

WORKSHOPTALKS

Selling union members

by Htun Lin

From its start *News & Letters* has identified the labor bureaucracy as the "last barrier to the full emancipation of the working class." To a Left-leaning journalist like Esther Kaplan, in "Labor's Growing Pains," (*The Nation*, May 29, 2008), labor's "growth" is equivalent to the labor bureaucracy signing up new members.

The two main characters in her story of organizing drives in health care are the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), headed by Andy Stern, and the California Nurses' Association (CNA), headed by Rose Ann DeMoro. Kaplan frames the story as a "turf war" over new members because "more than half a million nursing jobs will be created over the next ten years."

COLLUSION WITH BOSSES

Stern's method of union growth—enlisting more dues-paying members by colluding with management in a way that totally embraces capital's prerogatives—makes traditional corrupt "business unionism" look good. He has gone after nurses of the California Nurses Association (CNA), including a goon-like stalking of individual nurses at their homes and physically accosting nurses at a Labor Notes conference, after CNA blocked his effort to organize nurses in Ohio.

Back in the 1990s, CNA in alliance with service workers confronted Kaiser management with a series of strikes and won the first ever landmark contract with a provision for "quality of care." This win signified a new kind of labor movement where workers were reaching for ways to reclaim control and meaning of their own labor.

When CNA now insists on a separate union for nurses, it makes itself vulnerable to the criticism of being an "elite craft union" or, as Kaplan puts it, "unwilling to leverage the relative privilege of RNs for

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BLACK/REDFIELD

Richard Wright today

by John Alan

Richard Wright is not an icon to the movement anymore. He is fodder for cultural historians who are revisiting him on the 100th anniversary of his birth. They are writing odes to Wright and contesting the meaning of his literary legacy. Literary significance of any writer is not as important as the actual history of great masses of people moving to reconstruct society.

The shocking story of Bigger Thomas in *Native Son* was a big event when it was published on March 1, 1940. The story is placed in Chicago, where I lived at the time the book came out. It was a big deal in the segregated slum on the South Side. It includes a very dramatic burning of a white woman in a furnace. Bigger Thomas' fear showed how racism operated in Chicago. Hundreds would come to discussions at the Washington Park outdoor forum. Bigger Thomas, people felt, underwent a form of lynching.

As I wrote in 1980, "When Wright published *Native Son*, back in 1940, it was an historic break from the Black middle-class literature of the Harlem Renaissance. Bigger was the frightening spectacle of what Northern racism could do to a human being, how totally it could alienate a young Black person from American 'civilization.' And, because of Bigger's human qualities of 'perception and emotion' as Wright puts it, Bigger was implicitly the negation of that civilization."

Blacks, who were discussing the book, were stuck in the ghetto, piled up in kitchenettes, small apartments that kept getting broken up into even smaller units, crammed with people. Blacks were in these segregated slums not because they wanted to live that way, but because there was no alternative. Police brutality was widespread. One could not cross Cottage Grove Avenue without getting arrested. I myself was arrested for walking on the other side of Cottage Grove.

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World food crisis stirs revolt

by Franklin Dmitryev

In the past few months, world hunger turned to revolt, and the specter of social revolution returned to the scene. Suddenly, the rulers heard the cries of the hungry and scrambled to make a show of action with a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) summit on the food crisis—only to end up with what social movements called "Empty Policies for Empty Plates."

After the Haitian masses erupted in revolt in April—with a week of protests by the thousands and barricades across the country, the storming of the presidential palace and the fall of the Prime Minister—UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warned of "social unrest on an unprecedented scale." Food prices in Haiti had gone up 50-100% in a year. A growing number of people had far from enough to eat, forcing some even to buy mud cookies to dull the hunger pangs.

In the 1980s Haiti produced enough rice for 95% of domestic consumption, but in 1995 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forced the country to lower barriers to heavily subsidized U.S. rice imports. Now 80% of Haiti's rice is imported. Thousands of farmers there were driven out of production. While Haitians go hungry, the country is paying \$1 million a week on IMF loans.

In a country where most of the population is poor, does not know formal employment, and lacks adequate sanitation and health care, the protests not only opposed high prices but called for an end to the UN occupation and the neoliberal "death plan," and a UN military base was attacked.

Food prices and shortages have sparked revolt in 40 countries, from Mexico's 75,000-strong Feb. 2007 march over tortilla prices to a risky street protest in North Korea in March 2008 over a 60% reduction of rations. Unrest has included May Day workers' marches by the thousands over food and fuel prices, from The Philippines to Thailand, Russia to Indonesia, as well as 1,000 women in Peru banging pots on May Day to demand action on food prices.

The involvement of workers is particularly threatening to the rulers. In February, workers on strike joined the issues of food and fuel prices to working con-



Haitian woman faces UN peacekeepers guarding presidential palace during April revolt

ditions in 31 municipalities of the African country Cameroon, sparking further protests. According to human rights groups, 100 people were killed in the state repression, and 2,000 arrested.

FOOD CRISIS IS NOT A FOOD SHORTAGE

Average world food prices have doubled since 2000, accelerating sharply late last year. The FAO forecasts that prices will remain high over the next decade. Hardest hit are the 2.6 billion people who live on less than \$2 a day and spend 60-80% of their incomes on food. An estimated 100 million people have been added to the rolls of the hungry, which could now exceed 950 million. Even before this crisis, 18,000 children were dying daily from hunger. In the "richest land," the U.S., 35 million people are said to be in "food-insecure" households.

The sharp rise of food prices reflects long-term trends. Africa in particular has seen food production per person fall constantly for 40 years. In the 1960s, Africa was a net food exporter. Today, after decades of neoliberal structural adjustment programs, almost every country there is a net importer.

Mexico, the cradle of corn, became a net importer of corn, and of food, after NAFTA gutted state aid to smallholder farming and opened markets to subsi-

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EDITORIAL

A Report and an Appeal

The Special Convention of News and Letters Committees, held in Chicago on May 25, was a reaching out for a New Beginning by the revolutionary Marxist-Humanist organization founded by Raya Dunayevskaya in 1956. From its birth, our concept of organization was "responsibility for the Idea of Marxism for our age, with its aim being Marx's goal of no division between mental and manual labor, specifically theory and practice as a unit." Never was this more needed than for today's world in crisis.

This June-July issue of *N&L* is an especially appropriate time to look at the two historic points of our development, and, in particular, two documents that provided the ground for our decisions there. One was the Thesis presented by Dunayevskaya to the founding convention on **July 6, 1956, as Theoretical and Practical Perspectives—Where to Begin?** We saw the principles established by the founder as what can guide us to a higher point in our quest to develop a philosophically grounded alternative to the horrors of capitalism.

The other document and date in which we grounded our perspectives was the **June 1, 1987**, presentation by Dunayevskaya in which she challenged revolutionaries to find and walk "the untrodden path" of the "**Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy**" that Marx alone had practiced. What became clear was that posing the need for us to return to the 1956 and the June 1, 1987, presentations was not a move "back" but a move forward to a "new beginning" based on principles established at our founding. We reaffirmed that principles do not change no matter how different is the objective situation. Both of these documents are available to all. (See ads, pp. 7,8)

It is necessary to recognize the unprecedented nature of this Special Convention, which was called by the members, not the leaders. The Call was motivated by the need to end the impossible situation created when a minority group in the organization attempted to sabotage the publication of *N&L*, openly calling for a boycott. While the aim of the Special Convention had been to resolve these critical questions, this group, rather than trying to work them out, resigned the day before the Convention convened.

Those who came together on May 25 represented a wide range of dimensions—from two of our founding members to the Youth columnist for the last three

issues; younger women's liberationists as well as the mother who became a South Central LA activist after her son's arrest during the LA rebellion; gay activists as well as a Black worker with long experience in community organizing; professors and students. One of our many prisoner subscribers sent us his greetings, which are in our Readers' Views section.

The objective need for an organization like ours—as a vital part of the search for a viable alternative in the life-and-death struggle for a totally new society built on human foundations—is evident in the daily headlines of the world press. Revealed in our recent Leads is the meaning of these crises—from the fears of global recession, to the "flames of revolt in China," to the seemingly never-ending disastrous wars in the Middle East. The principles on which we are grounding our new beginning were expressed in the epigraph to the Report given to the Convention on "What is a Marxist-Humanist newspaper in 2008?" It is from Dunayevskaya's 1956 "Where to Begin?"

"To reach all these strata, beginning with the first and most important, the working people, and extending to all who wish to break with this present society, we have to have the conviction not merely of ideas, but of practice. Not to hide behind the generalities of a new social order, but to go into the practicalities of a paper, a committee, a book, a visit to a shopmate, a conversation with a next-door neighbor, a distribution before a factory gate, a drive—I mean the inner drive from your own convictions—to want to do the impossible, which is only seemingly impossible, to sustain these new beginnings."

The threat to our continued existence brought out the many skills and talents of our members, who suddenly needed to take on new tasks to continue publishing *News & Letters* as a unique combination of workers and intellectuals and of theory and practice. There are two difficult tasks we have to share with the world as soon as possible: a collection of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Writings on the Middle East*; and the collection of her writings on Marx.

As we have done ever since our birth, we are turning to our readers and supporters to help us continue. We welcome your contributions to *News & Letters*, to discussions, and to revolutionary finances, all of which are necessary to help us keep going forward.

Theory/Class Debates at NWSA

by Terry Moon

This year's National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) Conference was a step up from last year's (see "Need to dig into revolutionary theory," Aug.-Sept. 2007 *N&L*) where depoliticalization was stark and the emphasis was on "performance." Last year there was no political plenary; this year Black feminist theorist Patricia Hill Collins gave the keynote speech. Several of the "Presidential Sessions" also revealed a political content, including "Feminist Theories of Globalization and Empire," and "Conversation with Paula Giddings about *Ida: A Sword Among Lions*, facilitated by Beverly Guy-Sheftall."

ABSTRACT THEORY REIGNS

What surprised me was the abstract nature of Patricia Hill Collins' talk. Collins, known for her *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, tried to link racism, sexism, and empire. She did so by establishing new categories of "erasing race" and "racelessness." They are a part of what she sees as the "new racism," where so-called "colorblindness" is actually used to maintain racial hierarchy and "racelessness" is used to savage affirmative action. "Colorblindness" sounds like a good thing—not to let race determine one's judgment—but is actually a way to avoid seeing social inequalities.

She tried to link these ideas to feminist analysis and world politics by introducing feminist theory notions of

WOMAN AS REASON

the opposition between the private and public sphere. Women traditionally occupy the private sphere, the home, family. Here racism can flourish unchallenged because it is a private domain and nobody's business. The public sphere, traditionally occupied by men, is where business and government reign. The link she

made, which took the form of an assertion, was that the public sphere appears, but is not, "colorblind" and decisions are supposedly made for "objective" reasons; unlike the private sphere, where unchallenged racism can run rampant. The public sphere is advanced capitalism and its supposedly raceless markets, and the domestic or private sphere is nation states whose "family" is its citizenship. All this and more was bookended by looking at the Miss America and Miss World beauty pageants!

And although she did talk about "capitalism" and "global capitalism," and is clearly opposed to both, Collins did not project any concept of an alternative, no socialism, no revolution.

The abstract nature of her talk was starkly revealed by a question from a Palestinian professor/activist. She questioned Collins' theoretical edifice of public and private by telling of how so-called private space, the home, becomes a public political space of struggle—a "site of resistance"—as the Israeli army routinely demolishes the homes of Palestinians. She also spoke of how governments work to spread fear. But Collins just didn't get it. Not only didn't she address the question of private spheres becoming contested public space, as is revealed in the unconscionable and illegal demolition of Palestinian homes by the Israeli army, she talked about fear only as it impacted intellectuals in the U.S. But what the Palestinian woman was speaking of was the deliberate brutalization of ordinary citizens in order to make it impossible for them to live their lives in either public or so-called private spaces.

CLASS CHALLENGE

What always makes NWSA worthwhile is the constant tension within the organization between those who want it to be an academic professional organization, and those who work to make it more activist oriented, to be what it claims to be in its constitution: The academic arm of the women's liberation movement. This was seen at our workshop on "The Relationship of Marxist-Humanism to Struggles Against Sexism, Racism, Homophobia, and Globalized Capitalism," where 30 came to be part of the discussion. The only workshop to have the word Marx as part of the title, women came because they wanted to learn about Marxist-Humanism, and as one Black woman told me later, we were one of the few workshops explicitly on class.

Class took center stage at the "Tribute to Black Feminist Thought" Friday night. There Emi Koyama, a genderqueer community activist, told us all that though she is broke and her organization is not a 501(c)(3), and even though she was invited by NWSA to be on the panel, they refused her any funding whatsoever. She had to fundraise in order to get there and give NWSA a working class and genderqueer face. Her audience was outraged, and some stepped up to help her right then and there.

There is a large rank-and-file NWSA membership that wants NWSA to really be the intellectual link between activism and academia. These women are looking for radical answers and a way to revitalize the women's movement and avoid the mistakes of the past. The question is: Is NWSA up to meeting the challenge?

Annie Sibanda speaks direct from Zimbabwe

Editor's note: Annie Sibanda of Women of Zimbabwe Arise described the current mood on the street as Robert Mugabe had himself sworn-in for a sixth presidential term on June 27 following a run-off election campaign marked by violence and intimidation, such that Morgan Tsvangirai, the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) candidate, was forced to withdraw. At least 70 MDC supporters have been killed. One hospital alone reported 2000 victims of violence and torture since the May elections. Mugabe has no credibility left and is feeling pressure from the African Union and the UN to negotiate with the MDC. This is a moment when profound solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe is called for. The responsibility shouldn't just be "kicked upstairs" to these international bodies and the interests that they may represent. Sibanda told News & Letters:

The mood of the people swings like a pendulum from hope to despair. However, now that the "election" has been held, there is little room for hope. The predominant mood is fear and uncertainty, extreme anxiety for everyone.

Anything can happen at any time. There can be violent retribution from government militias. There can be any kind of new policy or action by the government which disrupts lives, such as changing money, fixing prices, preventing people from traveling. No one can be sure they will be able to afford to buy food if it can be

WOMENWORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey

Eight-year-old Nojoud Muhammed Nasser filed a lawsuit in Yemen in April against her father who forced her to marry a 30-year-old man. She came to court by herself because no one in her family would support her, nor defend her against her abusive father and husband. The lawsuit is being used to push for legislation against such violence against children. More than 50% of Yemen's girls are forced into child marriages.

Students at Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., protested the granting of an honorary doctorate at the commencement ceremony to a most notorious alumna—right-wing, anti-woman speaker and author, Phyllis Schlafly. More than 1,000 people joined the Facebook protest group, set up by students not yet born during Schlafly's reign of terror. Mary Ann Dzuback, director of Women and Gender Studies at the university, maintained, "The university has completely disregarded the concerns about anybody who cares about full and equal rights for women."

