

WORKSHOPTALKS

Working on killing floor—the ER

by Htun Lin

There is a daily calamity across America that does not usually make headlines. Unlike earthquakes and hurricanes, this calamity is purely man-made. It is the death and injury tolls in hospitals, especially emergency rooms, due to systematic neglect and substandard care. There is occasional outrage from grieving family members, and maybe even the once-in-a-blue-moon lawsuit over a wrongful death or injury. But this unnecessary toll is taken as business as usual.

For example, when Esmine Green, a 49-year-old mother of six, fell out of her chair after more than 24 hours in the emergency waiting room of King County Psychiatric hospital in New York City, hospital staff ignored her while she convulsed to death on the waiting room floor. In the end, hospital administration fired or suspended seven employees, including a doctor, two nurses, and two security guards.

This blame game may give some immediate satisfaction, but the problem of patients neglected and harmed by long emergency room waits is a national epidemic. It is a deliberate way to control costs by denying care.

Analysts claim the national epidemic of long ER waits is due to a "real shortage" of admission beds. Those of us who work on the frontlines of healthcare know that it is both real and imagined. Certainly HMO restructuring for the last decade has reduced not only the number of hospital beds but ERs and even hospitals.

As healthcare became a focus of a new round of accumulation for investors, HMOs not only deliberately divested their infrastructure but also deliberately cut

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BLACK/REDVIEW

Olympics and capitalist crises

by John Alan

While media coverage of the Beijing Olympics was filled with the quest of swimmer Michael Phelps to win eight gold medals to surpass Mark Spitz's seven in the 1972 Munich Olympics, it is impossible to comprehend how it did not include even a mention of the Munich massacre. Within a 24-hour period on Sept. 5, 1972, Palestinian terrorists invaded the Olympic Village resulting in the murder of 11 Israeli Olympians and one German policeman, and the deaths of five Palestinians. Mark Spitz was himself immediately taken out of the country because he is Jewish and an assassination attempt was feared. Here are excerpts from my column on that horrific event that appeared in the October 1972 News & Letters.

The Olympic Games, just concluded in Munich, Germany, were another bloody political episode in the inhuman mess that world capitalism perpetuates. It has shown how very short the distance is between the Olympiad's eternal flame and the burning villages of Vietnam; it focused the continuing racism in America and Africa, and the cretinism of individual terrorism...

The goal of the XX Olympics was a "festival of peace, in the spirit of Olympic ideals, characterized by understanding, reconciliation, and the brotherhood of all peoples," so declared the Lord Mayor of Munich, Hans Hocken Vogel. In the face of the realities of the world situation, the sentiments expressed by Dr. Vogel reveal the unspeakable depths of hypocrisy by the ruling classes, rejected by sane people all over the world.

At this very moment the American imperialists in Vietnam are pursuing the most barbarous war in the

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U.S. criminalizes undocumented to attack workers' movement

by Eugene Walker

In the biggest raid on a workplace in U.S. history, hundreds upon hundreds of Federal agents mobilized by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement swooped down upon the Agriprocessors plant in Postville, Iowa, on May 12 to try to seize some 697 undocumented workers for whom arrest warrants had been prepared. The close to 400 workers caught at the plant were **not** rounded up for deportation. Rather, this was part of a concerted campaign to criminalize the undocumented immigrant. Thus, the workers were criminally charged with "aggravated identity theft" and "Social Security fraud" for using other peoples' social security numbers or made up numbers.

Just as Katrina demonstrated the government's indifference towards the poor, primarily Black population of New Orleans, the anti-immigrant raids in Postville exposed this government's determination to run roughshod over the human rights of another significant segment of the U.S. population—the millions of undocumented who work in U.S. fields and factories, in construction, and in cleaning offices, hotels and homes. The immigrant without papers has become the new Other within our borders. The near police-state actions of the Federal government in Iowa resulted in the jailing of some 387 Guatemalan and Mexican workers, followed by rapid-fire Orwellian court proceedings and harsh sentencing. At the same time, Postville brought forth **resistance** to the unjust conditions of immigrant life and labor in this "land of the free."

On Sunday July 27, 1,000-plus marched in little Postville, opposing the police-state tactics used by the government against hundreds of Agriprocessors workers who continue to be imprisoned, protesting against the working conditions at the plant, and demanding legalization of undocumented workers.



Women led off the rally at San Francisco ICE headquarters on Aug. 22 demanding rights for immigrant workers.

Arrested workers were transported to the National Cattle Congress, a 60-acre cattle fairground that was transformed into a detention center. The next day began with hothouse, fraudulent legal procedures that led to prison terms. Erik Camayd-Freixas, one of the many Spanish language interpreters the government brought in, described the process:

"Driven single-file in groups of 10, shackled at the wrists, waist and ankles, chains dragging as they shuffled through, the slaughterhouse workers were brought in for arraignment, sat and listened through headsets to the interpreted initial appearance, before marching out again to be bused to different county jails, only to make room for the next row of 10. They appeared to be uniformly no more than 5 ft. tall, mostly illiterate Guatemalan peasants with Mayan last names, ... some in tears, others with faces of worry, fear, and embarrassment. They all spoke Spanish, a few rather laboriously. It dawned on me that, aside from their Guatemalan or Mexican nationality, which was

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War in Georgia: dangerous new world

The war which broke out between Russia and Georgia on Aug. 8 represents one of the most significant confrontations between the U.S. and Russia since the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. Whatever the immediate outcome, it will have serious and dangerous ramifications far into the future.

The current crisis stems from the decision by Georgia's U.S.-allied Mikhail Saakashvili government to settle militarily the matter of South Ossetian separatism. South Ossetians, who live in a former Soviet oblast or administrative region (as well as the similar Georgian region of Abkhazia), looked to Russia for support. Their government is heavily influenced by the class of former KGB and Soviet era bureaucrats tied to Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. When Georgia attacked brutally the Ossetian city of Tskhinvali, the Russian military was more than prepared to take advantage.

Despite a two-year long military buildup that more than doubled Georgian armed forces to 28,000, trainers from the U.S., and some modern arms received from Turkey and Israel, the Georgians turned out to be no match for the Russians.

Saakashvili may have felt he had an optimal moment, when Bush and Putin were to be at the ceremonial opening of the Olympic games, posing as the arena of international peace between nations through athletic competition. To whatever extent Georgia's government was emboldened to challenge the Russians, it wouldn't have happened without the close military ties they have been cultivating with the U.S. and NATO. Indeed, only the demurral of Germany kept Georgia out of NATO last year. And only last month a thousand U.S. military personnel were in Georgia for a training exercise, at a base which Russia has now bombed.

NO MORE UNIPOLAR WORLD

The U.S. military has flown 2,000 Georgian troops back from Iraq, and as well has begun humanitarian aid flights to Tbilisi. At the same time the Russian military has continued its brutal advance through the country and cities of Georgia, with the stated goal of forcing a "regime change." The occupation of Gori effectively split the country in half. This crisis is a direct challenge to the U.S. and essentially puts an end to the idea of a "unipolar world."

Vladimir Putin had stated this goal clearly last year in a speech in Munich, Germany: "What is a unipolar world? It refers to one type of situation, one center of authority, one center of force, one center of decision-making. It is a world in which there is one master, one sovereign. This is pernicious ... unacceptable ... impossible."

The crisis is a challenge to those countries formerly controlled by the Soviet Union, as seen by the statements and actions of Ukraine and Poland (whose presidents flew into Tbilisi to stand with Saakashvili) and the Baltic states. The logic for an immeasurably wider conflict is firmly in place. The Polish government for instance has now accepted the presence of a U.S. missile shield, and in return a senior Russian general has chillingly declared Poland a legitimate target of Russian nuclear missiles.

NEW THREAT OF TOTAL WAR

Putin's stance is also meant to send a strong message to Western Europe inasmuch as the gas pipelines that pass from Baku, Azerbaijan, through Georgia were shut down. The continent is already dependent upon Russia for much of its energy, and Putin would like to keep that leverage in place, or to strengthen it. The current crisis demonstrates to the Western European governments how easily that can be done. Closing the gas pipelines also establishes Russian dominance over Georgia, as they are seen as strengthening Georgia both economically and politically.

Yet another motive for Putin's Russia is perhaps greater land access to the Middle East, and the opportunity for further military moves in that volatile region.

What is new in Georgia is that this isn't just a flash point but actual war, with Russian imperialism telling U.S. imperialism that the struggle for world mastery is far from over. It makes it more urgent than ever to realize that self-determination can only end capitalist warmongering if it is a path to global solidarity and getting rid of capitalism. The opposite of war is revolution.

The battle of ideas is as paramount here as the physical battlefield. Russia has tried to justify its actions in Georgia with a specious parallel to the situation of Kosova under Milosevic. (Claims of Georgian "ethnic

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Nicaragua: what happened after the revolution

by Terry Moon

The necessity of addressing the philosophic question, "What happens after revolution?" before and during the revolution itself, was raised concretely recently by Sofia Montenegro, a long-time revolutionary feminist activist of the Nicaraguan Autonomous Women's Movement. Montenegro excoriated Daniel Ortega, the president of Nicaragua and the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front's (FSLN) reactionary role in making Nicaragua's anti-abortion law one of the most repressive on earth, outlawing all abortions for any reason, including a woman's health. Since the law came into effect in November 2006, it has caused the deaths of well over 100 women. Many die in agony, mostly from completely treatable conditions.

Montenegro said to her InterPress interviewer, "It was the votes of FSLN lawmakers, not the Right, that made the repeal of therapeutic abortion possible. It was a betrayal of women, who were key allies of the 1979 Sandinista Revolution."

WOMEN STILL DYING

While the FSLN-affiliated women's organization, AMNLAE, kept quiet about the appalling lack of reproductive rights during the revolution that overthrew the dictator Somoza in 1979 and for many years after, by 1983 Maria Torres, the director of Children's Hospital in Valex Pals, Nicaragua, complained to the U.S. feminist journal *off our backs* that illegal abortions were one of the three major causes of maternal death. Torres' hospital saw one or two self-induced or butcher abortions a day. The *oob* article also quotes the authors of *Sweet Ramparts: Women in Revolutionary Nicaragua*, who "note that one hospital in the capital city of Managua admits an average of ten women a day as a result of illegal abortions."

