervez Musharraf, in power since 1999, is nearing the end of its rope. As protests mount, even top generals have hinted that it may be time for Musharraf to go and for civilian rule to be restored.

In July, Musharraf moved very belatedly to shut down the Red Mosque (Lal Masjid), an armed fundamentalist center that had for months sown terror in the capital, Islamabad. In March, its stick-wielding women students kidnapped and held for weeks three women whom they accused of running a brothel. In April, the democratic movement demonstrated in Karachi, thousands strong, demanding that the state intervene against such Taliban-style vigilantism right in the nation's capital. But the vigilante actions continued unchecked for two more months, even after policemen were also kidnapped.

Many believe that the military's ties to religious fundamentalists are at the source of this reluctance to confront their obviously illegal actions at a time when the regime has few other sources of support. But now even those elements, concentrated along the Northwest Frontier area where Taliban support is strong and where many of the Red Mosque's students originated, have declared war on the government.

In May and June, Pakistan experienced its greatest mass democratic movement in decades. A high point was reached on June 3 when tens of thousands gathered across normally more conservative Punjab to greet the motorcade of Supreme Court Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, whom Musharraf had suspended because of his independent spirit.

Musharraf has had pro-regime goons attack and murder pro-democracy demonstrators in Karachi, has tried to censor media reports of opposition demonstrations, and has instigated physical attacks on the homes of opposition leaders, all to no avail. Pakistan has entered a time of democratic turbulence and renewal.

Benazir Bhutto, a former president with a popular base, awaits her moment. As in the past, she is cutting deals with the military and the U.S., and above all, trying to make sure that the structures of class and capital would not be disturbed during any transition from military rule.

U.S. and militia brutality in Iraq

port, the U.S. has been forced to accept and support a Shi'a fundamentalist government with strong ties to the Iranian regime. That government, along with its



sometime allies in the Mahdi Army of Moqtada Al-Sadr, has been conducting a reign of terror against the Sunni minority. Sunnis, who comprise about 20% of the population, were dominant under the deposed regime of Saddam Hussein.

While a minority inside Iraq, Sunnis constitute the overwhelming majority in the greater Muslim world. This assures a vast supply of volunteers for the Sunni resistance, especially since it can also draw upon funding from the former Ba'athist regime and states like Saudi Arabia.

It was Sunni fundamentalists—especially Al Qaeda in Iraq—who began the inter-religious bloodletting through a relentless campaign of terrorist attacks against Shi'a civilians. This continued, most recently in the northern village of Amerli, where over 150 Shi'as perished in a suicide bombing on July 8. In mid-June, Sunni jihadists blew up the Askariya Shrine at Samarra. This thousand-year-old mosque is one of the most revered sites in Shi'a Islam. Last year, terrorists destroyed its golden dome. The June attack finished off the rest of this architectural treasure. Again a wave of reprisals against Sunni civilians and mosques has followed.

Many Sunni leaders, including tribal leaders and some Islamists, have begun to distance themselves from the extreme jihadists in their community, but they too have come under murderous attack.

Secular democratic forces have been almost com-

pletely wiped out or marginalized. Women have been forced to re-veil, and Shari'a religious law is being applied by local sheikhs in the spheres of family, marriage, and inheritance. In May, the Iraq Women's Movement sent an open letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, protesting Article 41 of Iraq's draft constitution, which would leave such "personal status" law to one's religious community. It would take the country back to the era before 1959, when a new constitution enacted by the leftist Free Officers' regime guaranteed women equal rights under law.

The above horrors meant that few noticed when Ali Hassan al-Majid—a.k.a. "Chemical Ali"—was convicted of genocide and crimes against humanity on June 24. Al-Majid led the notorious "Anfal" campaign of 1987-88, in which 180,000 Iraqi Kurds were murdered, many of them via poison gas. Iraqi Kurds were paying attention, however, with thousands coming out into the streets to celebrate this long overdue verdict.

China's exploitation

Revelations of forced child labor in the brick kilns of impoverished Shanxi Province, in June, rocked China. Some teenagers had been kidnapped, others tricked into performing this dangerous work under starvation conditions in isolated villages. Once on site, dogs and beatings prevented escape.

After the story hit the press, bloggers flooded chat rooms with attacks on the government. They pointed out that at the most notorious brick kiln, the local Communist Party Secretary was a member of the family that owned the kiln. They also decried how only a few minor operatives had been arrested, but not the higher party, governmental, and police officials who covered for these longstanding abuses.

Some bloggers declared that the Chinese people have become "slaves" of the top party leadership in Beijing. Others mocked the new party slogan about creating a "harmonious society," using the term "harmonize" as a synonym for censorship, as in the phrase, "That critical post was harmonized."

The brick kilns of Shanxi are only the most dramatic examples of growing economic disparities, as poorer inland areas have been shut out of the fruits of economic development. Their youth are forced to immigrate to the coastal cities, where they perform the hardest and most dangerous jobs.

Also in June, 7,000 demonstrated in Xiamen, a coastal city where authorities had planned to construct a giant petrochemical plant. They warned of the danger of cancer from the exposure to the fumes. Two months earlier, thousands battled police for four days in the village of Zhushan in inland Hunan Province. It started as a street demonstration against skyrocketing bus fares, but escalated after police responded by beating and arresting students and workers.

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