Poor women in the Philippines have sued the mayor of Manila over the city's eight-year ban on contraception. They asked the appeals court to repeal the local law banning access to condoms and birth control pills, saying it has severely and irreparably damaged the lives and health of the majority of women in Manila. "This ban is yet another abhorrent example of a larger global trend led by religiously motivated policy makers who adopt policies based on ideology instead of the health and well-being of the very people they are selected to serve," said Melissa Upreti, senior legal advisor for Asia at the Center for Reproductive Rights.

A 22-year-old student, Amir Yaghoub-Ali, was sentenced in June to one year in prison by Iran's Revolutionary Court for petitioning for the One Million Signatures Campaign for women's rights. Ali was found guilty of "actions against national security through the spreading of propaganda against the state." The ruling is being appealed.

Before Roe v. Wade

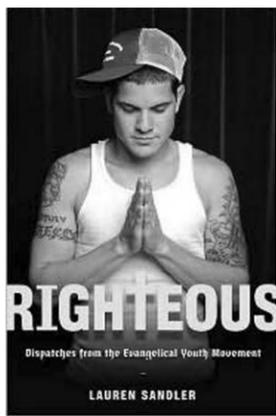
Dr. Waldo Fielding wrote an article in *The New York Times*, "Repairing the Damage, Before Roe" (June 7) where he made the point that "there are few physicians today who can relate to...the pre-Roe 'bad old days'...from personal experience. I can." So can I. I have been on this earth long enough to know what it's like to have an unwanted pregnancy and have termination of a pregnancy be illegal.

I wasn't about to have a baby at 16 or maybe it was 17. I didn't have any money and was ashamed to tell my parents so I caused myself to have a miscarriage (a coat hanger was no joke). Not only did I bleed heavily, my uterus became infected and I ran a temperature of 106 for three days. Needless to say, I did go to my parents who got me antibiotics. I had to take four different kinds of antibiotics and go to two different doctors two weeks apart for a minor surgery to clean out my uterus.

Well, I'm sure this is more than you wanted to know, but you all need to know what can happen to women if we lose this right. Are we in danger of losing the right to safe, clean, legal abortions? I think so with the Supreme Court becoming more and more conservative. All these damn men believing they have a right to tell women what they can and cannot do. So let's get on the stick and fight for all our rights.

—Judith Tristan

'Righteous: Dispatches'



Righteous: Dispatches from the Evangelical Youth Movement by Lauren Sandler is an important warning that the religious right has already captured the hearts and minds of much of the next generation and is using them as foot soldiers in their attempt to create a theocracy. Sandler traveled the country interviewing teens and young adults of various races, classes, and lifestyles who joined the movement in different ways, including

hippies at a "Rock for Life" festival and professional skateboarders who evangelize their audiences after their shows.

"Prosperity gospel" preachers use hip-hop to tell Black audiences to donate money, pray for wealth, and vote Republican. In Seattle, Mars Hill Church is the hub of a cult-like community of nuclear families in which young parents have a hip, punk-rock appearance but where submissive wives breed as many "soldiers for Christ" as possible. The more formal but equally cult-like Patrick Henry College prepares students for government jobs by teaching them that American government is based on the Bible. Sandler even interviews public high school students who have been indoctrinated into political fundamentalism as a result of anti-evolution teaching in science classes.

The damage caused by this movement hits women and their children especially hard because of its message of submission to male authority and of constant childbearing. A young woman giving a workshop at "Rock for Life" says, "It all comes back to the idea that I'm a living sacrifice. If my sacrifice is that my uterus falls out, I'm willing to give that to the Lord." When women surrender control of their lives and bodies, it is only a small step towards every individual surrendering control of his or her mind.

Sandler says this movement's "rapid expansion is the secular world's own damn fault," citing longstanding anti-intellectualism and the lack of community in our society. The movement offers unconditional "agape" love and community to those who follow unquestioningly. Sandler tells the stories of youth in emotional crisis, such as the woman swayed by emotional rock music of an "Acquire the Fire" rally to give her life to Jesus. She was immediately funneled into the "Teen Mania" live-in indoctrination program. Young people's quest for meaning is often satisfied by being told that they are the "Last Generation" before the world-ending Second Coming of Jesus, which can only be ushered in by the creation of a worldwide Christian theocracy. This belief is even promoted in military youth prayer groups.

Sandler has optimism. She says we must copy the tactics of the religious right as they have copied the left. The left needs to recognize this horrific problem, then assert that leftist, feminist values are life-affirming. We need, she says, to create caring communities and more services for people in crisis as well as influence the culture with our values through magazines, newspapers, television shows, and universities.

--Adele



WOZA and allies protest the arrests of women suspected of working with Women of Zimbabwe Arise

found. This mixture of fear and anxiety is extremely debilitating, especially for women. It forces people to concentrate on day to day survival.

There is and will increasingly be a flood of people out of the country, primarily to South Africa, but also to Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia. No one expects that this situation is going to be resolved any time soon

and meanwhile we have to survive. People feel helpless and desperate.

Civil organizations feel under threat. Three weeks ago the minister announced that all Non-Governmental Organizations must stop field operations. This produced an outcry and legal opinions that roundly rejected the legal capacity of the minister to take such a step. Later he retracted and said it only applied to those holding large meetings.

Nevertheless, it appears that

in most places all food distribution has stopped, even for orphans and vulnerable children. The larger food distribution organizations—World Vision, Care International, Plan International—have closed their offices "temporarily."

We do not know what the position will be in the coming weeks, whether things will be allowed to return to "normal" or whether there will be increased retribution and repression.

Sellout ends American Axle strike

DETROIT—"I didn't walk the picket line for three months for this!" shouted a rank-and-file worker at the information meeting on May 18 to consider the concessionary contract negotiated between the UAW and American Axle. The applause and howls of support from the overwhelming majority of the workers present clearly demonstrated their opposition to the new contract that cut their wages, pensions, health care benefits, vacation time, holidays, relief time, union representation and right to strike—and froze their wages for five years, the length of the contract.

Yells of "Sellout!" and "Renegotiate!" met the disclosure of the contract's details. Wages were cut almost in half, from about \$27, and now start at \$14.35 at two plants and \$10 at another. The company will also close two of its five plants in the U.S., the Forge plant in Detroit and one in New York.

Pensions will be frozen in January 2009, replaced by a 401(k) plan. Health costs will be \$10 a week for single workers, \$25 for family members. Overtime pay is eliminated for work over eight hours a day short of 40 hours a week, and relief time is cut from 23 to 15 minutes.

Strikes will be prohibited for speed-up, health and safety issues; subcontracting or bargaining in bad faith. There are changes in the grievance procedure to favor management, and more workers are assigned to each committeeperson.

UAW officials were booed when they tried to placate the workers, insisting that this was the best contract possible under the circumstances. Knowing that the workers no longer trusted them, the UAW brought in a Lehman Brothers financial expert to back them up with financial data. Axle made a profit last year of \$37 million and would make a projected annual profit of \$185 million from the workers' concessions.

He also raised the specter of the company moving operations to Mexico, where it has a plant that doubled its production during the strike. That helped relieve some of the pressures from GM, Axle's main customer, to settle the strike.

When the strike first started, the union and many workers thought it would be a short one, since GM

would pressure Axle to settle in order to have the axles to produce its trucks and SUVs. But the strike dragged on for three months until a tentative agreement was reached. While angry and frustrated, the Axle workers nevertheless reluctantly approved the contract on May 18 by a surprising 78% margin.

Many of them will now be taking buyout plans the company has in place to cut some 2,000 workers from its payroll. The workers who remain, however, will feel the full brunt of their decline in living standards. National inflation nearing 4% will raise their cost of living for every one of the next five years, but their wages will not change. Twelve cents per hour from workers' wages will be diverted into the COLA fund, so they will be paying more here too for inflation costs.

In stark contrast to this dire outlook for the Axle workers, the top executives of Axle will be able to enjoy obscene incomes. CEO Dick Dauch of Axle received a bonus of \$8.5 million to bring his total compensation for the year to \$15.7 million. Three of Dauch's top executives also received an average bonus of a half million dollars each.

The expression used by management during the strike was "We're all in the same boat." The executives may be in the boat (or yacht), but the workers are drowning in the water.

—Andy Phillips

Guards fight for union

OAKLAND, CAL.—More than 1,500 California security workers are in year three of their struggle to form a union with SEIU. Many of these security workers work at Kaiser facilities throughout California. Kaiser and Inter-Con, the contractor, continue to use harassment and intimidation against employees in violation of federal law.

The security officers are a crucial component of our healthcare system. They are there to provide safety and security when there are code-red fire-emergencies and code-blues, fights between patients, assaults on staff. They screen for weapons and respond to potential HazMat threats. Often, our patients are suffering from one kind of mental illness or another, and the officers provide security and reassurance.

Inter-Con officers contracted at Kaiser get capricious work schedules, don't have access to fair wages, free family healthcare, paid sick days, or the protection of a union all other workers at Kaiser take for granted.

Our unions should not take some of our lowest paid brothers and sisters in the shop for granted. It is highly disrespectful for our union to come out with a namby-pamby statement like, "The union can't take a position on the Security officers' picket line." Because of the "Labor-Management partnership," they have to remain "neutral"! SEIU leaders promoted "employer neutrality agreements" when they gave away crucial rights (like the right to strike or criticize management), just to gain the right to organize. But now that security officers want to organize, they are claiming the same "neutrality" blocks them from organizing?

—Kaiser worker

Strike was victory, contract was defeat

DETROIT—In a workshop at the Labor Notes Conference in April titled "Black Workers Organizing," Tim Schermerhorn, Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100, NYC, emphasized that the essential nature of a labor organization is determined by whether it has a rank and file orientation. Below is what he told N&L. —S.V.G.

In the early 1980s we had to connect the rank-and-file upsurge with the Black rebellion. The leadership of the TWU was always weaker than the movement that created it. Now there is an accelerating retreat/surrender mentality prevalent in the established leadership.

The Dec. 20-22, 2005, strike was NOT organized by the union leadership. The strike began at 3 am. On that picket line were a few TWU workers, supported by a number of homeless people. The union leadership didn't even inform the rest of the workers about it.

Today, many transit workers will still tell you that the strike was the greatest experience of their lives, despite the betrayal in the settlement. The rank and file had organized itself. Without that organization, we would not have won. I say "won," because the strike was the victory; the settlement was the defeat.

There had been networks of people doing job actions all along, and the strike was built on that. The working class of NYC joined us, the homeless people who helped start the picket line, prostitutes volunteered. Localized expressions of solidarity included several workplaces taking up collections. At one particular school the teachers collected funds and donated them to someone whom they identified as a strike leader.

Today, transit workers no longer have a dues check-off and fully half the local is in bad standing. It is an organizational mess, but we are in a better political place in terms of our consciousness. People will strike again if there is different leadership.

To answer those who see only complacency or apathy among the union membership: you have to see "I won't strike" as "I don't think we can win." People have to see their union doing something and the union must build people's self-confidence. Complacency is a cover-up for a lack of confidence. The union must really listen to what people are saying.

Sugar workers in Iran risk all to form union

The 5000 workers at Iran's only sugar refinery, in Shush, have formed an independent union. This follows a 42-day strike that began March 5. A workers' petition protesting non-payment of wages was met with mass arrests by authorities and attacks by police and Revolutionary Guards.

The workers at Haft Tappeh Sugar Cane Plantation and Industry Complex have staged numerous strikes over wages and safety conditions in the last few years. The Iranian authorities have met these labor actions with arrests and sometimes with public whippings of militant workers. In defiance of threats, the new union was founded June 16 at a mass public meeting of plant workers and their families.

At the same time, labor repression continues. Gholamreza Gholamhosseini, an executive board member of Tehran's independent bus drivers' union, Vahed Syndicate, was arrested while attempting to enter a Women's Day event co-sponsored by the bus company. He was ordered held in Evin Prison for an indefinite period despite not being charged with any crime. Vahed Syndicate activists Mansour Osanloo and Mahmoud Salehi are currently held there as well.

The Vahed Syndicate sent a message of support to the new sugar workers' union. Before his arrest, Mansour Osanloo described what is happening among the Iranian people this way: "There are a variety of different movements in Iran right now. We have a student movement, a women's movement, a workers' movement, they are training and educating themselves. They try to work together, directly or indirectly, for solidarity."

—Gerry Emmett

May Day anti-war strike



The International Longshore and Warehouse Union-ILWU Local 10 sponsored a May Day march and rally in San Francisco to protest the ongoing occupation of Iraq. The longshore workers' one-day strike all along the West Coast was over 90% successful. They were joined by longshore workers in Iraq, who struck for two hours in solidarity. Messages from other unions internationally, from Iraq, England and elsewhere were read. Many unions, individual workers, and May Day celebrants who joined the ILWU, brought this workers' holiday alive for today.

Domestic workers rally for protection

NEW YORK—On June 7 at least 200 domestic workers from the Domestic Workers' Alliance (DWA) rallied at City Hall in downtown Manhattan. Concluding a three-day National Domestic Workers' Congress in New York City, the participants (about 90% of whom were women) identified themselves as from various countries in the Caribbean, South and Southeast Asia, and Central and South America. The DWA, founded at last year's Social Forum in Atlanta, includes the very active New York City chapter, Domestic Workers United (DWU), which represents nannies, housekeepers and elderly caregivers, who often work in the private residences of wealthy families.

As one of the few participants who was not a member of DWA, I thought I would get the "real" stories by talking to the "rank and file" in the crowd. But it turned out there really were no distinctions between those who took turns at the microphone and those who stood and cheered on every woman who spoke about her oppressive conditions in her home country, at work in the U.S., and ongoing activities with DWA.

Patricia, who was making a living as a babysitter, said, "I got involved [with DWU] when someone passed out a flier in Central Park. I was fed up with things like having no sick pay, but hearing my friend's story about working as a live-in on Long Island was the last straw. Her employer would punish her by putting her out of the house at 9 pm with nowhere for her to go. But desperate for money, she actually returned to that same employer!"

In the several days prior to the rally, the workers, who traveled to the Congress from Los Angeles, Houston, Boston, Chicago, Washington, and San Francisco, attended an organizing conference at Barnard College. An activist, who traveled up to Albany to lobby the legislature for a domestic workers' bill of rights, said that they are getting close to getting a bill passed.

—Participant

WORKSHOPTALKS

Continued from page 1

the good of the entire healthcare workforce."

Stern, leader of the "Change to Win" coalition that broke away from the AFL-CIO, is now embroiled in a full-throttle factional fight with one of his own largest locals, "United Healthcare Workers West," led by Sal Rosselli. Rosselli, who pushed a sellout Labor-Management Partnership on us when Stern dictated it, now is rightly challenging Stern's top down undemocratic methods.