We wrote then in the pages of *News & Letters*: "we must ask what it means for Nicaragua, four years after revolution, to have a law that is so awful that abortion is only legal if the woman's life is in danger and even then consent must be given by the man!" (See December 1983 *N&L*, "Philosophy critical for 'feminist dialogue.'") Now, even that law, with the help of Ortega and his now counter-revolutionary FSLN, has been gutted. We concluded in 1983: "What is most unserious is to bury the demand of women to control our own bodies as if that isn't a priority **simultaneously** with feeding the hungry and fighting U.S. imperialism... [W]e are talking of revolution in permanence, of the fact that women's fight for full freedom has always deepened the

Acid attack threat

Recently, the Pakistani unit of the Taliban announced not only that it demands "unislamic" businesses to close (CD shops, cable service providers and internet cafes)—they also warned women that they have 15 days to start wearing hijab—or have their faces maimed with acid. These guys claim to be out to destroy the "traitors to Allah"—while they go against every Qur'anic command to respect human rights.

Disfiguring women's faces with acid has a long, scary history—including in Kashmir, in Pakistan, as well as Bangladesh, Uganda, Vietnam, Cambodia, Ethiopia, the UK, Turkey, Colombia, Thailand, and the U.S. Sadly, this is the short list.

While acid attacks happen most frequently in Muslim-majority countries, this crisis doesn't plague Muslims alone. It is vitally important to understand just how widespread these kinds of attacks are. They can do much more than maim someone's physical appearance. Blindness, loss of speech and even death can result. Many, after losing significant amounts of skin, are unable to survive the infections that ravage their bodies. UNICEF reported a story about a baby girl whose father poured acid into her mouth because she was not the boy he wanted his wife to bring into the world. She grew up unable to speak or hear.

Receiving the threat of an acid attack is alarming—but to see the pervasiveness of this horror is petrifying. Now, an acid-maiming campaign is being launched—openly—against Pakistani women. Unlike when communities have been taken by surprise, the Pakistani Taliban has stated their gruesome, disgusting mission publicly. We cannot claim shock this time around.

What can we do?

- Get involved with groups like the International Campaign Against Honour Killings (<http://stophonourkillings.com/>). Acid attacks are often used where a woman is seen as having "dishonored" her family, community, or religion. ICAHK works against this brutality. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (<http://www.hrcp-web.org/index.cfm>) releases yearly reports on violence against women.

- Learn more from Amnesty International (<http://www.amnestyusa.org/violence-against-women/violence-against-women---a-fact-sheet/page.do?id=1108440&n1=3&n2=39>) and join their campaign to protect women's rights. Learn by watching videos like this (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdeYt3zINOY>) and take action.

We cannot claim ignorance or justify inaction.

—Raquel Evita Saraswati
<http://raquelevita.wordpress.com>

concept of how total revolution has to **become...**"

Revolution is always the test of revolutionaries, and that the Left just didn't get it was revealed, again, in May of 1985 when Ernesto Cardenal, the then Nicaraguan Minister of Culture, spoke at the University of Illinois. His short speech ended with a call for a

dialogue with his audience. I took the opportunity to say: "I want to know how it is that five and a half years after revolution, women are still

dying from butcher abortions in Nicaragua? **What I am really asking is why is it that the fight to control our own bodies is seen as divisive to revolution, rather than as deepening it?**" Cardenal responded that women could get abortions if it was medically necessary—something that now, partly thanks to him, is no longer possible. (See June 1985 *N&L*, "Feminists question Nicaragua's Cardenal.")

Telling was how no one in that lecture hall dared to support me because they knew they would be attacked and in fact those who took the floor condemned my question as one Latin American activist did, by saying that: "Yes, women are oppressed, but Latin America is

different from the North American women's movement, and the main point is that women's struggle must be seen in terms of the overall view of the class struggle."

There is no need or space to argue with such ideas that have been long discredited by books like Margaret Randall's *Gathering Rage*, or most importantly, by the indigenous Nicaraguan women's movement and women like Sofia Montenegro.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER?

What must be stressed is there were 11 years when the Sandinistas ruled Nicaragua and could have codified women's freedom and reproductive justice in the laws and practices of the land. Had they done that, there is no way now that Ortega could genuflect to the Catholic Church and mount the presidency on the backs of women dying from treatable medical conditions and butcher abortions. It isn't only those like Cardenal and Ortega who are to blame. The left was **and remains** almost completely silent on the question, whether it is women dying in Nicaragua, or right here in the USA.

What is revealed is a narrow concept of what revolution means, a failure to come to grips with what happens after, and a non-understanding of Marx's concept of revolution in permanence. This is grounded in thinking that philosophy is an abstraction so that the vision of what it means to be a whole free human being and how deep and continuous must revolution become to make that vision a reality is simply lost, set aside. The reality of Nicaragua today, where women are needlessly dying because a revolution stopped short with the seizure of power, shows just how philosophic is the question of What happens after revolution? and that we need to be addressing that question right now.

Fragmented care

Incarcerated women are the sickest demographic in the U.S. This is because prison conditions are unhealthy and healthcare is inadequate in prison, and because women coming in to prison are already sicker. In fact, being ill and poor is a risk factor for going to prison.

At the 2008 National Women's Studies Association conference in Cincinnati, Ohio (see June-July 2008 *N&L*), "Disrupted Lives, Fragmented Care: Illness Experiences of Criminalized Women" was a paper presented by Susan Sered of Suffolk University. She looked at women in a Massachusetts prison. Most women prisoners in Massachusetts have not committed serious crimes but are there because they violated probation for very minor infractions: prostitution or petty theft. In California, where I work with women prisoners and edit *The Fire Inside*, women are incarcerated in huge numbers (over 11,000). In Massachusetts, there are around 600 women state-prisoners. If California incarcerated women at that rate, they would only lock up around 3,000. California prisoners fought the systematic medical abuse, which even the federal court found criminal, with prisoners dying needlessly every day.

Sered's study took an extensive health history of the women prisoners. It was not the case that the women had no access to care; in fact the number of facilities they received care from was overwhelming. Dealing with that many providers resulted in a very fragmented, disrupted care. These are women whose lives, in general, have already been fragmented. While Massachusetts apparently has a large number of clinics and other care providers, they are oriented around **conditions** they treat, like dental, reproductive or emergency care. They don't coordinate care for the women. Their "object" is the condition they are set up to address, not the whole person.

Most of the women have been sexually abused, many as children; many have been in foster care, juvenile facilities, homeless shelters, rehab programs, etc. Prison is just one more stop for them. Almost all have both chronic and acute medical problems such as diabetes and/or high blood pressure. Many also have dental and mental health problems. None have health insurance. They all have had some access to Medicaid, but it is on-again-off-again access, which contributes to disruption of care. They might see a therapist once and never get scheduled for a follow-up visit.

Most of the women have been married. None of their relationships last. Some have been pregnant and lost all pregnancies due to severe beatings by boyfriends or other causes. A large number have learning disabilities, which make it impossible for them to coordinate their own care. Their housing, too, has been disrupted as they sometimes qualify for Section 8 housing but then lose it as a friend or a relative begs to stay with them. Their lives are spirals of disruption, they have no stability, no one who cares about them. The medical system only reinforces the parade of strangers, for whom the women are expected to disrobe physically, mentally and emotionally.

This study was remarkable as it concludes that merely more services do not solve the problem. The humanity of the women prisoners, their total life, is not reducible to being a recipient of services. The conclusions I draw are that prison shows what is wrong with society at large: that healthcare focused on disease, not the patient, is not adequate. The lives of these women illustrate how this society failed them, how it is not a society for the people it creates. It shows why we need a fundamentally different conception of the "we" that is necessary to create the best possible individual "I's".

—Ursula Wislanka

WOMAN AS REASON

WOMENWORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey



Juan Pedro Castellán

Thousands of Chileans marched in Santiago to protest the Constitutional Court's ruling outlawing President Michelle Bachelet's free emergency contraception distribution program. The court claimed that emergency contraception could "endanger a recently fertilized egg." Gloria Maira, of the Movement for the Defense of Birth Control, said, "This is a demonstration in demand of freedom. We don't want any more moral dictatorships." More than 500 Chileans have already announced that they will renounce their membership in the Catholic Church because of the church's involvement with the court's anti-contraception ruling. Mujeres Publicas, a women's rights group in Chile, plans another protest against the Catholic Church.

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Hundreds of women, representing more than 30 nationalities from the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Japan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, participated in a 12-day bicycle ride campaign for peace. The Follow the Women group hosted the fourth Pedal for Peace in the Middle East which wound through Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and parts of the Occupied Territories.

* * *

Anti-abortion measures will be on November ballots in **California** as a proposed constitutional amendment requiring parental notification and a 48-hour waiting period for minors seeking an abortion. Voters also face a measure to amend the state constitution to ban abortion after 24 weeks calling it "murder unless necessary to save the mother's life." In **Colorado**, Amendment 48 declares a fertilized egg a person who enjoys all constitutional rights. It endangers the right to abortion and threatens oral and emergency contraception, IUDs and in vitro fertilization clinics. In **South Dakota** an abortion ban initiative would amend the state constitution to severely limit access to abortion except where the mother's life or health is at risk and in cases of rape or incest. Voters voted down a more restrictive bill in November 2006.

* * *

A petition to ban abortion and certain forms of birth control in Montana will not be put to the vote, after anti-choicers could not even get half the votes needed to put it on the ballot. The Fetal Personhood Amendment would have redefined "personhood" to include all stages of human development from fertilized egg to birth. The law would have also banned stem cell research and infertility treatments.

Information from Planned Parenthood

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Domestic partners Lorri Sulpizio and Cathy Bass are suing Mesa College in San Diego for firing them because they are gay and because they advocated for facilities for women athletes to be equal with those for men. Sulpizio and Bass worked for Mesa's basketball program for over a decade.

—Elise

Corporate murder in mine disaster

DETROIT—Corporate negligence was responsible for the deaths of nine coal miners in Utah's Crandall Canyon coal mine disaster last year, according to two recent federal investigative reports, one by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and the other by the Labor Department. Both reports lay the blame for the tragedy squarely at the door of the mine owner, Murray Energy Corporation, and its subsidiary mine operator, Genwal Resources.