But Stern is undemocratic because he believes there is no alternative to capitalism's despotic rule in the workplace. For him, union growth only follows capital's growth, much like a flock of seagulls following a fishing trawler, with the captain of the boat constantly throwing overboard scraps for the gulls to feed on. That in a nutshell is Stern's worldview.

That's why at every significant turning point for labor, he has been found on the wrong side. He not only instituted our Labor-Management Partnership at Kaiser, breaking the solidarity between unions in the fight for quality care, he has signed scores of "template" sweetheart deals with HMOs and nursing home chains. His tactics harm not just workers but patients as well.

CROSSING PICKET LINES

He has no qualms about crossing picket lines, going over the heads of workers to craft fraudulent health plans with the CEO of Wal-Mart or California Gov. Schwarzenegger, behind closed doors. In Puerto Rico, police attacked members of the teachers' union after they called for a strike in response to SEIU's sell-out deal with the Governor.

Stern is even willing to cross his own picket line in the midst of organizing drives. For example, at the University of North Carolina, where food service workers were organizing, he abandoned his own organizers, going behind their backs to craft a sweetheart deal, leaving both organizers and workers high and dry. **Make no mistake.** Stern and his kind are **enemies of workers.**

'WHY JOIN UNION IF YOU CAN'T STRIKE?'

Kaplan should have paid more attention to the view she cited from a radiology tech being "organized" by Stern at an Ohio HMO: "Frankly I don't think there's much concern for the members' lives in this rush to enlarge SEIU. Why join a union that's going to agree to subcontract your job? Why join a union if you can't strike for ten years? Where's the benefit then?"

Those of us who have been working under Stern's company unionism for the last decade share that sentiment. As one SEIU rank-and-filer said, "In a real union, the bosses don't have to tell you when it's time to organize."

Stern prides himself on his master plan to organize the "90% of workers without a union." His organizing principle sacrifices us to the needs of capital, even as it reduces us to just hands while he does the thinking for us. Our organizing principle is to overcome the separation between thinking and doing in our working lives. This principle transcends all factions and particular unions and speaks to **all workers.**

FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYADUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note: The 40th anniversary of 1968 has occasioned much discussion of that year of near-revolution. Many retrospectives have focused on the uprising in France, where the student revolt was joined by mass strikes and factory occupations by workers. Raya Dunayevskaya's analysis, reprinted below, was written in the midst of the events and was originally published in the June-July 1968 N&L under the title, "Who Arrested the French Revolution?" (Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, microfilm #6808-9) Her book *Philosophy and Revolution* includes a discussion of the France events as 1968's highest point of development, and at the same time an analysis of its "stillbirth."

De Gaulle's embrace of the OAS¹ fascist generals as co-leaders in the counter-revolution against the daring of the French masses—workers, students, and the average man in the street who attempted to reconstruct French society—should have surprised no one. It most assuredly didn't surprise U.S. imperialism that so clearly understood its class nature that it rushed to the defense of the falling franc. Compared to the threat to the whole "Western system" that a successful French Revolution would have represented, de Gaulle's arrogance and persistent backbiting at the U.S. was a minor enough irritant.

In face of the naked fascist slogan—"Cohn-Bendit² to Dachau!"—all the ideologues of the ruling classes, including the Communists, came out against "leftist trouble makers," and stood ready to defend "law and order"—the Gaullist democratic (sic!) order!

Why, then, didn't the class nature of Communism become as clearly visible to the Left, especially the Trotskyists? Why, although, from the start, the Communist attacks on the Trotskyists (who were among the most militant fighters in reaching for workers' power) were unbridled, did the Trotskyists continue to behave as if it were a mere question of "tactics"? Why, above all, do Trotskyists continue to distinguish between "the bourgeois order" and the "Communist"? These are not pedantic questions. The Trotskyists will be among the first to suffer from the reaction. Already, they are listed among the organizations to be banned. Yet they are sure to continue to behave as they have for the past three decades and end up as the left face of Communism.

Knowing this, the Communists feared nothing from the exposure of the fact that Premier Pompidou had regular contact with the Communist Party (CP) leaders throughout the revolutionary situation. Openly enough, through their control of the CGT,³ they did their best to contain the revolt, keep it from uniting with the students who had inspired it, and easily switched to both the electoral field and narrow trade unionism, not to mention their role as provocateurs for de Gaulle, a role three decades back, they played for Franco as the Anarchists and the Trotskyists were still fighting the fascists and the Spanish Revolution was being destroyed.⁴

STATE-CAPITALISM AND THE TROTSKYISTS

History is about to repeat itself. Communists feel confident that there is nothing to fear from the Trotskyists. **What they do stand in mortal fear of is power in the streets, spontaneous independent proletarian power which is independent of state-capitalism calling itself Communism. It is this, just this, Communism is out to destroy. It is this, just this, that de Gaulle appreciates in Communism. For it is this, just this, which permits him his two faces: OAS and CP.**

To all this Trotskyism remains deaf, dumb and blind, not because it does not know Communism's "history," but because it cannot comprehend its **class nature**. Because it is this which arrested the French Revolution, it is to this that we must turn.

The first Trotskyist denial that Russia had become a state-capitalist society was based on the fact that, though "Cain-Stalin betrayed the Russian Revolution," its result—nationalized property—remained and, therefore, the workers' state, "though degenerate" enough to be tied to a Hitler-Stalin Pact, had to be "defended."

The second denial that Communism was no more than a euphemism for state-capitalism concerned East Europe where statified property had been instituted, not via a social revolution from below, but via a bureaucratic Party from above, propped into state power with the aid of a "Red Army." Again, though "born degenerate" and even though the Hungarian Revolution opened up an entirely new page in world revolution, and in pools of blood, proved it wanted freedom **from Communism** (its Party as well as its secret police), wanted freedom to establish genuine workers' power through Workers' Councils, still the Trotskyists kept intoning that it was "impossible" to have a revolution unless there was a "vanguard Party to lead it."

Then the Third World was born without the aid of any of the shibboleths of Communism—statified property, or "the Party," Red Army, or the "International." So the Trotskyists came up with still another excuse for tailending the Communists—these countries were technologically backward and U.S. imperialism, as

The near-revolution of France, 1968: Why did it fail?

"enemy no. 1," would only perpetuate neo-colonialism and "therefore" one must be with the "Communist camp."

Now, what can possibly be the excuse for not unfolding a totally new philosophy of liberation free from all the shibboleths of what they call "betraying Stalinism"? France is neither isolated nor a backward country. It is far from having "workers' power" thrust upon it, pure, degenerate, or in-between; from below or above which somehow has to be defended from "imperialism no. 1" as an outside force or some inner "usurpers" (unless that be precisely Gaullism which must be overthrown and which Communism, instead, is propping up).

France is a technologically advanced land which is in the very heart of Europe. It is a world power, with a **force frappe** [nuclear strike force] to boot. And the native Communists have betrayed it not once but twice. (Three times if you count the mid-1930s not only as it appeared in Spain, but also in France.)

When the Communists preferred sharing power with de Gaulle although they controlled the majority



Serge Hambourg

Protestors in France, May 1968, with banner, "Sorbonne Teachers Against Repression."

of the Resistance, and, again, even when the Marshall Plan came "to save" Europe for imperialist enemy no. 1, still the Trotskyists could not totally free themselves from the coattails of the Communists. After all, the Trotskyists maintained, the Communists opposed the U.S. purchase of Western Europe, they were the "mass party" and "the relationship of forces demanded," etc., etc., etc.

As in the mid-1940s, the Communists refused to fight for power if it meant facing an independent proletariat that came in to power without the aid of the Communist Party or the Red Army, so in 1968 they "led" the proletariat only in order to betray it. **How many betrayals are needed to kill the self-delusion of the Trotskyists about the class nature of present-day Communism even where it is not the state-power?**

The answer is that the number of times is numberless for the good and substantial reason that the Trotskyists themselves believe in statified property, the State Plan, the elite party which binds them to the concept of the backwardness of the proletariat that is incapable of reaching socialism without being "led by the vanguard party." It is for this reason that the struggle against Stalinism, despite all the sacrifices, has amounted to nought, that is to say, has looked like just a family quarrel precisely because that is all it is.

It is for this reason that shouting "betrayal," "class collaboration," "new form of reformism," means nothing since they continue to tailend the Communists on the ground that "only in action" can they win over the masses in general and the rank-and-file Communists in particular. The elaborate subterfuge for the Trotskyist bizarre behavior has stood out nowhere more clearly than in the self-paralysis they brought upon themselves in France in 1968.

Although they have been in the forefront of the militants calling for workers' power and the revolution has only been arrested, not yet totally destroyed; although the fascist face of de Gaulle is aided by the Communists who are willing to settle for a few ministerial posts in an impotent Assembly, yet the Trotskyists do not draw a class division between themselves and the Communists. The reason for this can have but one explanation: **they have no new, that is to say, genuinely Marxist philosophy of revolution, but only a variant of the Communist elitist one, for which, once again, they are ready to die.**

No doubt it is brave to die for the revolution. The point, however, is to live for it. That is to say, to assure the revolution's success by a new unity of theory and practice which relies, not on some "vanguard party," but on the masses, the masses alone who would help forge out this totally new philosophy because they had a vision of a fully free society.

TO LIVE FOR THE REVOLUTION

To live for the revolution is not done only "in action," nor only by "bravery." It is impossible to prove "in action" what you have proved incapable of proving in theory—that you do indeed have a philosophy of liberation totally freed from Communist elitist concepts, and totally dependent on only one force beside a philosophy of liberation and that is the spontaneity of the

masses who will themselves "to a man" reconstruct society on totally new Humanist beginnings.

The general strike in France was not, after all, just an economic strike. And this was so, not because there were no economic demands, but because they clearly were not the dominant demands.

This was not just a political strike, again not because there were no political demands, but because these, too, did not predominate.

This general strike sharpened all class relations, and not only in the factory, but also the nature of education and "culture." **In achieving this, the general strike went beyond economics, beyond politics, questioned the very way of life and its underlying philosophy.**

No one, not even the bourgeoisie, failed to recognize that, both among the workers and the students, this was neither a dollar and cents nor a parliamentary struggle. **The general strike of 10 million French workers brought the whole economy to a standstill, was not isolated from the student youth that inspired it, and, together, they nearly toppled de Gaulle.**

Yet the revolutionary situation did not develop into a full revolution. And while the counter-revolution is mobilizing both visibly and clandestinely, the revolutionary forces are in disarray, **not** because they were defeated, but because they lacked the unifying cement of a philosophy of revolution. It is no accident that it was in East Europe, precisely because their struggle was **directly against** Communism in power, that this was expressed most clearly by Danilo Pejovic in *Socialist Humanism*, p. 199:

"Philosophy and Revolution is only another way of expressing Marx's well-known catch phrase about the 'realization of philosophy,' beginning as a revolution in philosophy in order to end as a revolutionary philosophy in the form of the philosophy of the revolution." **This is the missing ingredient in France today.**

For the 10 million workers and tens of thousands of students who have begun this new page in world freedom—the first such in the post-war world in a technologically advanced land—the world and France are still full of revolutionary possibilities. **For the heroic Frenchmen who have already destroyed so many myths—from the invincibility of de Gaulle to the myth that global glory-seeking is a substitute for social revolution within a country; from the myth that Communism represents "the Left" to the myth that revolutions can be made without the proletariat—for the world that has watched this drama of revolutionary change in the heart of Europe and saw France standing on the threshold of revolution, a new rebirth of revolutionary passion and revolutionary philosophy is sure finally to coalesce.**

The one still remaining advantage the French masses possess is that their revolution has not been defeated. It has been arrested; it is threatened; the whip of counter-revolution is visible. But there is time yet for regroupment and rearming with a philosophy for our age, the concretization of the Humanism of Marxism.

NOTES:

¹ The OAS was a French far-right paramilitary organization that tried to defeat the Algerian revolution with bombings and assassinations, including trying to assassinate French President Charles de Gaulle in 1962.

² Daniel Cohn-Bendit was a radical student leader associated with the May 1968 revolt. Dunayevskaya criticized his view that theory could be gotten "en route." See *Philosophy and Revolution*, pp. 266, 274.

³ The CGT was a Communist-controlled trade union federation in France.

⁴ Dunayevskaya held that the Spanish CP helped crush Spain's 1936-37 proletarian revolution by stifling the spontaneity of the masses. See *Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 124.

Why do revolutions fail?

Read: *Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre, and from Marx to Mao* by Raya Dunayevskaya.



"In May 1968, all eyes turned to France, for it was there that the highest point of development for all 'new passions and new forces' erupted... Daniel Cohn-Bendit was absolutely right when he said that the movement was beyond the small parties which wanted to lead. But he was wrong to hold to so abstract a view of a philosophy of liberation as to think that theory can be picked up 'en route.' Without theory the road to revolution leads 'en route' to nowhere; the revolution-to-be was a stillbirth."

To order, see ad page 7

ESSAY Freedom, necessity, and post-capitalist society

by Russell Rockwell

For theoretical direction on Marx's concept of post-capitalist society, it would be difficult to overstate the importance Raya Dunayevskaya attributed to her May 20, 1953, philosophical letter to the philosopher Grace Lee Boggs on Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*¹, and to Marx's post-*Capital* 1875 text, *Critique of the Gotha Program* (CGP)². While space does not permit us to take up CGP's text, this essay will outline the concepts of necessity and freedom, which we argue are central both for how Dunayevskaya conceptualized the transition from capitalism to post-capitalist society and for the dialectic that links Hegel and Marx's ideas.

Some years after the fact, Dunayevskaya realized that she had begun her 1953 reading of Hegel's crucial Introduction to *Philosophy of Mind* just where Marx, in his famous 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, "broke off"³ at the transition from nature to mind. To the young Marx, "Absolute Mind" appeared thoroughly (if not hopelessly) idealistic as he analyzed *Philosophy of Mind*'s Introduction in 1844, that is, before the two decades that culminated in his greatest work, *Capital*.

After those two decades of development of philosophy and economics, Marx returned to *Philosophy of Mind*'s categories, because he still had to confront the question of the various forms of the dialectic of nature and society, necessity and freedom, in the abolition of capitalism. (In Hegel's philosophic categories, Mind Objective refers to *society* and the state.) Most notably in *Capital*, Volume III⁴ (passages from which we will quote and discuss below), Marx affirmed and deepened his idea of freedom inseparable from the concept of social necessity—and labor as the metabolic relation of man to nature—he had first broached in *Capital*, Volume I. In the latter, he had written that, "Labor...as the creator of use-values, as useful labor, is a condition of human existence which is independent of all forms of society; it is an eternal natural necessity which mediates the metabolism between man and nature, and therefore human life itself."⁵

To develop these points, I argue in this essay that Dunayevskaya's work suggests that it was precisely in writing *Capital* that Marx picked up the threads he had laid aside two decades earlier in his 1844 reading of *Philosophy of Mind*. In the *Capital*, Volume III, passages, to which Dunayevskaya's 1953 letter points her readers⁶, Marx returned specifically to where in 1844 he had "stopped" his analysis of *Philosophy of Mind*. From this perspective it makes no difference whether or not this return of Marx to Hegel was actually "textual." As I will demonstrate in the section below on Marx's "social translation" of Hegel's dialectic, *Capital* Volume III's still astonishing passages on freedom and necessity pick up *conceptually* exactly where Marx's 1844 "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy" had "stopped" in his examination of Hegel's Introduction to *Philosophy of Mind*.

This essay argues that it is virtually impossible to discern the meaning, especially the societal relevance, of *Philosophy of Mind*'s final paragraphs, without the more detailed account of the identical concepts Hegel provided in his Introduction to the work. Dunayevskaya discussed precisely these concepts in her May 20, 1953, letter, later identifying this discussion as central to the "philosophic moment" of her development of Marxist-Humanism.

WHERE MARX "STOPPED" IN A READING OF PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

The young Marx concluded his 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* with the essay titled, "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy." Marx alluded to paragraph 381 and then paragraph 384 of Hegel's Introduction to *Philosophy of Mind*. Hegel's Introduction to *Philosophy of Mind* consists of 10 paragraphs, numbered 377-386, divided into three parts: he places no heading over the first part, the four paragraphs numbered 377-380, which survey various historical approaches to the "knowledge of mind...the highest and hardest, just because it is the most 'concrete' of sciences."

The part Marx commented on, numbered 381-384, Hegel had titled, "What Mind Is." In these paragraphs Hegel characterizes the dialectical relationship between mind and nature, arguing that mind is the "absolute prius," though it has nature for its "presupposition." The third and last part (which Marx did not and Dunayevskaya did comment on) falls under Hegel's heading, "Subdivision"; it consists of the final two paragraphs, 385-386, where Hegel describes Absolute Mind as the dialectic of subjective (*freedom*) and objective (*necessity*) Mind.

In examining Hegel's text prior to the Subdivision, Marx issues critical comments on Hegel's interpretations of nature and mind; these comments preface passages from Hegel's paragraph 381 (which Marx quotes in full) and Hegel's paragraph 384 (from which Marx quotes about half the text). The main thrust of Marx's critique here revolves around Hegel's notion of nature as externalization (of mind). Marx writes:

It [nature] has to be taken here [in *Philosophy of Mind*] in the sense of alienation, an error, a defect, that which ought not to be...For the abstract thinker, nature must therefore supersede itself, because it is already posited by him as a potentially superseded being.⁷

Marx's argument is that Hegel's dialectic is itself limited in that it does not point the way to overcoming alienation in actuality. In respect to the "abstract thinker" [Hegel], nature as externality, "has something outside itself which it lacks...its being is something other than itself." According to Hegel, nature, as such, lacks freedom and freedom consists in overcoming nature, not in mind's living, dialectical relationship with nature. In any case, Marx's 1844 text, which ended with the statement, "The Absolute Mind, this is the highest definition of the Absolute," stopped at the threshold of the Subdivision and left Hegel's analysis at definition ("What Mind Is")—where Hegel appeared most idealistic and least socially relevant.

In contrast to Marx in 1844, the Subdivision was where Dunayevskaya's analyses began in her May 20, 1953, letter. Dunayevskaya's text began at the third part of Hegel's Introduction, where Marx had "stopped." She closely follows how Hegel explicated movement and development at the pinnacle of his "system," strongly suggesting development of the concepts of nature and mind and the societal relevance of the dialectic.

Hegel's paragraph numbered 385 (the first of the two comprising the Subdivision) begins with the statement: "The development of Mind (Spirit) is in three stages..." First is in the form of "self-relation," the "ideal totality of the idea," "self-contained and free," that is, "Mind Subjective." Second is in the form of "reality," mind "realized, i.e. in a world produced and to be produced by it: in this world freedom presents itself under the shape of necessity," that is, "Mind Objective." The third stage is, "unity of mind as objectivity and of mind as ideality and concept, which essentially and actually is and forever produces itself," that is, "Mind Absolute."

Dunayevskaya's 1953 letter notes the final paragraph (#386) of Hegel's Introduction where he characterizes the very *identification* of these three stages (freedom, necessity, and the unity of the two) as a veritable process of liberation, in Hegel's own words, "finding a world presupposed before us, generating a world as our own creation, and gaining freedom from it and in it."

Dunayevskaya's 1953 letter, moving from Hegel's Introduction through *Philosophy of Mind*'s concluding syllogisms, discerned the movement to post-capitalist society in the work's final three paragraphs. This essay argues that those three paragraphs spell out a dialectic of necessity and freedom that parallels the movement in the work's Introduction: (1) the logical system as the starting point (Subjective), nature as the middle term (or "finding a world presupposed before us"); (2) Nature as the starting point (or presupposition) (Objective), with Mind the "mediating agent in the process" (or "generating a world as our own creation"); and (3) Self-knowing reason as the middle term (Absolute), mediating subjective and objective (or "gaining freedom from [the world] and in [the world])."

MARX'S SOCIAL TRANSLATION OF HEGEL'S DIALECTIC OF NECESSITY AND FREEDOM

It is at (3) above, *Philosophy of Mind*'s final syllogism—which Hegel had already detailed in *Philosophy of Mind*'s Introduction Subdivision—where Marx's 1844 text had stopped. However, little more than 20 years later in *Capital*, Volume III, Marx fully returned to the concepts of freedom and necessity with which he had engaged with Hegel in 1844.

In the May 20, 1953, letter Dunayevskaya informs Grace Lee Boggs that while she was studying the Introduction to and the final three syllogisms of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* she had also been reading Part 7 of Marx's *Capital*, Volume III⁸; she mentions the final Part, "The Revenues and Their Sources." There, in a remarkable chapter titled "The Trinity Formula," Marx investigates how the "trinity" of capital-interest, land-ground-rent, labor-wages, "holds in itself all the mysteries of the social production process." In this analysis, Marx takes great care to bring to the fore that the crucial point is the precision that is required to distinguish capitalism from past social formations and hence also the potential of post-capitalist society. In the "hidden inner connections" of the trinity, "forced labor" is the underlying secret, despite how this labor appears as the "result of free contractual labor."

Marx writes that surplus labor exists as well in the earlier forms of slavery and serfdom, where it has an "antagonistic form and its obverse side is pure idleness on the part of one section of society." Nonetheless, this surplus labor prior to capitalism is not expressed in a surplus-value (p. 953). All capitalist labor is actually forced labor. However, the surplus, unpaid labor,

expressed in the development of science, technology, and most importantly, human beings themselves, constitutes a universal, that is, is part of a historically *new*—post-capitalist—potential of reduced labor time, not for a particular class, but for each member of society. In *Capital* Volume III's famous passage on freedom and necessity (including a few prior sentences that elucidate value and its negation, but are rarely referenced), Marx writes:

It is one of the civilizing aspects of capital that it extorts this surplus labor in a manner [surplus value] and in conditions that are more advantageous to social relations and to the creation of elements for a newer and higher formation than was the case under earlier forms of slavery, serfdom, etc. Thus on the one hand it leads towards a stage at which compulsion and the monopolization of social development (with its material and intellectual advantages) by one section of society at the expense of another disappears; on the other hand it creates the material means and the nucleus for relations that permit this surplus labor to be combined, in a higher form of society, with a greater

reduction of the overall time devoted to material labor...The realm of freedom really begins only where labor determined by necessity and external expediency ends; it [the realm of freedom] lies by its very nature beyond the sphere of material production proper...Freedom, in this sphere [material production proper], can consist only in this, that socialized man, the associated producers, govern the human metabolism with nature in a rational way, bringing it under their collective control instead of being dominated by it as a

blind power; accomplishing it with the least expenditure of energy and in conditions most appropriate for their human nature. But this always remains a realm of necessity. The true realm of freedom, the development of human powers as an end in itself, begins beyond it [labor in material production, realm of necessity], though it can only flourish with this realm of necessity as its basis. The reduction of the working day is the basic prerequisite.⁹

The full *Marxist-Humanist* implications of the *Capital*, Volume III, passages only become apparent when we see that Marx provides a "social translation" of the concepts Hegel depicted in the Subdivision to the Introduction to Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*: finding a world presupposed before us (domination as if by a blind power where freedom is abstracted from necessity); generating a world as our own creation (*dialectic* of freedom and necessity, collective control of nature, least expenditure of energy in material production); and, concretization of freedom as from and in nature and material production (establishing working and living conditions most appropriate for *human* nature, reduction of the working day—creation of the realm of freedom, and "free activity," on the basis of the humanized, liberated realm of necessity).

CONCLUSION

The key concepts *necessity* and *freedom*, the dialectic of what is and what *can be*, are developed in the Hegelian-Marxian dialectic of capitalist and post-capitalist society. Here, for the first time and in terms of this social relevance, we have explored Dunayevskaya's philosophic moment through the lens of the theoretic relationship of *Philosophy of Mind*'s "Introduction" to the work's final three syllogisms. The most urgent theoretic task is to continue to work out today's relationships of necessity and freedom—inadequately examined concepts in sections of Marx's *Capital*, and in critical but neglected post-*Capital* works, like *Critique of the Gotha Program*.

NOTES:

- 1 This letter appears in Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Power of Negativity* (Lexington Books), pp. 24-30.
- 2 See Dunayevskaya's "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy," pp. 3-13 in *The Power of Negativity*.
- 3 See Dunayevskaya's "Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy," p. 8, and, "Not by Practice Alone," p. 282, both included in *The Power of Negativity*.
- 4 See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Tr. by David Fernbach (Vintage Books), pp. 958-959.
- 5 See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Tr. by Ben Fowkes (Vintage Books), p. 133.
- 6 See Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Power of Negativity*, p. 25.
- 7 See the English translation of this essay in Erich Fromm (Ed.), *Marx's Concept of Man* (Continuum), p. 195.
- 8 See Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Power of Negativity*, p. 25.
- 9 See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Tr. by David Fernbach, pp. 958-959. Emphases added.



Mass march for the eight-hour day in Australia, 1909

REAFFIRMING OUR THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES—WHERE TO BEGIN

From my perspective it's critically important that *News & Letters* continue to not only survive but flourish. We're at a most foreboding period ever. Humanity itself is standing at the edge of the black hole of capitalism, about to be completely sucked into the abyss of an existence where poverty is the norm for a vast multitude of people.

In light of the present visibility given to China, its mischaracterization as a Communist country is designed to close the door on any left-wing thinking and simultaneously portray capitalism as the ideal social system for humankind.

No one has more accurately articulated the dialectical movement of capital than Marx. Without this fundamental comprehension of the dialectical process we are going into battle against a superior force unarmed and blind. Some on the left speak of reforming capital, as if it is only about people having a job. In fact it is about people being engaged in work that is truly life-affirming. Now, more than ever, Marx's Marxism is in need of full and wide airing.

I am with you in solidarity.

**Prisoner
Pelican Bay, California**

In her column in the April-May issue of *N&L* on "Where to begin?" Dunayevskaya says that "our point of departure must be in the concrete stage of capitalist production itself. The crisis is in production." The importance of comprehending the crisis in production is directly related to everything else in the world of human activity. This is because the critical issue at stake is the role of labor as to who will control it. In other words, will labor continue to be subjected to the despotic plan of capital or will it be in control of a freely associated labor force. It concretely brings into being what Dunayevskaya contends—"the age of automation strives to be recorded in its proletarian impulse."

**Student of Marxism
California**

The essay on "Healthcare and Marx's View of the Future" and Dunayevskaya's Archives column on "Theory and Practice in a new Relationship" in the April-May *N&L* speak to each other. Dunayevskaya pointed out that workers who have never heard of Marx embody Marxism in their everyday lives. That is not to say she held a Marxist vision of how the world works and then went around "verifying" that workers behaved accordingly. She meant workers have the impulse of the new because they know when a way of thinking has become too old to be useful. It's not easy to get that across in a

newspaper without making the readers suspicious that an intellectual has doctored up the article. After all, intellectuals seem to have nothing to do but be smart and say clever things. Yet we need philosophy permeating each article if we are to live up to the mission of publishing an organ that does not separate theory from practice.

**David
Bay Area**

I Googled "Marx on Praxis" and found the third entry is the Archives column reprinted in *N&L* in Nov. 2001 entitled "Marx's concept of Praxis for today." It was inspirational to read it in light of what has been going on in *N&L*. It was as if Dunayevskaya was speaking to us today, cautioning us on what Praxis really means, and urging us not to separate theory from practice and practice from theory. Her lifelong devotion to the dialectic meant a philosophic engagement with theory, never assuming it to be separate from an engagement with workers from below. (The original 1971 thesis was written as she had been completing *Philosophy and Revolution*.)

**Member N&L
California**

The last two issues are the best I've seen since my involvement with *N&L* a decade ago. Clear, concise, readable and informative. I hope the problems faced in the last few months are rectified. The purpose of the organization overshadows any personalities.

**Robert Taliaferro
Wisconsin**

In a revolution of a permanent nature, the struggle never ends. Revolution in permanence is a process of staying miles ahead of temporarily popular currents. I hope you will long continue until the beginning of a new kind of society. The enclosed small donation is to help you continue and to thank you for all you do.

**Longtime supporter
Louisiana**

CHINA IN REVOLT

Thanks to *N&L* for exposing the Chinese regime for what it really is: totalitarian and state-capitalist. Not only are some "Marxists" missing the obvious fact that China is a repressive and anti-worker state, but non-Marxist leftists are critiquing Westerners who participate in pro-Tibetan (or anti-Chinese) demonstrations because they claim that those who live in Western, capitalist-imperialist countries have no "right" to criticize the failures of

IN MEMORIAM—FOR BARBARA SEAMAN

There are not many people whose names are synonymous with the founding of a movement—Barbara Seaman was one. She died in February of lung cancer at the age of 72 after a lifelong commitment to the women's health movement. She didn't trust drug companies or doctors and did something about it.

She researched and wrote prolifically on women's health, first as a columnist in women's magazines like *Ms. Magazine* and later in muckraking books. Her first book, *The Doctor's Case Against the Pill*, made public what birth control pill manufacturers had always known and kept secret: the pill increased women's risk for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. She exposed that it had been tested on poor women in Puerto Rico, several of whom had died of apparent heart attacks but received little or no medical attention. She also exposed unethical experiments taking place within the U.S. on Chicanas.



Betty Lane

Her work made evident the combined racism, sexism and class oppression evident in such actions. It supplemented the thought and activism of women of color who have always been a vital part of the Women's Liberation Movement. Her work made it obvious that abortion rights alone would not free women, and that any fight for reproductive health had to take on capitalism as well as sexism, racism and anti-abortion fanatics.