The reports disclosed that the mine had long been operating under dangerous conditions, conditions that were known by mine management. They were not only ignored, but were also falsified to obtain permission to use retreat mining, which is very profitable and removes coal pillars that help keep the roof from caving in. Removing the coal pillars tremendously increases the pressure on the roof, and this pressure manifests itself by the flaking of coal from the sides and pillars in the mine and by upheavals in the floor, called bumps.

These were the conditions the miners were working in on Aug. 6 last year, when the top caved in on six men. Instead of MSHA directing the rescue efforts, which it is mandated to do, this task was left to the mine owner, Robert Murray, who insisted that the roof fall resulted from an earthquake (an "act of God") in order to escape future prosecution, despite a seismograph report from the nearby University of Utah rejecting that claim.

The botched rescue efforts resulted ten days later in the deaths from another roof fall of three rescuers who were trying to reach the six dead or trapped miners, and the rescue efforts were terminated. The toll: nine dead miners, all still entombed in that mine.

The MSHA report especially criticized Genwal for failure to fully report the dangerous mine conditions, and that deceit deprived MSHA of the information it needed to make decisions about the mine operations. MSHA fined Murray Energy \$1.6 million for its irresponsible actions, the highest fine ever assessed by the agency. Another company, Agapito Associates, that had



Family and co-workers at one Crandall Canyon miner's funeral

drawn up the retreat mining plans for Crandall Canyon, was fined \$220,000 for submitting false data that masked the dangerous conditions in the mine.

The Labor Department report also criticized MSHA for approving the retreat mining plans and for its failure to take control of the mine rescue operations, despite MSHA pleading ignorance of the unsafe conditions. The reports also confirmed that it was no earthquake but unsafe conditions in the mine that led to the deaths of the miners. The public outrage at the spate of mine disasters in the past few years has resulted in the hiring of 322 mining enforcement employees, which clearly demonstrates the horrible lack of safety concerns by this administration. It has filled all worker watchdog agencies with industry appointees and slashed their budgets to the point that they are incapable of performing their duties.

While the additional enforcement personnel will undoubtedly help, this is no substitute for needed mine safety legislative reform. Such reform has been submitted to Congress, but is opposed by MSHA, whose director, Richard E. Strickler, says it does not permit enough "flexibility" (whatever that is) or allow enough time to effect the provisions. This is the same argument that MSHA has consistently used to delay or prevent federal mine safety legislation.

While the public outcry against this particular disaster is such that the companies will probably not get off scot-free, as many safety-violating coal operators have in the past, the recent history of fines at MSHA indicates that the final fines will be substantially reduced upon appeal.

The disclosures surrounding the Crandall Canyon disaster reflect such blatant disregard for the lives of miners that even one of the most prominent capitalist news organizations, the *New York Times*, has editorially called for a criminal investigation into the tragedy. In that way the families of the dead Crandall Canyon miners can at least receive that small measure of justice.

—Andy Phillips

Israeli-Palestinian trade union solidarity

According to the International Trade Union Confederation, a significant agreement was reached on Aug. 6 between the Israeli trade union congress, the Histadrut, and the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU). The agreement involves protecting the rights of those Palestinians who work for Israeli employers.

Included will be the reimbursement by the Histadrut to the PGFTU of legal and union representation fees that have been paid by Palestinian workers with Israeli employers since 1993. In the future, at least 50% of such fees will go to the PGFTU to enable both organizations to provide representation and legal services.

Implementation of this agreement will be overseen by a joint committee of both organizations. Both organizations also pledge to base their future relations on dialogue, negotiations and joint initiatives to advance "fraternity and coexistence between the two peoples."

The 250,000-member PGFTU, close to Fatah, has been criticized by many Palestinian labor activists, like those of the Democracy and Workers' Rights Center (DWRC), for a lack of internal democracy. Up to 50,000 workers in the West Bank and Gaza were represented last year at the founding of a new independent labor coalition, the Federation of Independent Unions-Palestine. Unions represented ranged from education, medical, and financial workers to the Unemployed Workers' Federation. This new coalition operates outside the structures of the existing political parties.

The new coalition had advocated an agreement like the one just signed by the PGFTU. As Hasan Barghouti of the DWRC has noted, freedom of association and the right of workers to organize has been expanding, and a vibrant labor movement is growing up among Palestinians.

—Gerry Emmett

Celebrating culture of labor history

SAN FRANCISCO—The San Francisco LaborFest was established in 1994 to institutionalize the history and culture of working people in an annual labor cultural, film and arts festival. It takes place every July, beginning on July 5, the anniversary of the 1934 "Bloody Thursday" police shooting of two workers, Howard Sperry and Nick Borboise, supporting the longshore and maritime workers' strike. Their murders sparked the San Francisco General Strike, which shut down the entire city and led to hundreds of thousands of workers joining the trade union movement.

This year's themes were commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the New Deal and the 40th anniversary of 1968 and the movements that developed worldwide. Both were seminal events for people in the U.S. and around the world.

LaborFest is organized by unionists and unorganized workers, cultural workers and supporters of labor education and history. There are now LaborFests in Tokyo and Osaka, Japan, every December. LaborFests have also taken place in Buenos Aires, Argentina and El Alto, Bolivia. In April of this year, the first LaborFest in Capetown, South Africa took place. In May, there were LaborFests in Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey. The need to build local, national and international solidarity is critical, if labor is going to face the challenges it faces on all fronts.

I've had the pleasure of attending many LaborFest events over the years, and the privilege of volunteering to help organize and staff events. The highlight each year is the Labor History Boat Tour, a dinner cruise around the San Francisco Bay. We get a close up look at the construction of the new Bay Bridge and sail right under the largest cargo cranes in the world at Oakland Port, and defunct and current maritime worksites.

This year local musicians Marcus Duskin and Carol Denney played and sang labor solidarity songs. International Longshore and postal workers/historians Leo Robinson, Carl Bryant, Fernando Gapsin, Jack Heyman and others conducted a panel on Black Workers, Hanging Nooses and The State of the Labor Movement. This year kicked off the First Annual Labor Book Fair and Poetry Reading.

The closing party featured live rock music and dancing with the strike-seasoned schoolteachers' band Angry Tired Teachers. We saw movies about Sacco and Vanzetti, Eugene Debs, workers' struggles in the UK, Turkey, Oaxaca, Mexico, South Africa, France, Spain, Australia, Ireland and rural and urban people in the U.S. The musical group Folk This! performed a tribute concert to Utah Phillips, the late singer, songwriter, storyteller, anarchist, railroad tramp, and defender of the homeless and workers everywhere.

Historian Robert Leighninger, author of "Building Louisiana," told us about the pattern of bombing of New Orleans levees in 1927 and 1967, and possibly in 2005. Brad Ott traveled from New Orleans to tell us about the struggle to reopen Charity Hospital, the famed public health hospital, which is being kept closed despite being declared fit to operate by the U.S. Public Health Service and the Army Corps of Engineers. (For more info and to help, go to www.replacethecare.org or www.charityhospital.org.)

Get involved or just check it out! www.laborfest.net.

—Janice R.

WORKSHOPTALKS

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back on their workforce by reducing the number of healthcare providers, from doctors and nurses to housekeepers. It's all about maximizing profit by minimizing cost.

As more and more American workers are denied health insurance, and as private clinics increasingly refuse to schedule appointments for patients on Medicaid, increasingly more people are appearing in the ER as healthcare of last resort. In poor communities like Oakland, the waits can be upwards of 24 to 32 hours.

HEALTHCARE DELAYED IS HEALTHCARE DENIED

A major cause of ER crowding is the hospital practice of "boarding" inpatients in the ER. These patients have already been admitted by doctor's orders, but due to deliberately short-staffed medical-surgical wards, they are unable to go to a floor bed. One recent study showed that critically ill patients who board for more than six hours are 4% more likely to die. The nurse-patient ratios in the ER can be as high as eight to one.

In California, Gov. Schwarzenegger failed in his attempt to scuttle the nurse-patient ratios which nurses had pushed through the legislature, but it doesn't matter. Hospitals can violate those ratios by simply bottlenecking the ER by "boarding" inpatients there. The ER is thereby used as a loophole around state law.

So, how does "ER boarding" work? Simply deny a bed for a patient. It's not that we've run out of physical beds, but there are no nurses and aides to go with those beds. Management huddles every morning to find new ways to cut staffing levels down to the bone: not replacing sick calls, canceling upcoming shifts, sending nurses home, or shutting down particular wards by instructing the charge nurse to refuse to take any more admits. It is a daily battle to place patients.

Patients are seen as adversaries both to managers and to some workers. They are reduced to a cost imposed on managers' budgets, or just another burden to my eight-hour shift, as we workers are all harried, overworked, and short-tempered. It's about self-preservation. Managers have to protect their budgets, and RNs become obsessed with their own particular workload. In the process, the patient loses.

LETTING WORKERS TAKE THE BLAME

Why are front-line caregivers giving in to "ER boarding"? A recent study by Doctors Meisel and Pines (see "Waiting Doom, how hospitals are killing E.R. patients," <http://www.slate.com/id/2195851/>) speculated: "Put yourself in an inpatient nurse's shoes. You are overworked, and your current patients need attention. You get a call from the ER, saying that a patient like Green is ready to come upstairs. The bed is clean and ready. But you have 20 more things to do before your shift ends in two hours. You won't get in trouble for stalling, because no one really measures how long patients stay in the ER. So you tell the ER nurse that the bed isn't ready yet."

This is called "bed hiding," and it is a national epidemic in hospitals across America. We are so inured to substandard care as the norm that we spend time documenting non-care, i.e., why a patient isn't placed within the 24-hour legal deadline, instead of delivering care. It is the system that sets us up for failure. We must refuse to be unwitting accomplices.

We must find a way not to harm the patient in the course of this protracted battle over labor time. Our ultimate goal in healthcare work must be finding a new vision of healthcare labor, which promotes health, not capital's expansion.

How to begin anew?

Theoretical and Practical Perspectives: Where to Begin

Report by Raya Dunayevskaya to the founding Convention of News and Letters Committees, July 1956.