She was asked, "How did we get to the point of thinking that menopause is a disease that needed to be cured and that estrogen was the cure?" She responded, "That was the triumph of marketing over science. It was something the drug companies made up—science by press release." Today, when George Bush uses the power of his presidency to savage science and replace it with ideology, Barbara Seaman will be greatly missed.

**Terry Moon
Chicago**

READERS' VIEWS

China. The philosophy of Marxist-Humanism transcends national borders and demands freedom and justice for workers worldwide. Marxist-Humanism is the antidote to capitalism, not the false "Marxism" that aligns itself with the Chinese state or the narrow leftism that forbids critique of non-Western regimes.

**Philosophy Grad Student
Memphis**

Thanks for taking up religion and Marxism by disabusing revolutionaries of the view that China is "rescuing" Tibet from the theocratic rule of the Buddhist monks. That is the position of much of the Left here. It is not Marxist to murder monks, whether in Burma, Indonesia or El Salvador. We don't need to defend religion, but there is more to it than most of the Left sees.

**Asian American
San Francisco**

The growth of China's economy is fantastic. After the earthquake much credit was given to the government for being quick to act. It showed they do pay attention to the outside world. But after three minutes of silence it was "get back to work." Americans put the blame on Bush after Katrina. I was in the 1985 earthquake in Mexico where 10,000 died. The families never gave up on critiquing the shoddy buildings. They are now asking in China why all the schools fell. It's a new economy with shoddy building. We need to pay attention to the second earthquake that may come after the natural disaster.

**Observer
California**

JUSTICE

I did a foolish thing about 30 years ago. A man died. There was no true justification for what I did. I was given 13 years at hard labor in a terrible institution.

George W. Bush did a foolish thing four years ago. People died. There was no true justification for what he did. Multiply 600,000 by 13 to equal a multiple life sentence at hard labor without benefit of parole, probation or pardon in a terrible institution.

Where there is no equal justice before the law, there is no justice.

**D.T.
Lafayette, LA**

DETROIT HAPPENINGS

The struggles of various strata of the ruling class to control and/or own "a piece of the pie" may soon cause a welling up by the masses to expose these illicit grabs. These are examples of what is happening in Detroit:

A tunnel authority is being contrived whereby Detroit and Windsor would turn over their existing control to separate authorities consisting of appointees of the two city governments. The Ontario government would provide millions to the Windsor authority which would then see that \$65 million would go to the City of Detroit to be used in the current budget while \$10 million more would go to insurance and transaction costs. This would lead to the City of Detroit losing the right to the Detroit side of the tunnel and all proceeds for the next 70 years.

As another example, the FBI is probing the OK of a sludge treatment contract awarded to Synagro in November 2007. That company will invest \$125 million in building a new plant close to the City of Detroit's existing treatment plant. These things happen in a "now you see it, now you don't" fashion. One City Council member can flip-flop and a passing 5-4 vote occurs.

Now that the FBI is investigating, it should be getting hot around some council members. And Detroit residents will get active and show we ain't taking it anymore.

**Indignant citizen
Detroit**

RACISM AND THE ELECTION

The flap over Rev. Jeremiah Wright brought out the stereotype of Marx saying "religion is the opiate of the masses." James Cone, a scholar Rev. Wright admired, once said that Black Liberation Theology links Black religion and Marxist philosophy in a way that could lead to the new society. He recently

denied being a Marxist, but he never took back what he said. I think he was trying to say Marxism is what Black masses practice when they see a way to liberation. It is not something they studied and "applied" to their struggles. *American Civilization on Trial* is the best effort yet to show that Marxism has indigenous roots here.

**David Mizuno'Oto
Oakland, Cal.**

See ad page 7 for the fifth edition of *American Civilization on Trial*, published for the 40th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington

The nomination of the first African American as a major party presidential candidate is without question an historic event in our racist country. Obama went from 20% of the Black vote to an enormous number by the end of the primaries. That's significant. I think it shows how much hunger there is for some kind of racial rapprochement, however symbolic or ineffectual. Obama's campaign kept using the word "change." The question is what kind of change? If we count ourselves out of that national discussion, it's at our peril.

**Revolutionary
California**

It makes me feel very proud as a Black man that Obama was able to get the nomination of the Democratic Party for President. I think it shows some real change in attitude towards Black people in this country. I'm under no illusions as to how much change he will be able to make, but I believe he will try. I am also worried that someone will try to harm him before they would allow him to be elected President of the United States.

**G.F.
Los Angeles, Cal.**

This election brings out the inability to solve Black poverty. White poverty is also huge. Identity politics is not working and there's hope that white and Black workers can be brought together. Much of the Left has avoided dealing with poverty by focusing only on the Black numbers.

**Concerned
Oakland, Cal.**

Whenever I'm asked what I think about Obama, my answer is that I am firmly with the abolitionist Wendell Phillips. He said that anyone running to be the President of the U.S. has low ambition. It is not possible to change the world if your "job" is to represent U.S. capitalism.

**Voter
California**



THE PRISON NATION

Local Memphis media have aired a videotape of a white Memphis Police Department officer beating a Black transgender woman in police custody. He deliberately put on a pair of gloves before using handcuffs to beat the woman in her head and sprayed mace into the open wounds. The Women's Action Coalition was outraged. The fact that the attack happened in the public lobby of the county jail in front of witnesses and cameras suggests it was not an isolated incident but standard operating procedure.

We called a community meeting and 60 people came to develop a list of demands, including a criminal investigation. We presented them at a City Council meeting and plan to bring a bigger group to their next meeting to see how they have addressed our demands.

**WAC member
Memphis**

An exhibition called "Prison Nation" at the William Grant Study Center in Los Angeles displayed posters made by artists, activists and students from U.S. universities. They revealed that jail is just a warehouse for poor people. The U.S., with over two million in prison, has the largest prison population in the world. In 1980 there were 13,400 women in prison; by 2005 the numbers increased to over 140,000. In 20 years the U.S. prison population increased 700% while the population increased 20% and violent crimes declined. Most were there for drug addiction or parole violation. African Americans, who are 10% of the population, make up 40% of the prison population.

Policies target youth through gang injunctions. Proposition 21 allowed youths as young as 14 to be tried as adults and imprisoned with adults. Prisons today no longer have a policy to rehabilitate. As one poster stated, "The California Youth Authority is the world's largest and most notorious youth prison system."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., fought for civil and political rights for Blacks. However, as *N&L* columnist John Alan wrote, there is a "difference between political and human emancipation." Another *N&L* writer and activist, Georgiana Williams, wrote of how for years police beat up young Black men. It was not only the Rodney King beating and the subsequent not guilty verdict for the cops who beat him, that ignited the Los Angeles Rebellion.

**Basho
Los Angeles**

In prison, property relations run your life. Prison rules say that you cannot alter any of your property. If your state-issued pants are too long, you can't hem them up. If your shirt rips in the normal wear and tear, you can't sew it up again. You can't even alter your own things: if you own a pair of sweat pants you can't make them into cut-offs for the summer.

You can't dye your hair because that will alter how you look. It's a wonder they don't write you up for getting gray hair or having it fall out. It used to be that women would try to celebrate Halloween by making paper outfits to wear that one day in a year. We can't do that any more either, because it changes your appearance.

The truth is that when you come to prison you are altered. We are not property, we are not defined by what we have or don't have in our locker. We may have made a mistake, but we are not a mistake. We're human beings.

**Woman prisoner
Chowchilla, Cal.**

IRENA SENDLER

Irena Sendler died May 12, 2008. Sendler organized a network of 25 people who smuggled 2,500 Jewish children out of the Warsaw ghetto during the Nazi Occupation of Poland. The children were adopted into the homes of Polish families or hidden in convents and orphanages. The intent was to return all the children to their parents. For years Sendler guarded the real names of the children and their parents, making lists she put in jars and buried in a garden to dig up after the war. By then almost all the parents were dead.



Sendler in 1943 shortly after escaping from Pawiak prison.

Sendler and her helpers made over 3,000 false documents to help the Jewish families. She was eventually arrested and tortured by the Gestapo. The post-war Communist government suppressed her story, which was largely unknown until a group of Kansas high school students brought it out with a widely performed play titled "Life in a Jar." Please check out this ongoing project at IrenaSendler.org.

**Revolutionary Humanist
Cyberspace**

GEORGE CARLIN

George Carlin took on the ideological nature of oppression in his comedy. Organized religion and the state were common targets for him. In an October 2007 interview with Keith Olbermann, Carlin said this about his political comedy: "I don't like this 'let's be cute, and let's be clever.' I like smashing them (political leaders). That's the only way to take care of them."

**Tom P.
West Coast**

RAINN

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN) is the largest anti-sexual abuse organization in the U.S. It launched an online counseling service in April. Their phone hotline has already helped more than a million victims. They hope the new service will reach a new generation who are often more comfortable online. RAINN reports that every two minutes someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted. Almost half are under the age of 18. You can reach them at <http://www.rainn.org>.

**RAINN supporter
Chicago**

HEALTHCARE TODAY

The Psoriasis Walk for Awareness in San Francisco in June was one of several held around the country at different times this year. What's special about it is that it's more than a fundraiser, it's a movement. Members of the National Psoriasis Foundation see themselves as part of the larger health care movement which is going on in the U.S. today to take charge of their own medical care and treatment. Pharmaceutical companies were present, hawking their wares, but as one marcher said, "They have to listen to us, we aren't waiting for them to come up with cure-alls and miracles." Another marcher spoke of the disease as a great equalizer that respects no boundaries of nationality, ethnicity, "race," or gender, and said that suffering through it has brought together people from all over the world. The movement is about ending the sense of isolation so many suffer, that "It's not just about a cure, but a new attitude to life."

**March Volunteer
San Francisco**

Readers: Can you contribute \$5, the cost of a subscription, to our special fund for prisoners who request one?

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By RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao**
30th Anniversary issue, 2003\$24.95
- Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today**
2000 edition. Foreword by Joel Kovel.....\$24.95
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich\$12.95
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** (Special: Includes shipping)\$10
- The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx**
by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$24.95
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**\$8.50
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**
Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes"\$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

By CHARLES DENBY

- Indignant Heart; A Black Worker's Journal**
1989 edition includes Afterword by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$14.95

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- Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study**
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- American Civilization on Trial** Black Masses as Vanguard. 40th anniversary edition, by Raya Dunayevskaya, and
- Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles** Race, Philosophy & the Needed American Revolution by John Alan
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Review of *Living for Change*

Living for Change: An Autobiography is the autobiography of Grace Lee Boggs, one of the three co-leaders, along with C.L.R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya, of the Johnson-Forest Tendency and of Correspondence, the organization from which News and Letters Committees originated. Grace Boggs, a daughter of Chinese immigrants, graduated from Bryn Mawr College with a Ph.D. in philosophy. A Hegel scholar, she made solid contributions to the Johnson-Forest Tendency's exploration of Hegel's philosophy, yet by 1953 began to move in a different direction from Raya Duna-

yevskaya's development of Hegel's Absolute Idea.

Dunayevskaya contrasted the reaction of Boggs to Stalin's death in 1953 to that of production worker Charles Denby, the longtime editor of *News & Letters*. While Denby wrote of workers comparing Stalin to their foreman, Boggs said that the women workers to whom she spoke were more interested in hamburger recipes.

Boggs refers to Dunayevskaya's critique of her hamburger recipe account as an example of what was wrong with the old Left. However, Dunayevskaya's critique was prophetic. Boggs and her husband James Boggs remained with C.L.R. James when News and Letters Committees arose from Correspondence in 1955. Seven years later, the Boggses split with James and abandoned Marxism. The impetus for the split was a book written by James Boggs, *The American Revolution: Pages From a Negro Worker's Notebook*, in which he disparaged the revolutionary potential of the American working class. Grace and James Boggs thereafter moved toward a Third Worldist perspective and became apologists for various Third World dictators.

Today, Grace Boggs is a community activist living in Detroit. To her great credit, she cares about the City of Detroit and has done many positive things, such as advocating community gardening on the ever-increasing open fields in Detroit. She founded Detroit Summer, a youth program.

Unlike all too many self-styled community activists, Grace Boggs is not motivated by self-interest. But tragically, she long ago lost the vision that another world is possible, one that goes far beyond making life under capitalism tolerable.

—Dan B.

For Mildred Loving

Mildred Loving passed away on May 2. She and her husband Richard took the right to love to the Supreme Court and made it legal. In 1967 the Court struck down the ban on interracial marriage in the Lovings' home state of Virginia, leading to similar racist laws being overturned around the country.

Richard and Mildred had been childhood sweethearts in Central Point, Caroline County, an area where working-class Black and white people lived side by side. They were married in Washington, D.C., then arrested back home in Virginia in 1958, only 50 years ago. In that time and place, love and marriage made them literal outlaws. Deputy sheriffs broke into their bedroom in the middle of the night.

Everybody since has owed Mildred a debt of gratitude, and like true love itself, she was modest about that: "The preacher at my church classified me with Rosa Parks, I don't feel like that. Not at all. What happened, we really didn't intend for it to happen. What we wanted, we wanted to come home."

There was a poor movie made about the Lovings in 1996—the filmmakers hijacked their story. As Mildred said, "None of it was very true. The only part of it right was I had three children." There is a more serious and accurate account of the Lovings' life in the book *Virginia Hasn't Always Been for Lovers* (Southern Illinois University Press, 2004) by Phyl Newbeck.

In 2007 Mildred released a statement supporting the human right to marry the person one loves, and it concluded: "I am still not a political person, but I am proud that Richard's and my name is on a court case that can help reinforce the love, the commitment, the fairness, and the family that so many people, black or white, young or old, straight or gay seek in life. I support the freedom to marry for all."

Mildred didn't have an easy life. Richard Loving was killed by a drunk driver in 1975, and Mildred lost an eye in that same crash. Her son Donald passed away in 2000. But Mildred had strength, and dignity, and the modesty of a real hero. Any voice might be louder, but none was more true.

—Gerry Emmett

BLACK/REVIEW

Continued from page 1

Racism was so horrible Wright feared for his life. He exiled himself to Paris. He left the indigenous Black struggle, which was becoming much more developed. While he coined the phrase "Black Power," which later became a slogan for the movement, he was not here to participate in it. Wright died in 1960 in Paris, but his contribution to the movement doesn't stop at a literary work.

Most of Wright's ideas about Black reality were presented in fiction form. In them he revealed an aspect of American civilization that neither the Communist Party USA, whites in general, nor the Black middle-class leaders could accept. Yet it was just here, within the main source of Wright's legacy to Black America, that he showed his unfailing determination to discover something universal by going deep into Black reality in racist America.

Wright developed a critique of American civilization through the Negro question. It was also a critique of Blacks in American civilization, especially Black leadership in the form of Black writers. In his 1937 essay, "Blueprint for Negro Writing," long before Frantz Fanon wrote in *The Wretched of the Earth* about the reality, the limitations and the transformation of African Nationalism, Wright was attempting to approach American Black Nationalism in that same dialectical way.



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Update on Mumia

On March 27 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit denied Mumia Abu-Jamal a new trial and called for a jury to decide, this past May, whether he is to serve life in prison or be executed. On June 9, an order extending the due date for submitting the Petition for Rehearing was submitted by the Court of Appeals. Mr. Abu-Jamal's lead counsel Robert P. Bryan plans to file on June 27. Journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal remains on death row for allegedly killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981.

—Elise

Hollow holiday

My Uncle Al, Alandress Gardner, who is 85 years old, came from a family of nine, born in Vicksburg, Mississippi. His poppa was a Baptist preacher who owned land, but he was lazy. His mother, Grandma Emma, was very mean and treated Uncle Al's mother, Big Momma's children very badly. So Big Momma left her husband and moved to a white man's, Mr. Merce Hawkins, plantation in Vicksburg. Everybody raised cotton and corn and grew a garden for their own food. The plantation also had horses, mules, cows, chickens and other fowl.

What we loved about Uncle Al was he was a jack of all trades. He could do everything. He was the backbone of our family. He could cook and clean, he became Daddy and Mommy to all. Uncle Al only went to the eighth grade—there was no High School in the area. He was a very positive and friendly person.

Uncle Al, his two brothers and his nephew, were called up to the Army at the time of WWII. He spent most of his time in the Philippines and New Guinea in the segregated Army. I remember him writing home that it was so hot he got a heat rash and his skin peeled.

Every year, when I come to Chicago for the News and Letters Committees Convention, I either would call or go to see Uncle Al in Gary, Indiana. This year I called Uncle Al on Memorial Day and asked what he was doing? He said he, "Didn't feel honored as a soldier or when serving my country." He went on to say, "I put my life on the line for my country and my life was in jeopardy. In the Philippines and New Guinea they treated me like a man. But when I returned home in February 1946, I got on the Greyhound bus in Jackson, Mississippi, to return to Vicksburg. There was no one on the bus, just the driver and me in my Army uniform with a duffle bag. I was very tired. I laid my bag on the floor and sat down in the front seat. The driver drove about 10 miles then pulled over to the side of the highway and said, 'Boy, you got to go to the back of the bus.'"

Uncle Al was hurt and angry because he had fought for his country and still had to go to the back of the bus and couldn't even vote in Mississippi. He said, "I couldn't start voting until I moved to Gary, Indiana, in 1953. We still don't have equal justice in this country. My wife and I have had property in Mississippi taken from us by politicians even though all taxes were paid and we had registered deeds. They just took the land."

My Uncle's final word was: "I never took part in military celebrations; I want nothing from them."

—Georgiana Williams

Silence the Violence

Editor's note: On June 18, thousands participated in "Silence the Violence" vigils. News & Letters met with three of their "Street Promoters" in Oakland. These Black youths are not single issue anti-violence activists, but are building a movement for radical change through a united community. The previous weekend there had been six murders in Oakland for a total of 66 homicides this year. This is a mix of what these three had to say.

Silence the Violence started off with a whole different campaign in the prisons. A kid got killed in the CYA (California Youth Authority). Then something happened outside the prisons—a kid got out of the CYA and then he got killed in the street and we thought we need to focus on the violence outside the prisons.

We trying to teach the youth to think before they react. You don't gotta bust nobody's head. If someone gotta problem they come up to me and say they need my help and I say OK, what kind of help do you need? You say, 'I need help with my life, I'm going to take you right down to The Covenant House and get you a shower, food, case management, GED. Without those resources, a youngster's going to be out here robbing people and selling dope.

Violence is a way of living if you don't have a job. Some of us come from the same situations with drugs, violence, prostitution, all kinds of stuff. We got people that been through more stuff than you'd think—near death experiences. It's a small circle of violence, a small underworld and it's really easy to get caught up in it. We get people to speak their thoughts in front of crowds to get the stress off their chest.

During the revolution of the '60s, Martin Luther King was preaching non-violence—turn the other cheek. If the government that's supposed to protect you and provide you with democracy, equal rights and it's not being acted out, then what do you do? Like when you see the police gunning down youth, how do you keep walking around with peaceful protest if you're not being heard?

It's going to take a confrontation in order for this change to happen. We need to do away with this system. If the revolution was to kick off right now like they were trying to do in the '60s I think it'd be more diverse in ethnicity. It'd be more mighty. All races united.

The police are literally trying to take us street promoters—who are selling the Silence the Violence CD for five bucks a pop—to jail. The police waste our time, waste their time when kids are getting their heads beat in in west Oakland.

Silence the Violence is a movement. We move mean. We not gonna let nobody just overthrow us. We out here at 40th and Telegraph all the time. Come and talk to us.

MISSED THE NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES SPECIAL CONVENTION? READ ABOUT IT NOW!



Post-Convention Discussion Bulletin includes:

- "An Open Letter to All Friends and Supporters of News and Letters," by the Resident Editorial Board
- "On Organization," by Olga Domanski
- "What Is a Marxist-Humanist Newspaper in 2008?" by Terry Moon
- "Report on Revolutionary Finances," by Mary Jo Grey

"What has been a serious concern for some time is what we are and are not doing to work out the question of what Raya Dunayevskaya called the 'Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy.' Why do we seem to be looking at our digging into the June 1, 1987, statement Raya presented to us as a challenge to work out that Dialectic, as if it is somehow contradictory to our digging into Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program (CGP)*?... It is needed more than ever this year when 'two sides' seemed to have been developed towards it. Why were the important discussions about Marx's *CGP* being made to seem as if they were versus, or 'instead of,' digging into June 1? Why is that relationship being pulled apart?"

—Olga Domanski

from *Post-Convention Discussion Bulletin*
"On Organization"

Reprinted for the Special Convention:

- Raya Dunayevskaya's report to the founding convention of News and Letters Committees, July 1956, *Theoretical and Practical Perspectives: Where to Begin?*

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New South Korean resistance

May of this year in Korea started with a public gathering called "Candle Light Culture Festival," but the festival turned into a demonstration against the current president, Lee Myung-bak (from the conservative party), and his government. Tens of thousands of angry



citizens congregated at Seoul Plaza in front of Seoul City Hall and the focus of this demonstration is becoming a nationwide battle against what some call "neofascism." The current Korean government from the start (February 2008) has been working on the following policies.

- Privatization of public sectors such as water, gas, electricity, and healthcare
- Construction of a great canal that runs through Korea, which will cause environmental damage but will benefit many construction companies including Hyundai (President Lee was its CEO)
- Importing U.S. beef that is at risk for BSE (mad cow disease)
- Attempting control over internet portal sites and broadcasting

In April 2008, President Lee announced during a visit to the U.S. that the government would import U.S. beef with no condition about the risk of mad cow disease. His announcement sparked the anger of the Korean people, because they thought that the government humiliatingly gave up the sovereign power of quarantine inspection for signing the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA). From May 2, tens of thousands of people daily held a candlelight vigil in downtown Seoul and asked for renegotiation with the U.S. government. However, President Lee and his government continued to disappoint the people with their insincere attitude and lack of commitment to settle the issue, and it made the people more angry. As a result, more and more people, from children to old men, took part in the candlelight vigils day by day, and finally the candlelight vigil turned into an anti-government demonstration taking over the streets. The government was baffled and put down the demonstrations violently using water cannons.

After the violent crushing by riot police, the demonstrators felt that their just claims to correct the mistakes of the government were ignored, and that President Lee had no intention of protecting the people. Furthermore, President Lee and his government have tried to control the press and broadcasting (including internet portal sites) to be used only for carrying through wrong policies, never accepted by the majority of the Korean people, such as privatization of public sectors, construction of a great canal, and signing the Korea-U.S. FTA.

The Korean people feel that their democratic rights

Burma cyclone and worse

The cyclone that struck Burma in May was only the beginning of death and devastation, which the military junta intensified. The outlaw rulers of Burma stunned international opinion by refusing aid shipments or putting killer conditions on accepting aid. Military control of the country was used not to funnel food and water to cyclone victims, especially to the hard-hit minority Karen areas, but instead to divert the best food and supplies into the coffers of the military.

This was not merely the result of indifference or incompetence. Just a week after the cyclone, troops attacked, burned and looted the Karen village of Mu Li Khi, the latest attack that even involved systematic use of rape and enslavement to fracture its opposition. The military junta had proved its willingness to massacre even ethnically Burmese students, farmers, workers and monks, in bloodbaths from 1988 to as recently as 2007. Despite the cyclone, the military extended the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi, who still has not been able to take office since she won the last election—in 1990—and bloodied activists rallied in front of her house on her birthday. Even with the cyclone, the military took no holiday from their campaign targeting the Karen minority.

Karen areas contain the timber and mineral exports to China and the West that have enriched the generals. The comparison here is to the attitude of Indonesian rulers to the 2004 tsunami's destruction of insurgent areas of Aceh, and to the ill-concealed satisfaction at the fate of Blacks uprooted by Hurricane Katrina displayed by government officials from sheriff's deputies to Bush.

—Bob McGuire

and principles, established through struggle and resistance, are damaged and violated by the despotic government in favor of the conservative segments in Korea, so they began to chant for anti-privatization, anti-great canal, anti-FTA, anti-government, and the impeachment of President Lee as well as the renegotiation with the U.S. government for importing U.S. beef. Against the political attack of the conservatives, by taking to the streets, many Korean people make clear the democratic principle that nobody can damage and put back to the past the principle that all state power and authority emanate from the people.

The crisis of democracy which the Korean people felt, called together a million people on June 10, the 21st anniversary of "Great Struggle of 1987." The candlelight vigils and demonstrations in Korea have continued to be held for 51 days.

The candlelight vigils and demonstrations that are going on in Korea have some important meanings.

- They are going on without any guidance, divisions or leaders. Only spontaneous or autonomous participation of citizens on the internet network daily organize the candlelight vigils and demonstrations. As it is unusual and never seen before, some say that "collective intelligence" or "intelligence of the multitude" leads the struggle and resistance. In any case, it is obvious that these unusual and new ways of social movement in Korea imply so many practical meanings.

- It presents new opportunities and possibilities for a direct or pure democracy against conditions where the representative organs, such as the National Assembly occupied by the conservative parties, are unable to accept or understand the progressive demands of the people. However, it is also obvious that this phenomenon asks some questions of the relation between the public and the political party to the progressive and leftist parties as well as to the conservative parties.

—Two South Korean activists

Pride Weekend



Tens of thousands filled every inch of Dolores Park for the 16th Annual Dyke March in San Francisco on June 28. The theme this year was visibility: visibility of protest and of our power, visibility which saves lives and may save our rights to live, to love and to be recognized. Visibility to counteract the many ways we are made invisible. Featured speakers included a doctor demonstrating a breast self-exam and dykes from former Yugoslavia. The march stretched over 10 blocks. The previous day saw the 5th annual transgender march with a focus on transgender civil rights. Sunday's 38th Annual Pride Parade of over a million was also a celebration of the May 15 California Supreme Court's decision that denying gays and lesbians marriage is a violation of their civil rights.

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Special needs under capitalism

As the single mother of a totally dependent 18-year-old with special needs, I am constantly challenged to find quality care and programs to help her in a world which seems to value her less as a person because of her disabilities. Caregivers are only paid between \$9.57 and \$12.00 per hour to help me care for her. There are few people willing to do this kind of work for that kind of pay, and because of that, we have had 10 different workers this past year. The Union, while advocating for the caregivers, pays the least and has the worst health insurance plan.

Now that she has graduated high school, my daughter can go into a vocational program until she is 21. They try and set the young adults up with a job of some kind, but they don't get paid for their work! They say it's more for the "experience" and for learning to get along with other people and dealing with work deadlines, etc. It will be very hard to find a job my daughter can do, but why is the work she might do not valued enough to compensate her for it? The attitude is that she should be grateful for the work and not complain about not getting paid.

What really worries me is the lack of programs for my daughter once she turns 21 and can no longer attend the vocational programs. There are very few programs out there that address the needs of a 21 year old with special needs. The ones we have been able to find are only two days a week. In order to get her to and from these programs, I would have to quit my job. Or put her on a bus by herself to get her there, which is not an option. It is assumed that most people with special needs will find a job of some kind, or even go to college. My daughter is unable to do either of those things, so she will probably spend most of her time on the computer on YouTube, or watching TV. Even the summer camps that we count on so heavily every year don't take young adults over the age of 21. It makes me angry that this society cares so little for those with more limited capabilities once they reach this age.

What scares me and other parents of kids with special needs, is what happens to them if something happens to us. I worry about this constantly. I have a friend who will take my daughter if something happens to me prematurely, but what if she decides she can't? What happens if my daughter outlives me? There are adult family homes in the state I live in, but many of them will not take adults as dependent as my daughter is. And it's unclear if Medicaid will pay for these homes. My fear is that she will end up in a nursing home that will not take good care of her. Will they bother to get to know her and what she likes and doesn't like? Will they allow her to have her headphones and play the music that means so much to her? Will they change her diapers when needed and get her out of bed? Or will she be just left alone, without any companionship and proper care?

These are my worst fears.

—Suzanne K.

Queer Notes

By Elise

Students from a record-breaking 6,000 schools participated in this year's Day of Silence, supporting and bringing awareness of the many LGBT students who keep silent to protect their lives. A backlash against the Day is gaining some ground. The U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that a teenager who had been banned from wearing an anti-gay t-shirt could wear it on this year's Day of Silence. The opposition is also organizing counteractions, including a so-called "Day of Truth."

Two women in Kingston, UK, have been convicted of harassing and terrorizing their gay neighbors, partners Michael Harris and Shires Crichton. Karen Reeves and her 22-year-old daughter Christie Myles are banned from having any contact with and living in the same village as Mr. Harris and Mr. Crichton, to whom the women made homophobic gestures and remarks for several months earlier this year. Reeves even drove her car at one of the men. She was also sentenced to five months in prison for her lack of remorse and for "leading" her daughter. Myles will pay court costs.

Moscow's GLBT activists went ahead with a pride parade, defying yet one more "official" ban on such activities. In 2006 and 2007, Mayor Yuri Luzhkov banned pride demonstrations and parades. "Rights For Gays and Lesbians!" and "Take Mayor Luzhkov's Homophobia to Court" were just two of the banners that were displayed. Most recently, parade organizers filed suit against Russian President Dmitry Medvedev for not replying within 30 days to their appeal of Luzhkov's ban and requested the European Court of Human Rights to order Moscow to compensate organizers for last year's parade.

The Third Civil Court of First Instance in the Boyolu district of Istanbul, Turkey, closed the offices of the gay rights advocacy group Lambda Istanbul. Its vague ruling was based on Lambda's failure to "remedy errors and deficiencies" in its statutes, part of Turkey's Law on Associations. The ruling puts Turkey in violation of the European Convention on Human Rights, and the international Human Rights Watch group is calling for the European Union to deny Turkey entrance into the EU.