"Theoretical and Practical Perspectives," sounds very imposing. The sub-title, *Where to Begin*, sounds simple. Yet both mean one and the same thing. It is a matter of laying a solid foundation for...

1. the continuance of *News & Letters* as a workers' paper, as the recorder of the impulses from the deepest layers of the population, which is at the same time a new form of unity of theory and practice;
2. the form of organization we wish to establish for ourselves, and its relationship to the working class as a whole;
3. our relations with workers abroad...is matched by the American workers' desire for knowledge of the world's working people...;
4. finally, the book on Marxism [what became *Marxism and Freedom* in 1957] as both theory and a weapon in the class struggle."

—Raya Dunayevskaya

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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYADUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note: To commemorate the anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we present excerpts of a lecture given by Raya Dunayevskaya in Tokyo on Jan. 2, 1966, to a group of activists and writers from *Zenshin*, an anti-Stalinist organization of the Japanese New Left. Her trip to Japan in 1965-66 included a speech in Hiroshima and discussions and meetings with student youth, autoworkers, anti-war activists, and Marxists grouped around the anti-Stalinist Zengakuren movement. The transcript of the lecture is in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 9697. An edited version is included in *The Power of Negativity*.

The first thing I want to make very, very clear is that Hegel has a validity all his own, and I want to talk about Hegel today. I am going to take for granted instead of reiterating all the time about what Marx did or did not take from Hegel. I am taking for granted that we are Marxists and that we are proletarian revolutionaries. If I mention Marx at all, and even Lenin, it is only in passing in order to show what each of them took from Hegel and what we have to take from Hegel. But on the whole, the subject is Hegel and no one else.

The second thing I want to make clear is that, so far as I am concerned, Hegel is his major works—that is to say, *Phenomenology of Mind*, *Science of Logic*, *Philosophy of Mind*. I am not the least bit interested in Hegel's reactionary ideas about the state... or in how he applied his ideas. I am interested only in the actual logic and movement of those ideas which he set forth, not only as a summation of all that went before, but as both the prerequisite for Marxism and as something we have not yet exhausted. We first have to work out many of the ideas before we can transcend them.

THE PULL OF THE FUTURE

Hegel's *Phenomenology* was a summons to grasp the spirit of the times. It was a demand that the philosophers give ear to the urgency of the times. It was a challenge to all philosophers who came before him, and the greatest in modern times was Kant: if we are to live up to the fact that 25 years have passed [since Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*], including the French Revolution, and yet philosophy was still using their old categories, then we have to stop using the conclusions of other philosophers, right or wrong, as a pillow for our own intellectual sloth, our own attempt not to meet the challenge of the times. A new thing had happened in the world in a 25-year period which compelled a new stage of cognition. And a new stage of cognition means both a summation of what has happened up to your time and a recognition of the pull that the future has on you. It is this summons which we want to see how Hegel answered, and what it has for our day.

The greatest and first total statement was [Hegel's] *Phenomenology of Mind*... Hegel, despite the abstract language, is actually dealing with 2,500 years of the development of thought, mainly but not completely of Western civilization... I want to take the six stages of Hegel's development of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit, Religion and Absolute Knowledge [in the *Phenomenology* and divide it] into two major stages. One will be Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, and Reason, which I consider the development from 500 BC—slave society and Aristotle as the ancient world's greatest philosopher—to Reason, which is capitalism, the French Revolution, Lutheranism, and Kant-Hegel. The second department is all the rest: Spirit, the various forms of Alienated Spirit, and why there is still alienation even though you have reached Religion and Absolute Knowledge.

In the first department, what we have all previously emphasized, from Marx forward, is the section on "Lordship and Bondage," because we recognized that Hegel is showing the lord could demand anything and the slave was completely negative, and yet the slave is the one who gets a mind of his own. The slave getting "a mind of his own" was one of the bases for Marx's great development of proletarian consciousness.

...The importance of that section is that the slave has gotten a mind of his own, but whether he will get to Reason, or to Spirit, is in question. If you become conscious, not only of the world and yourself as opposites, but of yourself as getting Self-Consciousness and going further to try and break down this division between opposites and yourself, and you are so thrilled that you have this idea, Hegel shows that it could become, in his words, "just a piece of cleverness, and not yet the mastery over reality."¹ And because it could be just a piece of cleverness and not yet the mastery over reality, you can become just an alienated soul.

FURTHER STAGES OF ALIENATION

I want to take up one more thing in [the section on] Self-Consciousness... Stoicism arose because you as an individual recognized that this is a horrible society—there was universal slavery and bondage—and you couldn't overcome it. You weren't, so to speak, what we would call a mass movement to overcome it. So you as an individual becoming a Stoic was actually a rationalization, as in developing such stupidities as "a

¹ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931) [hereafter referred to as PhGB], p. 240; Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977) [hereafter referred to as PhGM], p. 119.

Hegel's summons!

Grasp revolutionary spirit of the age

philosopher is free even though he is in chains."

Hegel shows that everything that appears great is only a further stage of alienation. Even when he comes to Reason, that will be so. The important thing about not stopping at "Lordship and Bondage" is that getting a mind of one's own is only a beginning. Hegel is showing that if you are going to master reality, you are going to have to get a lot further than that. Attempts to master it by such thought as Stoicism, even when they are correct either as individual integrity or in the criticism of the rest of society, are absolutely insufficient.

Therefore I am stressing that what came out after the slave got a mind of his own was a new stage of, so to speak, retrogression, where the intellectuals all began saying: "Oh, great, the Roman Empire is dead, but we will be stoics, or in some other form such as just behaving ourselves, we will overcome it." And even when it moved to overcoming, sparked by a real revolution—whether Hegel considers that to be Christianity or at another time the actual French Revolution—that is still not the answer. That is why I do not want to stop at gaining a mind of your own. I want to stress what Hegel saw in the Alienated Soul, Stoicism, and Skepticism, which were good little paths on the way to Reason, but they were not the answer.

As against using the conclusions of other philosophers as a pillow for intellectual sloth, or as against the Alienated Soul and Stoicism, Hegel is showing a new movement of history. There was an actual revolution. It broke down everything, smashed it to smithereens and started something new. And the people who did this great thing (Robespierre and the others) recognized Reason as their deity. And yet what happened? Why did the Terror follow? Why did Napoleon follow? Why didn't we yet get to the Millennium? Hegel sees Reason as a very new high stage, but [neither it nor] Spirit, which is our next department, answers or kills off all the alienations of society. It just brings them to a higher stage. So Reason ends this first great department of the *Phenomenology* on this movement from 500 BC to the French Revolution.

Now we come to Department II, the central core. The alienated soul, Hegel says, has moved to a higher development, an Alienated Spirit. The higher development is that man has achieved this revolution, but he begins to identify himself either as faction or as person with the revolution, and from now on the State is more or less on order. [Hegel has] a tremendous attack on the state—never mind that he was a Prussian philosopher. He attacked it thoroughly, totally and completely—even any future state that would come between the person and his development.

There isn't a single person on our stage today, whether you take Mao, Fidel Castro, or any other person, that you cannot find described in the [section on] Alienated Spirit.² It is about what happens when there is a new revolution and yet somehow there is a transformation in the relationship between reality and thought in such a way that you begin to identify yourself with the state or with one single faction. You begin to have as big a Reign of Terror in thought as the revolution had³—a Reign of Terror in thought against the other, the new opponents, etc. And the new opponents even include religions, although Hegel was a Christian.

His criticism of what he called "the discipline of culture" [PhGB, pp. 507-610; PhGM, pp. 296-363] is the foundation for Marx's criticism of the superstructure. Hegel was not a proletarian revolutionary, but he criticized all culture as having been very good for fighting against superstition and that sort of thing, but it now has imprisoned us by what Marx called the fetishism of commodities.⁴ I would go so far as to say that Hegel's three volumes on the *Philosophy of Religion* are the greatest attack on the so-called vanguard party that we have ever seen. Hegel does with the church, though he is a Christian, what we want to do against the Stalinist party. He is saying, "Look at that, Christianity came in because finally we saw that, as against only a few being free, like those who were great enough to be

² "Spirit in Self-Estrangement: The Discipline of Culture and Civilization" is the second main subdivision of the section on Spirit.

³ A reference to the Jacobin terror during the French Revolution.

⁴ For further discussion see Dunayevskaya's Nov. 21, 1963, letter to Erich Fromm in *News & Letters*, Feb.-March 2008.

philosophers, Jesus insisted that man as man is free. But this one little Church, the Catholic Church, said they were the only interpreters and would not let us have a direct contact with God."

Whatever his excuse is, we have a lot to learn from Hegel, not merely to transcend him. Here he is supposed to be a Christian, a Lutheran that corrected such excesses both in the Catholic Church and the Terror of the French Revolution, and yet Hegel comes down and says [Religion] is not it—I have to go to philosophy. That is the basis for all the attacks on Hegel as being a hidden atheist—and, by golly, he was. But the point that we are trying to stress by now being in Department II, is that Spirit is still alienated and in the discipline of culture. Religion [the next stage after Spirit] has been perverted and man, not the Church, must decide as to what will finally evolve. It brings us to the final stage of Absolute Knowledge.

He comes to Absolute Knowledge and says: Look, this is history. This has moved in such and such stages as the phenomena of the spirit of man. Now there is also the science of this spirit, whether in religion or in actual science, and these will unite to form Absolute Knowledge. The Absolute Knowledge of science and history uniting as one becomes the transition point for the *Science of Logic* and the *Philosophy of Mind*, because everything always ends in some Absolute. One is Absolute Knowledge in the *Phenomenology*, then we have Absolute Idea in the *Science of Logic*, and then Absolute Mind in the *Philosophy of Mind*. But it is always moving in this direction...

Now Hegel comes to the *Science of Logic* and begins to talk not in stages of consciousness—as in the *Phenomenology*, which had just flowed out of him under the impact of the French Revolution—but in actual philosophic categories. Each category takes up a whole stage of civilization in the same manner as each stage of consciousness does. Because we are hurried in time I am not going to deal with either Being or Essence. I will go directly to "The Doctrine of the Notion," and especially its last section, "The Absolute Idea." "The Doctrine of Notion" or of Freedom is in actuality the objective and subjective way to get to the new society...