World food crisis reveals capitalism's direction

Continued from page 1

dized imports of U.S. agricultural products, throwing 1.3 million farmers out of work. This transformation of world agriculture is not just a policy choice. In China, native rulers have overseen the same transformation, throwing 150 million off the land.

Once the Third World countries that gained independence departed from revolutionary mass self-activity, their course was set by capitalism's law of development: the concentration and centralization of capital at one pole, and the growing army of the unemployed at the other pole—whose character as an army of revolt is only beginning to show itself. Capital's concentration has resulted in the globalization of the capitalist industrial agriculture complex, increasingly supplanting "agro-ecological" farming for subsistence and domestic markets with "agro-industrial" farming of cash crops for export.

Peasants are driven off the land, not so much by "free trade," as by the imperialistic relations of very unequal trade: the forcing down of trade barriers in poor countries, while transnational corporations receive state-capitalist subsidies, which account for 30% of farm revenue in the 30 richest countries. The same is true of factory fishing fleets, which could not profitably destroy the world's fisheries without their estimated \$50 billion in subsidies each year. Agribusiness also relies on direct or indirect superexploitation of undocumented immigrants as farm labor, as well as "contract farming," in which the farmer owns the land but all production decisions are made by the corporation buying the crop or livestock. In some cases corporations or big landowners simply seize common or private lands.

FOOD CRISIS A CRISIS OF CAPITALISM

The millions of human beings added to the rolls of the starving and the poor are the collateral damage of a class war waged by capitalists against both small-holder farming and urban and rural working classes. Ever since the global economic crisis of the 1970s, capitalists have been trying to shore up the rate of profit

by finding new ways to drive down wages and benefits, while forcing workers to work harder, and more completely absorbing activities such as farming into commodity production—including turning water and common lands into commodities.

Key factors behind the food crisis reveal themselves to be aspects of the decay of capitalism, which has moved from advancing the development of forces of production to undermining the conditions needed to sustain human civilization.

Most directly, the falling rate of profit spurs capital to seek one alternative after another to productive investment, the latest being the flight to commodities futures after the collapse of the housing and credit bubbles. Speculative money in commodities futures reportedly rose from \$5 billion in 2000 to \$175 billion in 2007.¹ Futures allow investors to cash in on rising prices without investing in production; the huge amounts of money

chasing commodities tend to drive up prices. Traders amplified this effect by hoarding food.

Industrial production of biofuels, aided by \$15 billion of subsidies last year, has diverted cropland from growing human food. According to the *New Statesman*, "American cars now burn enough corn to cover all the import needs of the 82 nations classed by the FAO as 'low-income food-deficit countries.'"²

Grain that could feed the poor is used as animal feed. The agribusiness complex is waging a concerted campaign to transform populations in capitalistically growing Third World countries such as China, India and Brazil into consumers of U.S.-style industrially processed diets. Food consumption becomes a means for the production of surplus-value, regardless of the social or health effects.

Enough food is produced today, but the trend is for increasing diversion of crops to feed cars and livestock, fueling demand growth that will outstrip production, especially as global warming worsens and farmland and water hit limits.

Precisely because capitalism's dynamic is to produce maximum surplus-value, and because value is congealed labor, capitalist agriculture squeezes the most output possible from labor, though that means reckless waste of land, water and fossil fuel energy; though it means that that most basic human need, food, is denied to human beings and used to fill cars and cows; though it is held off the market in hopes of higher profits while millions grow desperate; though today's production undermines the conditions for future farming. Marx grasped that this is capitalism's inexorable dynamic:

"...instead of a conscious and rational treatment of the land as permanent communal property, as the inalienable condition for the existence and reproduction of the chain of human generations, we have the exploitation and squandering of the powers of the earth..."³

At the FAO summit in Rome, the U.S. pushed an agenda of eliminating trade barriers and expanding production through intensive technology—more of the same medicine that helped consolidate industrial agriculture at the expense of those who work the land.

Where last year's UN report on Millennium Goals

repeated the 1996 World Food Summit pledge to halve the number of hungry in the world by 2015, today the FAO says that will not happen—in fact, that number has been rising since then.

Protesters carrying a banner, "Stop corporate control of food," were thrown out of the press room at the summit. Some held posters contrasting the millions going hungry with the record profits of agribusiness corporations, for instance, ADM up 55% to \$1.15 billion, Monsanto up 54% to \$2.23 billion, and Mosaic up over 1,100%.

EMPTY POLICIES FOR EMPTY PLATES

Elsewhere in Rome, the June 1-4 alternative Terra Preta Forum, called by social movements across the globe, blasted the FAO summit as worse than useless. The Forum issued a Civil Society Declaration, which said in part:

"The serious and urgent food and climate crises are being used by political and economic elites as opportunities to entrench corporate control of world agriculture and the ecological commons...We, more than 100 organizations—coming from 5 continents...propose a different, sustainable way of addressing persisting ecological and food crises and climate change and forge solutions that strengthen our capacities, valorize women's centrality in food production, protect our ecologies, and reclaim our communities, societies and economies. We reject the corporate industrial and energy-intensive model of production and consumption that is the basis of continuing crises. We affirm that the paradigm of Peoples' Food Sovereignty forms the guiding framework for our future actions and the survival of humanity."⁴

Food Sovereignty goes beyond demanding food as a right, posing it as a question of peoples' self-determination in producing food as well as its availability. As a demand for masses' control of food production, in opposition to the sway of market forces, Food Sovereignty implicitly reaches for socialism. Some organizations participating in the Forum call for "21st century socialism."

In the works are the July 4-9 Peoples' Action Days around the G-8 summit in Hokkaido, Japan.⁵ Where this radicalism will lead is a matter of struggle, not least in the battle of ideas. Will it open up to the kind of vision of total uprooting projected by Karl Marx? Or will it be confined by the pull of the world market, commodity production and the state powers challenging U.S. dominance?

One pitfall for the movement is the myth still being spread about Marx's attitude to peasants. We can learn from the creative new developments he brought to his insights on agriculture in the last decade of his life. His attention to "pre-capitalist" societies led to new discoveries on the Man/Woman relation, and on the multilinear paths to development. Communal ownership of land in those societies could serve as the point of departure for development to a new world if their revolutions were complemented by proletarian revolutions in the industrialized countries. But, as the 20th century showed, once revolutions deviated from basing themselves on the masses' self-activity, there was no alternative to the capitalist path of "development," which leads to today's crises.

What both the objective crisis and the subjective movements point to is that capitalism is now moving backwards, destroying the conditions for human survival. The only thing that can tear us away from capital's awful momentum toward climate chaos and destruction of civilization's material basis, of which food production is the main pillar, is a new, many-sided path of development through revolution in permanence.

¹ "Who Is Responsible for the Global Food Crisis?" by Sinclair Stewart and Paul Waldie, May 31, 2008, *Toronto Globe and Mail*

² "How the Rich Starved the World," by Mark Lynas, April 17, 2008, *New Statesman*. For important movement statements, see "An African Call for a Moratorium on Agrofuel Developments" (<http://www.grain.org/agrofuels/?moratorium>) and "Biofuels in India: will they deliver or destroy?" (<http://www.grain.org/agrofuels/?india2007>)

³ *Capital*, Vol. III (Vintage: 1981), pp. 948-49

⁴ Full statement available at <http://www.foodsovereignty.org/public/terrapreta/final.doc>

⁵ See announcement at http://www.viacampesina.org/main_en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=561&Itemid=38



Strikes and protests spread across Cameroon in February over food prices and working conditions

indymedia.org

Kosova's independence

Kosova's declaration of independence in February was greeted by massive celebrations in Prishtina, the country's capital. The joy in the streets reflected the long-standing desire for independence from Serbian domination on the part of the overwhelming majority of Kosovars.

Four months after Kosova's declaration, however, the country is still struggling to emerge from the twilight status in which it was forced to languish since 1999, when an armed uprising of the Albanian population precipitated the intervention of NATO and the withdrawal of the Serbian army.

In the intervening years, Kosova remained formally a province of Serbia and was administered by a large and inefficient United Nations bureaucracy. Little economic development took place and Serbia was permitted to actively manipulate the small remaining Serbian community in its effort to achieve a partition of the northern part of the country. This state of affairs served to intensify hostility between Albanians and Serbs and contributed to events like the large-scale inter-ethnic violence that took place in March of 2004.

The Movement for Self-Determination, an organization formed to oppose the political stasis imposed upon Kosova by the international community, held a large protest in February of 2007 which was fired on by police. Two demonstrators were killed and Albin Kurti, a former leader of the mass student movement of the 1990s and organizer of the event, was arrested. Kurti was held under house arrest until February of this year, when his trial was suspended amid widespread public denunciations of the political nature of the charges.

Kurti and his organization have been the most trenchant critics of the incomplete character of Kosova's current status. As they point out, the February declaration of independence is explicitly based on an acceptance of the recommendations of a report by diplomat Martti Ahtisaari. The independence sketched out for Kosova in the Ahtisaari report is a highly conditional one, in which it continues to remain under European Union supervision and is subject to a de facto internal partition between the Serbian north and the Albanian south.

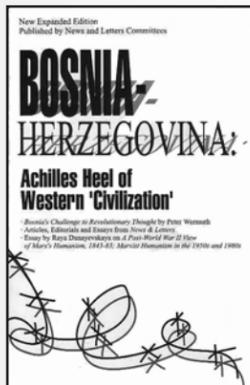
Furthermore, Serbia is largely absolved of responsibility for the 1999 violence and the decade of repression that preceded it. As Kurti writes in an essay in *The Case for Kosova*, edited by scholar Anna Di Lellio, "There is neither penance nor regret in the Serbian political and intellectual establishment for the 12,000 killed, 3,000 kidnapped, thousands raped, one million expelled and 120,000 houses destroyed in Kosova. There has been no justice for the victims."

—Sympathizer

Two works on the recent history of the Balkans:

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

THE ACHILLES HEEL OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION



KOSOVA

WRITINGS FROM NEWS & LETTERS, 1998-1999

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YOUTH

A Different Look at the May 1968 French Revolt

by Brown Douglas

This May marked the 40th anniversary of the Paris uprising of over 10 million workers and students. It shouldn't be forgotten that 1968 was a year for many other uprisings and near-revolutions: England, Mexico, Brazil, and Czechoslovakia being the most prominent among literally hundreds; not to mention the revolt of women, African Americans, and anti-war youth all over the U.S. reaching almost revolutionary proportions. But it was in France, an "advanced" First World country that was supposedly sufficiently prosperous and stabilized by capitalism and bourgeois society, where the revolt was the deepest, and students and workers almost reached the point of being able to reconstruct society on totally different grounds.

There has been a lot written about the effects of the 1968 events on French society since then. Historical analyses abound about the roots of the student protests, the slogans, leaders like Daniel Cohn-Bendit, and the massive street demonstrations. But today, France is run by the right-wing Nicolas Sarkozy who promised to "liquidate the legacy" of 1968. What happened to the revolt itself? Why didn't it achieve its goals? Among the many slogans spontaneously created by participants, why did "Those who make revolutions half way only dig their own graves" tragically fulfill itself more than any of the other revolutionary mottoes?

The questions that are most important to ask about a failed revolution in the past are questions that will lead to working out a successful revolution in the future. This is the only thing that keeps the discussion from being a purely historical one. The pull of ideas, specifically the ideas surrounding the French revolt and its collapse, are what makes this remembrance of an event 40 years ago a contemporary discussion.

Raya Dunayevskaya wrote "The near-revolution of France, 1968: Why did it fail?" (see page 4) during the height of the revolt, when "the whip of counter-revolution [was] visible." What might strike some of us today is the extended essay's polemic against Trotskyism. The reasons for discussing the failings of Trotskyism during the French revolt aren't sectarian, or old news, but at the very root of a Marxist-Humanist conception

Child Labor

Children and young persons are at present worse treated and harder worked than at any previous period.

—Karl Marx, *Capital*

Child labor, described by Karl Marx in *Capital* nearly 150 years ago, is alive and well in China despite a recent New York Times exposé of a child labor ring in China's southern provinces. Underground organizations lure children younger than the legal working age of 16 to industrial centers on the coast. Although officials have "instructed" police and labor departments to rescue child laborers and punish those responsible, there are believed to be thousands more children working throughout the Pearl River Delta region.

Journalists with *Southern Metropolis*, a crusading newspaper which first uncovered the abuses, recently interviewed parents and residents and posed as recruiters in Liangshang prefecture in southwestern Sichuan Province. Children were "sold" to factories at virtual auctions in Guangdong Province. At some coastal factories, children were even lined up and selected based on their body type. Children are paid about 42¢ an hour, far below the local minimum wage of 64¢ an hour. Some children were threatened with death if they tried to escape.

Chen Fulin, a government spokesman in Liangshan Prefecture, said that the child labor articles were accurate. "Since journalists could discover the facts by secret interviews in a few days," *Southern Metropolis* wrote in an editorial, "how could the labor departments show no interest in it and ignore it for such a long time?"

Several factors create conditions that perpetuate child labor in China: Recruiters receive between 200 and 300 yuan (about \$29 - \$45) per child; leaders of the underground organization can earn up to 100,000 yuan in three months; most companies employing child labor are small to medium-sized and not registered with labor departments.

Parents, who cannot support their families by farming, send out children as young as 8 or 9, pleased that the children earn several hundred yuan a month. One mother, who cried when she learned her son was sent thousands of kilometers away, was comforted to hear that he received a rice meal every two to three days.

Enforcement is weak. Even factories that supply global companies, including Wal-Mart, have been accused of using child labor and violating local labor laws. Big corporations have increased inspections of factories that produce goods for them, but suppliers evade scrutiny by providing fake wage and work schedules.

As long as the world economy operates under the capitalist production system, these conditions will persist as corporations are driven to reduce labor costs. Increasing automation and sending jobs overseas to cheaper labor markets, leaves young people here idle and miseducated for jobs that no longer exist. Exploiting children as workers is capitalism's method in developing countries. In no case are poor children nurtured and educated to realize their full human potential. Until capitalism can be destroyed, revolutionaries must expose and oppose the exploitation of children in all forms.

—Susan Van Gelder

of what revolution is and can be.

The de Gaulle government was shaken to the core by the students' and workers' actions. Even after de Gaulle made a back-room deal with the Communist Party-controlled unions (the CGT) for a 35% raise in wages—attempting to buy off the revolution—the workers marched in the streets chanting "Adieu de Gaulle!" ("Goodbye de Gaulle!"). What became clear, far before the attempt to buy the workers off, was that the counter-revolution against the students and workers was led not only by the government, but also by the Communist Party!