SECOND SUBJECTIVITY

Both Marx and Lenin, even though Lenin went further in the Absolute Idea, happened to have stopped in the Absolute. Marx said on the one hand it doesn't mean anything because Hegel returned to a closed system of thought, but on the other hand it does mean something because Marx was always returning back to it. But as it happens [Marx's 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic"] cuts off at a certain paragraph at the very beginning of the *Philosophy of Mind*, the section which begins on the Absolute. When Marx finishes [his analysis of] the *Phenomenology of Mind*, he tries to take it from a different angle. He goes through Hegel's whole system, quotes two paragraphs from the *Philosophy of Nature* [and then goes] into the *Philosophy of Mind*, where the manuscript breaks off. And that is the problem of our age.

One of the central points in the Absolute Idea, just before Hegel reaches what we call the "second subjectivity," is a sentence which reads, "The self-determination in which alone the Idea is, is to hear itself speak..."⁵ The self-determination of ideas also has various stages of development and breaks into two. There is a movement from practice—that is where I get my [category of] movement from practice, [whose self-determination] is to hear itself speak. It comes, so to speak, elementally in the proletariat, as instinctive. And there is a movement from theory which doesn't come so elementally and may have many pitfalls. At this point, where the theoreticians have to listen to the

Continued on page 5



Raya Dunayevskaya making a point during a lecture

⁵ Hegel, *Science of Logic* (New York: MacMillan, 1929), Vol. II, p. 467; Hegel, *Science of Logic* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1969), p. 825. The concept of a "second subjectivity" is based on Hegel's discussion in "The Absolute Idea": "The transcendence of the opposition between the Notion and Reality, and that unity which is the truth, rest upon this subjectivity alone. The second negative, the negative of the negative, which we have reached, is this transcendence of the contradiction. . . ." (pp. 477-78, 835, respectively).

On 'Freedom, necessity and post-capitalist society'

Hegel as an Enlightenment thinker sought to teach the transformative power of philosophy upon social life. Social life in the Enlightenment period was characterized by class domination, and Hegel's philosophy was emancipatory inasmuch as he theorized that the acquisition of social intelligence within a class-divided culture occurred most genuinely among theorizing members of the society having subordinate, rather than superordinate, political standing. This subversive learning dynamic, propounded in the master/slave discussion in the *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807), was propelled by what he saw as the necessity of human liberation internal to alienated human life itself. Marx, as a student of the liberation movements of the labor force, theorized human freedom as the emancipation of sensuous living labor from its estranged and distorted social existence as a commodity (i.e., wage labor)—and as capital. A future of freedom for the work force is, thus, to be found only in an economic order that is post wage-labor and post capital.

Russell Rockwell's essay (see June-July 2008 *N&L*) points to the work of Raya Dunayevskaya for theoretical leverage in moving us toward post-capitalist society. Dunayevskaya finds Hegel developing a theory of liberation in his *Philosophy of Mind* (1817, ten years after the *Phenomenology*) that is apparently more idealistic and less socially relevant. Hegel now elaborated emancipation in terms of the general concepts of freedom and necessity, rather than the more class-related terms **master** and **servant**. Dunayevskaya finds the greater universality of these philosophical concepts (as also the concepts nature and mind) pivotal to the late Marx's "social translation" of Hegel. She cites *Capital* Vol. 3 and the *Critique of the Gotha Program* in this regard, where Marx is said to have "deepened his idea of freedom inseparable from the concept of social necessity—and labor as the metabolic relation of man to nature...." according to Rockwell.¹

Dunayevskaya is taken with Hegel's Absolute Idea ("It is the business of philosophy to recognize it") and socialism is interpreted as one of its forms, expressed in such movements as "the [Paris] Commune, the Soviets, the CIO."² Rockwell extends Dunayevskaya's particular reading of Hegel through further citations from Marx: those persons whose structured social position requires that they serve capital nonetheless may find their ongoing oppression mitigated even under capitalism through a reduction of labor time. The true realm of freedom and the development of human powers in post-capitalist society, however, begin only beyond the realm of necessary labor. The development of concrete concepts of freedom and necessity are thus what Rockwell sees as the most urgent theoretical tasks of the workforce as it pursues its fullest political/human potential.

Let us conclude (like Engels in *Ludwig Feuerbach and the others above*) that the workforce is the inheri-

¹ Russell Rockwell, "Freedom, necessity, and post-capitalist society," *News & Letters*, June-July 2008, p. 5, www.newsandletters.org/issues/2008/June-July/essayJunJul_08.asp.

² Raya Dunayevskaya, "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes of May 12 and 20, 1953," in Raya Dunayevskaya, *The Power of Negativity*, edited by Peter Hudis and Kevin B. Anderson (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002) pp. 16, 17.

PHILOSOPHIC DIALOGUE

tor of classical philosophy. We would also do well to understand how the dialectic of nature and mind led Engels (in *Dialectics of Nature*) to defend the proposition that **science** is matter

become conscious of itself as **matter**. My point is that Engels saw dialectical materialism as the outcome of classical

German philosophy, and we are called upon today to think—not in terms of the philosophical logic of Hegel's Absolute Idea as such—but in terms of a more concrete sociologic, per Marx's famous Introduction to the *Grundrisse*. Thinking sociologically and concretely about freedom for the workforce involves something more than pay increases or a reduction of labor time—it involves the abolition of the wages system—even as labor remains a necessity and freedom provides the future satisfaction in all of our works.

—Charles Reitz

Hegel's Absolute

The dialectic of freedom and necessity in post-capitalist society impinges on the nature of labor in its relationship to self-activity, which according to Marx is the essence of true wealth. Russell Rockwell's "Freedom, Necessity, and Post-Capitalist Society" explores this question from the vantage point of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* and how it was appropriated both by Marx and by Raya Dunayevskaya. Rockwell stresses the movement to freedom beyond social necessity—and, at the same time, beyond the sphere of labor in material production, toward creative self-activity, what Marx termed "the absolute movement of becoming."

Crucial to Dunayevskaya were the final paragraphs of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*. While recapitulating the movement of negation of the negation presented in the Introduction's outline of self-liberation, those final three paragraphs illuminate the relationship of theory and practice needed for the movement to the new society—so much so that it forms the basis for the re-creation of Marx's philosophy of revolution for our day as Marxist-Humanism.

In addition to departing from the course of necessity, Hegel's final three paragraphs provide the basis for the category of the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory—which is needed to grasp the distinctive nature of our time, and to escape from the course of capitalist necessity hemming in revolts and revolutions. The self-activity that is the goal, as what opens up the realm of freedom in post-capitalist society, is at the same time the means to self-liberation. This is a concretization of Marx's concept of praxis for a new age, and allows an original view of what it entails.

While Marx stopped writing his "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" before reaching "Absolute Mind," Dunayevskaya held that Volume I of *Capital* re-created Hegel's Absolute as an absolute that is concrete for capitalist society. It was an absolute split into two: capitalism's law of motion to ever greater concentration and centralization, and with it the growth of pauperization; and united with that motion, while at the same time opposing it, the revolt of an army of the unemployed and "new passions and new forces" for the reconstruction of society. The historical tendency

becomes "...not just a negation of the negation 'in general' but the specifically self-developing subject, in its logical, philosophical, historical and individual envelopment" (*The Power of Negativity*, p. 105).

Seen from the vantage point of Marxist-Humanism, *Capital* reveals Marx's break with the old concept of theory, and his re-creation of the Hegelian dialectic. But making a category of this break took Dunayevskaya's return to the Hegelian dialectic, and specifically as Hegel summed up his life's work in the three final paragraphs of his *Philosophy of Mind* in its last edition. At the same time, the category grows out of the experience of our age when counter-revolution is in the innards of revolution, and "what happens after revolution" becomes the burning question—not to be answered with a blueprint, but to be comprehended philosophically. Blueprints only provide one more way for intellectuals in this age of state-capitalism to get sucked into the mindset of the Planner. Instead of breaking down the division between mental and manual labor, the Planner revives it within the revolutionary movement. One thing this shows is that a social translation—even by Marx—no matter how important, can't substitute for the philosophical generalization, and the continual return to Hegel with eyes of today.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Explore these issues further in New Essays by Raya Dunayevskaya

Contents:



Dialectics of Liberation in Thought and in Activity: Absolute Negativity as New Beginning

...it is this subjectivity as objectivity which is "subject, a person, a free being." Clearly, free creative power assures the plunge to freedom. It is the unifying force of the Absolute Idea.

Leon Trotsky as Man and as Theoretician (includes exchange with Ernest Mandel on the criticism of Trotsky).



Post-Mao China

Instead [of Marx's theory of proletarian revolution], there is the capitulation to the objective pull of state-capitalism as the "next" stage of human development....The Chinese masses have not yet had their last say.

Marx and Critical Thought

Marx was so appalled by labor that he, at first, called for "the abolition of labor." What convinced him otherwise...and call, instead, for "the emancipation of labor" was the laborer, his class struggles, his daily resistance at the point of production....



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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Continued from page 4

masses—[where Lenin] said self-determination of nations—the question is how will the two unite?

...Everybody says that Hegel is supposed to stand for Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis—and that is a lot of

Summons to grasp revolutionary spirit of the age

nonsense. He doesn't stand for any such formal triad. He says it could be three, four, or five. Since every beginning is a result of some other mediation, he says, "I have shown you the Doctrine of Objectivity, and of Subjectivity, and I am talking of the unity of the theoretical and the practical idea." He says in essence that the unity occurs in subjectivity alone, therefore it isn't really your first negation of the thing, but the second negation [which is decisive]...

Marcuse's, and the other academic Marxists', approach at this stage is to give up, run away, and I will show you the basis that they run away from. They think they are great materialists when they do it, but they are not. They say the Absolute Idea is the result of the fact that mental and manual labor were so far separated, and it was a pre-technological age that Hegel (and Marx even) lived in. They say [that with the Absolute Idea] Hegel ran back, so to speak, to what was before [the beginning of industrialization]. I completely and totally disagree with that, because Hegel ran back to what he was before on the state, not on the Absolute Idea... Marcuse, because he considers himself a Marxist (and academically he is one), is trying to say: 1) The Absolute Idea is pre-technology. 2) We have to forget that part and take reality. And to him reality is that the proletariat is impotent and has not made the revolution Marx had predicted. 3) He does recognize the second [kind of] subjectivity, but he interprets it as the intellectual who will do it and bring you to the new stage. It is against these three serious arguments that I want to show what I feel is the problem of the Absolute Idea.

I want to discuss it all within what we call "the historic barrier." In other words, you come to all you can say because history does not present you with new problems. On the other hand, why is it that certain people who are not as great as Marx or Lenin, but, by living in a different historic age, are compelled to deal with these problems?... The truth is that [before Marx-

ist-Humanism] the intellectual, including the Marxist intellectual, had not been able to break down either the humanism of Marx or the fact that [Marx's 1844 Manuscripts] broke off at the Absolute Idea. The new stage for the few of us who were trying to do it came from the masses. It was the miners' strike [of 1949-50], all this upheaval in [and after] World War II.⁶

URGENCY OF NEW CONCRETE TRUTHS

Hegel has a word for it. He says that it is only the concrete—when he talks about the compulsion of thought to proceed to these concrete truths—that demands a new stage in philosophic cognition. The compulsion comes only when your philosophic categories just don't answer what has come from below. Hegel, the idealist, recognizes that fact, while these so-called materialist Marxists, including the highest of them, Marcuse, do not.

So I want to end on what I began—to give ear to the urgency of the times and the summons to recognize the spirit of the age by recognizing that this second [kind of] subjectivity must again be broken into two: 1) What the proletariat is going to do. They are going to do it anyway; we better begin listening. 2) The other is what theoreticians must do. Their task isn't ended because the impulse comes from below. They have to first begin to work it out, and not just to satisfy with quick political answers. And the working out of that subjectivity of the theory of our age of the Absolute Idea, in the concrete form of philosophy, theory and politics, means that we are just beginning. There is no point in saying anything about realizing philosophy if we haven't done that. That is our age and that is why that is going to be the central point of *Philosophy and Revolution*.

⁶ On this strike and its part in the birth of Marxist-Humanism, see Phillips and Dunayevskaya, *The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.* (See literature ad p. 7.)

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THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

We have had great revolutions and they all turned into their opposite. The Russian Revolution was the greatest of our time. The Civil Rights Movement was a great revolution too. Yet neither has achieved a human society. We have reached the age when we will have to start thinking. Obama is not going to provide the kind of thinking we need. He is operating within the system although he may change the appearance.

**Very senior citizen
California**

Fascism de jure has seized control of Louisiana, a cesspool of unflinching corruption and spiritual assault. There is no contender in the Presidential race who will be able to lift the dead weight of slave society and wage-labor serfdom that envelops this terrain of inhumanity. There is a beautiful world of private property working for the elite class, with bread and potatoes for the destitute. A revolution in basic ideology is desperately needed.

**D.T.
Lafayette, LA**

U.S. Republican presidential candidate John McCain's positions on issues affecting women's health have taken some peculiar turns. In July, he refused to answer a reporter's question on the discrepancy between insurance companies covering Viagra but not birth control. In March, he opposed government funding for contraception to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa saying "I've never gotten into these issues or thought much about them."

**Mary Jo Grey
Chicago, IL**

The crisis in Georgia may very well be the "October Surprise" to skew the election that some have been expecting. It could have been meticulously planned some time ago, with Bush giving Saakashvili the go-ahead and then pulling a fast one on him. There's also the confrontation over missiles in Poland. Now that the Cold War is on again, maybe Rove and Bush hope a crisis will put McCain in the White House, which it might. I'm not sure Obama and his supporters are anywhere nearly as smart as they think

THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-WAR STRUGGLE — REMEMBERING HIROSHIMA

Received from: The Executive Committee for the 46th International Anti-war Assembly representing the All-Japan Federation of Students' Self-Governing Associations [Zengakuren]; the Anti-war Youth Committee; and the Japan Revolutionary Communist League (Revolutionary Marxist Faction) [JRCL (RMF)].

We send you our Overseas Appeal for the upcoming 46th International Anti-war Assembly in Japan: Let us create an international anti-war struggle! Fight together against war, against forced poverty, against the destruction of the global environment exacerbated by the 'new confrontation between the U.S. and China-Russia'!

We would appreciate a message of solidarity.

Sent: To the 46th International Anti-war Assembly in Japan, August 2008:

The members of News and Letters Committees, the U.S. Marxist-Humanist organization founded by Raya Dunayevskaya 52 years ago, send our revolutionary greetings to the 46th International Anti-war Assembly meeting in Japan. It is with special pride that we call attention to our long-established solidarity with you in the international anti-war struggle.

We also note with pride the 1964 Japanese translation and publication of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*, for which that solidarity had been responsible. What was crucial to us was that the identification of both Russia and China as state-capitalist soci-

eties are or that they're not too full of themselves to know what's going on.

**Questioner
Bay Area, Calif.**

FRANCE 1968 AND THE TROTSKY LEGACY

I attended a workshop on contemporary Cuba at the Trotsky Legacy Conference held at Fordham University July 25-27. A young woman student-activist who had recently returned from a visit to Cuba, and an activist with apparently many years of experience, described in-person visits. Both freely conceded racism, homophobia, and sexism within Cuban society, but still emphasized how "happy" the Cuban people were, and both elaborated their certainties as to the depth of popular support for the Cuban government.

My question to the presenters was this: as far as I know Trotskyists cannot openly organize in Cuba; by not being critical of this suppression, aren't you conceding that the Stalinists didn't need Trotskyism in order to create a truly revolutionary society (as you seem to believe Cuba represents)?

A fairly spirited discussion ensued among the workshop participants, most of whom represented one or another Trotskyist group. The outcome seemed to be that though Trotskyists might travel and speak in Cuba, attempts at political organizing have not been and would not be permitted.

**Conference Participant
New York**

In the Trotskyist party, "revolution" became the shibboleth. By building the party they kept talking of cadres, building cadres—that became the subject.

At the Trotsky Legacy Conference, bourgeois rights were praised in Cuba, which are important, but they are the boast of any bourgeois state and not the revolution. They did not address the humiliations of work which truncates the totality of the human being. We seek a society where work is not this perilous thing—for that a revolution in relations is needed. None present addressed working conditions in Cuba.

**Critical Participant
New York**

On the anniversary of France 1968, a participant gave a talk here re-creating

eties would not stop at the economic analysis but continue to a recognition and embrace of the philosophy of Marx's humanism.

Our fundamental opposition to war was incorporated directly into the Con-



Artwork by Kathe Kollwitz

stitution of News and Letters Committees adopted in 1956, which established: "The age of state-capitalism, whether in its single-party totalitarian form or its parliamentary form, can offer nothing to humanity but the prospect of another war. The advent of nuclear weapons, possessed by all contenders for world power, seriously raises the question of the survival of humanity in the event of such a struggle. We believe that the working people are the only force in the world today capable of changing present-day society and of evolving the forms and shape of future society..."

"The necessity for a new society is clear from the working people's opposition to

READERS' VIEWS

how important and multidimensional that moment was. It was not just that something was possible, but there was an expectation that there would be a radical change. He spent some time talking about the Communist Party (CP) betrayal. The CP told workers to stay in your shop and tell us your grievances and we will do something about them, not like those radicals in the streets.

I thought that sense of betrayal by sticking to a pseudo-concrete dovetailed very well with the June-July *N&L* "From the Archives" column written by Raya Dunayevskaya as the events were unfolding. She takes for granted the CP betrayal. She asks why the Trotskyists couldn't make a bigger difference. It was not because they lacked courage and conviction, but because they didn't have a vision of what is concrete. It seems concrete to talk about workers' shop grievances. But in a revolutionary moment what has to be made concrete is a new society.

The Trotskyists didn't have a new sense of the concrete. The revolution to them means workers bringing their problems to them. Reprinting this column now shows that Dunayevskaya was hoping that this kind of analysis might make a difference. This is an answer to those who think philosophy is just abstractions vs. concreteness of actual labor. As we saw in 1968, in a revolutionary moment these questions about the meaning of life are most concrete.

**Urszula Wislanka
Oakland, Calif.**

CLASS DEBATES IN WL

From Terry Moon's report on the National Women's Studies Association Conference (June-July *N&L*) it sounded as though Patricia Hill Collins was still trying to make dual systems theory work. I loved Moon's reporting the response of the Palestinian woman, which was an objective-subjective challenge to Collin's theory.

**Susan VanGelder
Michigan**

Bush is determined to kiss-up to his reactionary followers until the end and

war. That opposition is based upon a vision of a new society in which they, to a man, woman, and child control their own lives."

Our paper, *News & Letters*, which was thereupon established as an integral part of this quest for a fundamental new way of life, continues to be based on our principle of the unity of theory and practice that Marx practiced and that his Marxism stood for. It is with that in mind, that we 1) invite you to a continuing dialogue with us in our pages, and 2) wish to recall today the words Raya Dunayevskaya delivered to a peace rally in Hiroshima on Dec. 8, 1965:

"While I do not wish to minimize Japanese militarism's role in the second imperialist world war, the day of infamy that will never be erased from history is not Dec. 7 but Aug. 6. And when that day of infamy was extended and on Aug. 9th, Nagasaki was atom-bombed, hell on earth seemed to be the only reality left. Because we are gathered here to make sure that that dehumanized version of reality does not repeat itself, our anti-war struggles must be inseparable from those aimed at eradicating that which is at the root of all wars: class society."

Because those words are as alive today as when they were first delivered, we extend our strong solidarity in your appeal to "fight together against war, against forced poverty, against the destruction of the global environment" and sign our greetings: For Freedom and a new world built on human foundations.

**The Resident Editorial Board
News and Letters Committees**

it's frightening how much damage he can do in the few months he has left. Although somewhat watered down because of a huge outcry from women and women's rights advocates, he proposed a new rule

that would require over 584,000 employers to certify in writing that they comply with laws that "protect the conscience rights" of health care workers. We're



not just talking doctors and nurses here, but even someone whose job it is to clean medical instruments used in a particular procedure, volunteers or even trainees wouldn't have to do it if it went against their conscience. While supposedly only about abortion and sterilization—as if that is OK—it could also cover birth control or who knows what else some misogynist's "conscience" tells him or her is "wrong."