While the French Trotskyists were militant organizers and fighters during the May 1968 events, their activism and bravery lacked recognizing the class

Immigrant May Day March



Urszula Wisniewska/News & Letters

Over 5,000 people, mostly Latino youth, attended a May Day march and rally from the Fruitvale District to downtown Oakland, Cal., for workers' and immigrants' rights. Young Latinas led the crowd in reading demands of the Oakland Sin Fronteras coalition, including: End harassment and persecution of immigrant communities by federal agencies and local police; halt the use of "no-match" letters to intimidate worker organizing efforts; hold elected officials accountable to support immigrant rights; money for human needs and services, not militarism and war; and no more displacement from our homes and communities. One marcher said: "We need a system not based on money, but based on human dignity. These are human beings, families torn apart and we want to make them whole."

Protest firing 'Charcoal Alley' teacher

After promising us bridges, tunnels, roads and a high speed train connecting all the big cities of California plus a glorious and prosperous future, our munificent Governor slashed the budget to the Los Angeles Unified School District by some 340 million dollars.

On June 6, teachers, joined by students and parents, walked out for half an hour before school began in protest against funds cut for the district. Another march of teachers, students and parents took place at Jordan High School, on the so-called "Charcoal Alley," in the middle of Watts. The marchers were protesting the firing of an outstanding teacher accused of being too Afro-centric in her teaching!

What comes to my mind, as a former teacher at Jordan High School, is that it is just another subordination and insult to the students themselves, as if they aren't able to make up their own minds as to what direction to take when hearing many sides of social issues. Students should be presented with many sides of issues! They are capable of, and should be given the privilege of, making up their own minds.

Karen Salazar, a second year teacher at Jordan High School, should not be fired. Her students are motivated learners and are able to enter into discussions enthusiastically since the issues are relevant and alive for them. The California Standards accepts teaching of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, and the poetry of Langston Hughes. Salazar admits to "sprinkling" in lyrics of slain rapper Tupac Shakur. This only adds another flavor to the spread of ideas from which students can choose.

Her mentor teacher, who is a veteran teacher with Jordan High School, said, "I saw a new, young teacher teaching her lesson according to the objectives she stated on the board. I saw her engage with her students and interact with them in a very positive way."

Karen Salazar needs help. Letters of support can be written to Principal Strachan at: Mr. Stephan G. Strachan, Principal, Jordan High School, 2265 E.103rd St., Los Angeles, Ca. Phone # 323-568-4100.

A school district that is the second largest in the nation, graduates not even half of its high school seniors. The lack of regard and apathy toward the ghetto schools is untoward as well as unpardonable.

The Watts Rebellion of South Central and the blowouts of the eastside of the sixties were primarily motivated by a deplorable lack of attention to schools. Both events were explosions of pent-up cries of pain for help for the most elemental needs, mainly of a lack of recognition as being part of the community.

—Retired School Teacher

nature of Communism. The Trotskyist denial that the Soviet Union was a totalitarian state-capitalist monstrosity led them to be "the left face of Communism," as Dunayevskaya put it. Holding the same concept of socialism as the Communists, who worked with de Gaulle to crush the revolution, the Trotskyists were able to differ *politically* from the state power. But *philosophically* the concept of a "party to lead" could not propel the revolution forward.

Today's anti-authoritarian radical youth aren't looking to the vanguard party to give them a direction. Still missing, though, is a philosophy that gives action its direction, that can pose questions in a way that neither strips spontaneity of its importance nor leaves everything as mere strategy or pragmatics. What is needed isn't better political leadership or better protest tactics, but a total view of what we're opposing, how to uproot it, and a vision of a new society.

Dunayevskaya's formulation of what was needed was "a new unity of theory and practice which relies, not on some 'vanguard party,' but on the masses, the masses alone who would help forge out this totally new philosophy because they had a vision of a fully free society." Dunayevskaya called this the "missing ingredient" and the proof that philosophy isn't composed of ideas floating around in the air, but of ideas that are realized by masses in motion.

That is still the "missing ingredient" today. Marxist-Humanism is a philosophy for our times that poses an alternative not only to authoritarian sects of radicals, but also to activism that exhausts itself in action, action, and only action.

Mutanabbi St. Coalition

On March 5, 2007, a car bomb exploded on Mutanabbi Street in Baghdad. At least 30 people were killed and 100 were wounded. This locale is the historic center of Baghdad bookselling, a winding street filled with bookstores and outdoor book stalls. Named after the famed 10th century Arab classical poet, Al-Mutanabbi, it had been the heart and soul of the Baghdad literary and intellectual community.

We are among the pages of every book that was shredded and burned and covered with flesh and blood that day. And to those who would manufacture hate with the tools of language; those who would take away the rights and dignity of a people with the very same words that guarantee them; and to anyone who would view the bodies on Mutanabbi Street as a way to narrow the future into one book; we say, as poets, writers, artists, booksellers, printers and readers: Mutanabbi Street starts here!

In April of 2007, San Francisco poet and bookseller Beau Beausoleil began to form a coalition to address not just the tragic loss of life but the idea of a targeted attack on a street where ideas have always been exchanged. The coalition recognizes the commonality of Mutanabbi Street with any street that leads to a bookstore or cultural institution, in this or any country.

We organized a reading at the San Francisco main library, and many other libraries, as well as radio shows and a public-access cable interview/reading concerning the Mutanabbi Street project. In response to our call, Upstart Crow Book Store in Vancouver, Canada, held a reading.

The Coalition issued a call, organized by printer and professor Kathleen Walkup, to letterpress printers for their personal response to the bombing on Mutanabbi Street. To date we have received over 40 broadsides.

We continue to seek booksellers, individuals and cultural organizations in other states that will help organize meetings dedicated to Mutanabbi Street and the art and cultural communities of Iraq. We are looking for other regional coordinators for the extension of the Mutanabbi Street Letterpress Broadside Project. We invite other forms of artistic expression that address these issues. Please contact: Beau Beausoleil at overlandbooks@earthlink.net.

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Sometimes the weight of our own silence becomes completely unbearable, until we cannot take one more day reading about the blood, bone, and ash. And then the moment comes when we recognize that this distant landscape is our own and that we must walk through it.

I knew that if I had been a bookseller in Baghdad, my book shop would have been on Mutanabbi Street; and as a poet, I would most likely be in exile or dead.

The connections between the booksellers and readers on Mutanabbi Street and the booksellers and readers here, are simple and direct. We all share the belief that books are the holders of memories, dreams, and ideas. I felt an urgent need to keep this particular, tragic event in our consciousness; because it has such deep historical and cultural implications, both for us, here in this country, and for the people of Iraq. To this end, I decided to create a coalition of artists, poets, writers, printers, booksellers and readers.

I have always felt that letterpress printers have been "first responders." They have always provided a visible starting place for our collective grief or aspirations for a more just society. I wanted to issue a call to letterpress printers for their personal response to the bombing of Mutanabbi Street. Letterpress printing is a visceral act; it is the body and the text briefly merging, again and again. In this project I have looked for outward acts: poets reading aloud; printers using their presses to bite the words into the paper.

—Beau Beausoleil

WORLD VIEW **China: corruption kills**

While the 7.9 magnitude earthquake that struck populous Sichuan province in China on May 12 was a natural disaster, it was a manmade disaster that extended the death toll to upwards of 70,000 people.

Quick dispatch of the army to search for survivors and distribute aid appeared in sharp contrast to responses costing lives in Burma by the generals and in New Orleans by Bush in 2005. The government tapped a deep vein of sympathy across the country for victims of the earthquake. It tried to confine the mood of mourning into a three-minute national period of silence, but also encouraged full news coverage from the earthquake zone, even by foreign reporters given more access as the Olympics approaches.

But the report on the first day of 900 students buried under the rubble of their school in Juyuan pointed to the connivance of builders and local officials. So many other schools collapsed while older buildings around them remained standing that nearly 10,000 students were killed. Because of the government policy permitting just one child per family, in most cases each student killed was an only child. Official support for these grieving parents quickly



turned hostile. Within ten days parents had begun marching to officials to demand answers. By June 1, Children's Day, 600 parents and supporters in Dujiangyan wore T-shirts reading "We firmly ask for justice for dead students" and "Severely punish corruption in tofu construction."

A regional Chinese newspaper proved the truth of that charge of shoddy unsupported buildings by finding chicken wire in concrete rubble where rebars should have been. As a result the government pressured Chinese newspapers to end earthquake coverage, and began moving foreign reporters from the earthquake zone.

Officials tried to prevent a march on June 3 from the Juyuan school by intimidating the parents. They then overwhelmed the hundred parents who marched—in spite of pressure—with riot police and finally dragged away those who remained.

When the last earthquake in China leveled Tangshan, near Tianjin, in June 1976, party rulers imposed a news blackout, treating the earthquake like a military secret, and foreign reporters could not visit the site for seven years. Mao Zedong well knew that emperors had claimed the "Mandate of Heaven" to legitimate their power; natural disasters would be seen as a sign to their subjects that a dynasty had lost its legitimacy and could be toppled. Mao himself was dead two months later, but no total regime change has replaced state-capitalist rule in China. Now survivors of the earthquake join existing Tibetan and Uighur movements for autonomy, and resistance from peasants and workers to the accumulation of wealth for the well-connected and increasing impoverishment of the producers.

—Bob McGuire

Lebanon in crisis

The recent Doha Accord has not ended the period of crisis in Lebanon. It was a tremendous concession made to Hezbollah by the Lebanese government. While Hezbollah has called off the open war it launched in May, violent incidents continue in various parts of the country. There have been reports of death squads in Beirut targeting opponents of Hezbollah. Fighting has broken out in Tripoli between Alawi militiamen and Sunni groups.

The effort to form a new cabinet has also been dragged out as Hezbollah, which gained most ground at Doha, including its long-sought one-third veto power in the cabinet, tries to maximize its influence in alliance with Christian Michel Aoun.

The situation now leaves all parties at the crossroads. For most Lebanese it would be unthinkable to return to the days of civil war and mutual slaughter. The effort to bring Hezbollah into the government was probably the only deal that could be struck in that regard. By attacking the Sunni and Druze communities with its weapons of "resistance," Hezbollah discredited itself badly among most Lebanese.

While Hezbollah is now the strongest military force in Lebanon, it still can't occupy and control the whole country. Its fighters were badly bloodied in attacking the Druze villages of the Chouf. What Hezbollah's weapons can accomplish is a rearming of Lebanese politics, if other sects and communities are inspired to compete on that level. Down that road can lie another civil war, perhaps another Syrian occupation.

Destructive war with Israel is another possibility, for which all Lebanese people would pay a terrible price. Again, this would be a war that Hezbollah could spark but never finish. But when its Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem recently described "Resistance" as "a vision and a methodology to follow" he was describing just this vision of eternal and futile war. For Hezbollah, its weapons have become an end in themselves, apart from the real historic struggle of Lebanese Shia for dignity and justice.

How this appears to many Lebanese was perhaps summed up by one who said, "For Hezbollah to live, Lebanon must die a thousand deaths."

—Gerry Emmett

Typhoon Fengshen

At least 1,300 are believed to be dead after Typhoon Fengshen hit the central Philippines June 21, capsizing a passenger ferry resulting in the deaths of 809 of the 865 passengers and crew who were aboard. Many bodies are still trapped inside the sunken boat's hull. While early reports focused on the fact that the Philippine coast guard had cleared the ferry for sailing despite the typhoon's proximity, as we go to press the BBC and others are reporting that rescue and salvage efforts of 100 divers have been hampered because the ferry was illicitly carrying ten tons of endosulfan, a highly toxic pesticide bound for Dole Corporation pineapple plantations. Exposure (including of the rescue workers) to endosulfan can cause mental and genetic disorders, skin diseases, nervous disorders and even death.

In a recent "public eye award" short list announcement, the Ecumenical Institute for Labor Education and Research in the Philippines cited Dole, "where workers, particularly women, are only temporarily hired, earn starvation wages, and received no company benefits...children [who work on the plantations] suffer from health problems due to the strenuous work and to toxic chemicals such as endosulfan that are used on the plantations...the firm with the sunny logo is taking drastic measures against the unionists who recently exposed unsafe waste disposal in the canning plant...the local union secretary was temporarily suspended from his work at Dole after he uncovered [violations] of health and safety standards."

As relatives desperate for information about missing loved ones gathered at the corporate headquarters of Sulpicio Lines, owner of the capsized "Princess of the Skies," the shipping line has posted on its website an offer to pay the equivalent of about \$4,500 to the family of each victim. But its offer to "cast aside legal technicalities and waive the waiting period of one year with which missing passengers will be compensated" is not likely to enhance the company's or capitalism's image much among Filipinos.

—Russell Rockwell

Latin American Notes

New U.S. military base

Since 1999, the U.S. Military's Southern Command has operated a military base in Manta, **ECUADOR**, in relation to "narcotrafico," in the Andean region. The base also serves as a way to keep an eye on the political situation in the region from Venezuela to Bolivia. However, recently elected President Rafael Correa has signaled that he will not renew the base lease, which expires next year. There is now much speculation where the U.S. might establish a new base. Peru and Colombia are the leading candidates.

In **PERU**, the Ayacucho region several hundred miles south of Lima is one possibility. The region has a history of cultivation of coca, and is the area with some of the poorest peasants of the country. It is where a terrible dirty war was carried out between the terrorist group Shining Path and the Peruvian army, with some 70,000 victims, two-thirds of whom were Quechua peasants.

In **COLOMBIA**, the leading area for a new U.S. military presence is Palanquero air force base in Puerto Salgar, 120 miles north of Bogota. This base was made famous in 1998, when planes taking off from Palanquero bombed a Colombian town, killing 18 innocent civilians. A Colombian court found that a U.S.-made rocket was responsible for the destruction. Subsequently, the U.S. "decertified" this base, making it ineligible to receive U.S. military aid. However, the State Depart-

ment has recently "recertified" Palanquero, making it eligible for military aid, and the possible establishment of a new U.S. military presence there.

Wherever a new Latin American U.S. military base will be, the U.S. intends to continue to develop a strong military presence in South America.

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Mexico: military incursions

Mexican military and police entered and aggressively threatened the Indigenous autonomous community of La Garrucha, on June 4. The pretext was "to look for the cultivation of marijuana." The result was an intimidation of the population, including a threat to return again in two weeks. The targeting of La Garrucha was no accident. It is one of the communities in resistance with the Zapatistas, the site of one of the region's autonomous Councils of Good Government (*Juntas de Buen Gobierno*), established as an alternative to the structures of the corrupt, repressive Mexican state.

The provocative action was only the latest in a series of such actions in recent time. In response a caravan of supporters traveled from Mexico City to La Garrucha to lend solidarity. An international campaign was organized to appeal to a number of European Governments to intervene with the Mexican government of Felipe Calderon, to "respect the law" and stop holding the Zapatista communities hostage to threatening actions.

—Eugene Walker

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and donated new supplementary volumes to the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

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