Of course these conscience clauses and rules only apply to right-wing causes. If your conscience tells you as a medic not to participate in an immoral war in Iraq, or not to cross a picket line of your fellow nurses, that's a different story entirely.

**Women's Liberationist
Memphis**

WHAT DOES THE WORLD FOOD CRISIS MEAN?

I want to especially congratulate Franklin Dmitryev on his lead article in the last issue of *N&L*. It is not only comprehensive in dealing with many complex and potentially dangerous aspects of the environmental threats that we face, it also reveals the interconnectedness with other issues that are not usually included in environmental reports. His emphasis on food production reflecting capitalist value production, which is the major systemic contradiction in capitalism that spawns all other crises we face, is both revealing and profound, and opens new windows on international developments.

**Old Radical
Detroit**

The June-July Lead is very timely. Poor countries like Burma used to be net exporters and now are importers of food. This is not an accident. The list of countries where this is happening grows with free trade agreements which are based on huge subsidies for agribusiness and the use of food for fuel. The ethanol producers are posturing as going green. The general media doesn't connect the dots as the Lead did.

**Former Burmese citizen
California**

The important point is that the food crisis is not a food shortage. There are some, even on the Left, who argue that there is not enough production to sustain people. Yet every year we dump food into the ocean to keep the market prices up!

**David
Oakland, Calif.**

OUR READERS CORRECT US

The exhibit referred to in the Reader's View on "Prison Nation" (June-July 2008) was held at the William Grant Still Artist Center in Los Angeles. Still was a Black classical music composer.

**Basho
Los Angeles**

Your review of Grace Lee Boggs' autobiography (June-July issue) does not give any hint of a publisher.

**Laurens Otter
England**

Living for Change: An Autobiography by Grace Lee Boggs was published by University of Minnesota Press.

AN URGENT APPEAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

The following Appeal was sent to us by the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA News, Aug. 3), as an open letter from Naser Fayaz, the ATN journalist who was illegally detained by the Afghan intelligence agency, the NDS:



**Naser Fayaz
Journalist, ATN
Kabul, Afghanistan**

house. He told me not to go home because it could be threat to my life. From that time I have not visited my house; I am at a safer place provided by my employer ATN.

I am concerned about my family. They may be attacked at any time in my presence or in my absence. I request you to save me and my family members by providing us with armed protection.

RAWA requests protests be sent to: President Harmid Karzai at khaleeq.ahmad@gmail.com, president@afghanistangove.org

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan—UNAMA spokesperson—unama@un.org, siddiquea@un.org

On Monday 28 July, I was detained by the intelligence agency and released after one night. The detention took place due to my investigative program Haqeeqat (the Truth), which is broadcast every Sunday at 9:30 PM on Ariana Television. The 27 July program, which was based on the Afghan government's performance during the last four years, was pulled off the air mid-broadcast on the demand of the intelligence agency. This is against the freedom of the press and a violation of Article 34 of Afghanistan's Constitution.

Afghan law has due process provisions in cases where a journalist is accused of violations. It calls for the creation of an independent investigative committee composed of lawyers, journalists and other professionals. Several organizations known for supporting Human Rights and Freedom of Speech condemned the detention. Amnesty International in its report has said that the Afghan government must prevent the NDS from suppressing media freedom.

After my detention and release from the intelligence agency, I am feeling very scared. Only last night when I was reading Dari bulletin on our ATN channel, one of my colleagues in the station received a call from my brother informing me that he has been witnessing some suspicious movements around my

FREEDOM, NECESSITY AND POST-CAPITALIST SOCIETY

Russell Rockwell's essay "Freedom, Necessity and Post-Capitalist Society" (N&L June-July 2008) is a whole new look at "what comes after" a revolution. The question of freedom turns on our understanding of what is and isn't necessary.

The way one takes freedom from others is by claiming that unfreedom is necessary, that it's "for a higher purpose" or "for your own good," or "that's the way things are," "that's reality." Social class, which presents itself as necessary in our society, is not necessary in nature nor to our own nature, but only insofar as our own social development and understanding is incomplete. Capitalism reflects our incomplete understanding of our own nature.

We free ourselves by understanding the difference between that necessity which is imposed by capitalism—and this includes social class and inequality—and actual human necessity, which flows from nature and the history of human development, a history of overcoming previous, inadequate conceptions of freedom and necessity.

**Overworked
Oakland, Calif.**

Russell Rockwell calls attention to an intriguing passage. "The civilizing aspects of capital" bring us hidden and unexpected fruits: free time, leisure time. The application of technologies to our brute labor has provided a cornucopia that is within our grasp. Now it is expropriated from us, but the poetry of our labor will reclaim it. Centuries of evolution have diminished us. In the jungle of our needs we have forgotten animals but now the forest has become a zoo, and the trapped animal within us, an angry brute. In the realm of freedom, we the producers will be the human race. We will look into the mirror and see who we really are.

**Musician
New York**

VANGUARD PARTYISM

The place of a vanguard in the broader movement is still a serious question. I can see the pros and cons to having such an entity. My roommate, himself a Vanguard Socialist, doesn't believe that a classless society is really possible. He supports a broad range of civil rights, but thinks that most people tend to do the wrong things with their ability to make, however limited, political decisions.

**Grad Student
Mississippi**

REACHING FOR A 'NEW BEGINNING' IN A UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

The Report on the Paper given to the News and Letters Special Convention got it right in returning to our founding principle in Raya Dunayevskaya's "Where to Begin?" It saw our concept of the practice of philosophy as an active engagement, not just with other philosophers but with ordinary working people. Those relationships with ordinary working people are new beginnings and the test of the organization/paper is whether they sustain those new beginnings.

**Activist, writer, NLC Member
Bay Area, Calif.**

Editor's Note:

Raya Dunayevskaya's report to the Founding Convention of News and Letters Committees, July 1956, "Theoretical and Practical Perspectives: Where to Begin?" was reprinted for the Special convention this year. See ad page 3.

Here's a little to help you keep going with your publication. It is so very necessary in these times of massive disinformation in the major press organs. Thank you for all you do.

**Steady Reader
Louisiana**

In discussing membership size, the Organization Report at the Special Convention stressed that "it was never the 'count' that mattered." It does in my local—we could use more members to distribute the paper and engage in dialogues with others. But I agree with the point that was being made—our need to engage in the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy. That is the philosophic division between News and Letters Committees and all others. The key is seeing to it that philosophy, organization and our paper are all integrated.

**Member, NLC
Los Angeles**

The June-July issue was excellent! I am glad your difficulties are behind you! Enclosed is my contribution toward your work.

**Longtime Supporter
Vancouver, BC**

To our Readers:

Reports from our Special Convention in May are available in a bulletin for all to read. It can be ordered for \$3 from News & Letters.

We need your help to keep us going!

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Corporate influences on Corrections

by Robert Taliaferro

Recently Correctional Billing Services decided to raise its phone billing rates to prisoner families. Already higher than comparable rates in the community, Correctional Billing Services—in conjunction with various Correctional Departments around the country, and contracted phone companies—have pushed the rates through the roof.

In a world where a person can talk to China for about 2 cents a minute, it is an outrage that a man, woman or child in prison can only talk to a family member 2 hours away for 11 dollars for 20 minutes. That same 20 minutes costs 40 cents if they were calling Moscow.

CORPORATE ABUSE OF FAMILIES

Companies like Correctional Billing Services are only one example of unfettered corporate greed taking advantage of family members of prisoners, supported by and with the blessings of state correctional departments.

Though this type of corporate abuse has been going on for some time, it has gone largely unnoticed as most people tend to focus on companies like the CCA and Cornell when discussing the relationship of private corporations and corrections.

Cost-saving phone options like jailhouse versions of phone cards (in place with the federal system and private prisons for some time), with their attendant lower rates, have been rejected by states like Wisconsin and others. Those who opt for the higher cost billing and phone services often extort prisoner family members to use specific options of their services or not be able to receive calls from family members at all.

Correctional Billing Services, for instance, has a policy of requiring a family member's phone bill to be under a certain level for a period of three months. This requirement includes both correctional calls and private phone services having nothing to do with corrections. If the family member extends beyond their arbitrary level—even when the bill is paid timely and regularly—Correctional Billing Services will block prisoners from contacting their families for up to three months.

The only way to get phone service once that happens is to send Correctional Billing Services a prepayment thus allowing the company to invest these prepaid amounts—with attendant service fees of course—during the life of the service. The company can shut off phone access at an unspecified amount so that family members are required to deposit even more money, though enough money might still be available to cover one or two more calls.

Does detention await us all?

DETROIT—Two women who came to Centro Obrero/Latino Worker Center told us of a neighbor on Cecil Street where ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents came, took the couple and left their small children in the house. A neighbor still has the children and the couple does not have any contact with them or the neighbor who has them. The children witnessed this, as did the neighbors, but no word of their whereabouts had been forthcoming as of three days after their disappearance with ICE agents.

The next day the women were called by the Wayne County social workers in the jail and told their visits were cancelled because the jail cannot accommodate the volume of family members who had scheduled visits with their loved ones. Deportation day is Tuesday, and in the case of the woman whose husband is being shipped out, she needs his signature on the children's passport applications in order for them to have their documents which, theoretically will guarantee their rights as U.S. citizens. No children's passports will be processed without both parents' signatures.

A man called me this morning and told me his son went to get dog food on Monday night and did not return. This morning he called his father and let him know that ICE got him on his way home from the store and locked him up without a phone call. They impounded his car and it cost \$900 to get it out. If people have to pay for the cars, they cannot make bond or buy their own ticket home if they do get a voluntary deportation.

Some people who had drivers' licences purchased vehicles. Then the law changed prohibiting them from any transactions at the Secretary of State's office without a social security number. Now they cannot transfer titles, buy tags, change addresses, etc.

ASHAMED OF STATE AND COUNTRY

Never in my life have I been so ashamed of this state and this country. It is very hard to focus on anything else while our neighbors are being attacked without provocation or notice and locked up with no due process under any law. If these are not human rights violations, what are?

Several of the people in the raid described above are



VOICES FROM
THE INSIDE OUT

Abusive corporate influences on corrections don't stop with phone services or private prisons. From medical services to banking, corporations have been promulgating practices towards prisoners and their families which—if practiced towards the general population—would result in criminal charges.

Such practices in the correctional setting are done with the tacit approval of correctional officials and state legislatures. States with such policies and practices often provide service monopolies to companies that are willing to toe the line with procedural precepts that a state might establish for its prisoners—regardless of its legality if held up to scrutiny.

Correctional capitalism was once content to abuse its wards. After all, who is going to feel sorry for prisoners who committed crimes against the community? Correctional capitalism, however, is an addict and like any addict, once the source of supply becomes overused, a new supply has to be found to placate its needs. This new supply line is the families of prisoners whom the correctional supplier and its corporate addicts are abusing with near impunity.

As Felix Martin (Isaac Woods) once wrote, "...the disease of capitalism keeps on destroying and mutilating all life in sight.

"The way I see it, capitalism has produced a nation of addicts...because this whole system... fragments the whole human being, separates thinkers and doers, tears us up into small pieces, our hands separated from our minds, our minds separated from our feelings..." or if corrections has its way, families separated from families due to impinged inter-familial contact perpetrated by states themselves (*The Revolutionary Journalism of Felix Martin*, pp. 70-71).

The correctional Tao of capitalism is designed to place the families of prisoners into the same category of citizenship as their incarcerated fathers, mothers, sisters, or brothers.

CRIMINALIZING COMMUNITIES

"When a community becomes self-deprecating, it gives carte blanche to the bourgeoisie to attack that weakness and find ways to criminalize all of its members" (*Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles*, pp. 59-60).

It is time that the community at large refuses to let such blanket criminalization by association continue. Politicians say change is coming to the U.S. in election year 2008; let's make sure that the probe of change sinks beneath the surface and shines light upon the families of prisoners, who are often abused for their associations, and forgotten.

U.S. citizens. The ICE agents demanded their papers, which they do not have because they were born here. These children will remember this for a long time. Who are these agents? Are they returning Iraq war vets? Where are they being trained?

Why are there no Spanish-speaking people at the jails to field calls from family members? How can jail personnel communicate with detainees?

What is the avenue for investigation of human rights violations against the people, in the community and in the hands of the government and contractors when the people are detained? Who will take this up?

Why do agents scream and curse at children and adults who are no threat?

'WHY AREN'T YOU HOME WITH US?'

Thanks to Maureen Taylor of the Welfare Rights Organization for getting the utilities back on for the wife and children of a man who is scheduled to be deported this week. They have two daughters, ages four and six. I accompanied them to court to say goodbye to their father, whom they could only see on a video feed. The six-year-old said to her father, "Papi, why aren't you home with us? I want you to come home."

The father, who was seen by all the people in the courtroom, wept silently while the judge handed down the verdict; he would be deported immediately due to prior stops by immigration. He had gone home to his mother's funeral in July and gotten caught on the return trip in Texas. He was coming home to sell his house and pick up his wife and two daughters, but he will go ahead of them and she is left here to handle the sale of the house, the utility connections, work to get enough money to make the trip with the two kids, and hope not to get detained and deported, putting further trauma on the little girls.

This is a lot to handle with a broken heart and inability to speak English. Everywhere immigrants go they are under attack. Every move they make is dangerous, going to work, going to get dog food, going to mass, getting the kids from school, or even sleeping in your own bed at two in the morning. ICE can come in with a battering ram and scream obscenities at your children and hold them at gunpoint. At one time, crackheads and street thugs were our biggest worry here. Now it is all law enforcement in any uniform. It's a free-for-all against immigrants. We are the only ones who can turn this around. If we don't, we will all end up in detention.

In defiant hope.

—Elena Herrada

Return Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine!



The weekly demonstration at the Oakland Federal Building protesting the war in Iraq had Haiti as its special focus on Aug. 12. One year ago, Lovinsky Pierre-Antoine disappeared. He is presumed to have been kidnapped after a meeting with a U.S. human rights delegation. Lovinsky is a member of Fanmi Lavalas, the party of President Aristide, and a founding member of the September 30th Foundation, an organization assisting victims of the two coups against Aristide. Pierre L., organizer of Haiti Action Network, addressed the crowd, calling on Haitian authorities and the UN peacekeepers in Haiti to respond to calls for information about Lovinsky. "Standing with brother Lovinsky we are standing with all political prisoners in Haiti, in Iraq and around the world."

BLACK/REDVIEW

Continued from page 1

history of the human race, babies and the elderly are indiscriminately cremated alive with napalm and bombs...

Some naïve sportswriters are lamenting that the Olympics are becoming "political...and politics do not mix." Modern Olympics have been a political expression of national chauvinism from its very beginning in 1896.

General Douglas MacArthur in 1928, when he headed the American Olympic Committee, could not rise above this type of nationalism. And in Hitler's Germany of 1936, the Berlin Olympics were tailored to fit the needs of Nazi imperialism, and the U.S.'s Avery Brundage (still on the I.O.C.) helped to stifle the strong American movement to boycott.

As long as the political power of the Olympics remained firmly in the hands of the I.O.C.—a faceless autonomous organization, composed mainly of old, wealthy men—little or nothing was said about Olympic "politics."

MEXICO—THE TURNING POINT

The 1968 Olympics, held in Mexico City, was a political turning point—it was there that the revolutionary Black consciousness, born out of the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, was symbolized by the action of the two Black American athletes, who, while awaiting their awards on the victory stand, gave the Black Power salute of a raised clenched fist while the U.S. National Anthem was being played.

The generally apolitical quietism of athletes had shifted to a new awareness which challenged the sham internationalism and individualism which the waxen men of the I.O.C. had been touting for 64 years. The implications of the challenge were immediately grasped by the I.O.C. They immediately shipped the two winners back home.

Despite the slaughter at Munich, it was in Mexico, 1968, where the bloodiest of all Olympics took place. The pre-game student demonstration—which threatened to jeopardize the profits of the Olympic backers—was put down by the Mexican Government with such ferocity that hundreds of students were shot dead and hundreds more arrested. Many of them are still incarcerated after four years.

In Munich, two Black U.S. winners, Vince Matthews and Wayne Collett, chatted during the award ceremony and the playing of the U.S. National Anthem. For this "unconcern," the I.O.C., with concerned hypocrisy, expelled them for life from future Olympics! Collett said he "would not stand at attention because he did not believe the words of the Anthem represented the true attitudes of whites toward Blacks in the U.S.A."

Olga Connolly, now an American citizen, and the U.S. standard bearer in Munich, was winner of a gold medal in 1956 for Czechoslovakia. This year, she tried to organize a peace movement in the Olympic Village but her efforts were thwarted by officials. She aptly summed up what modern Olympics are all about—"Olympic officials speak the words of brotherhood and peace, this is political mouthwash. From the inside you become disgusted to see that the Games, a kind of Circus Maximus, are not conducted for anything else but commercialism, medal counts and for political profit."

NEWS & LETTERS

U.S. criminalizes undocumented workers' movement to attack workers' movement

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EDITORIAL *Afghan war heats up*

Far from winding down after more than six years, the war in Afghanistan is becoming more deadly. The U.S. media paid special attention now that more U.S. soldiers and their NATO allies are being killed in Afghanistan than in the war in Iraq. However, in both countries high levels of civilian death tolls from terrorist violence and, especially in Afghanistan, indiscriminate U.S. bombings have continued unabated. In the first three months of 2008, nearly 700 civilians were killed in Afghanistan alone. The government initially had the support of most Afghans who celebrated the overthrow of the Taliban's ruthless totalitarian rule, but now Afghanistan has seen a Taliban resurgence.

The plight of Afghans was never a priority in the U.S.'s imperial strategy. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks President Bush found in the Afghan war an opportunistic prelude to his war on Iraq and further ambition to dominate the whole Middle-East oil region, extending to the Russian border in the Caucasus. Afghanistan was left with a weak central government and reactionary warlords of the Northern Alliance in charge of much of the country. Under U.S. and NATO occupation, where billions have been spent bolstering the corrupt Karzai regime and its military, the conditions of life for ordinary Afghans have been on a steep downward slide.

PAKISTAN AND THE ISLAMISTS

Rather than seriously go after Al Qaeda, the U.S. closely partnered with the hated military strongman Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan, who likewise made deals with reactionary Islamists. The Islamists in northern Pakistan continue to protect Al Qaeda and the Taliban as they cross the Afghanistan border, including Taliban leader Mullah Omar, who directs a war of terror against any who disagree with his reactionary ideology, including members of his own Pashtun tribe. Musharraf's corruption is so pervasive and well documented that it united divergent factions in the effort to impeach him. Musharraf resigned and, as he was on the way out, the CIA exposed the collaboration of Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) agents with Taliban terrorists who recently bombed the Indian consulate in Kabul. Taliban defectors report on continuous close ties between ISI and the Taliban, ties that go back to the war against the Russian occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The U.S.'s continued reliance on bombing creates new sympathizers for the Taliban as when a bomb killed 47 in a wedding party July 6 in the Weygel Valley. In the same area on July 13 the Taliban directly attacked a small U.S. outpost, killing nine U.S. soldiers. This was a startling development because the Taliban had mostly been relying on suicide bombers, introduced into Afghanistan after the occupation, and other terror tactics. On Aug. 19, 10 French NATO soldiers were killed in an ambush near Kabul. In June, the Taliban freed 1,200 prisoners in Kandahar after blowing a hole in the prison wall and killing the guards.

The Karzai government, with little influence outside of Kabul, has become hugely unpopular because securing a government position became a license to shake down ordinary citizens. Most of the country is run by warlords and drug lords who manage the opium trade and run roughshod over the population. Opium had been outlawed under Taliban rule but now has become a source of income for them and the foundation for much of the ailing economy.

WOMEN'S OPPRESSION PERSISTS

Much of the violence is directed against children and young girls who are raped with impunity. A private TV channel aired the cries of a family and their 12 year-old daughter who was gang raped and pleaded for help

from President Karzai. The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) produced the tape at great risk to themselves because in Afghanistan even raising the plight of women and children is taboo. The family had to be taken into protective custody, but, as a RAWA member put it, "This is just an example among thousands of other cases. The rest go unnoticed by the media."

Some roads and fancy buildings have gone up in big cities but little has impacted the vast majority who make up one of the poorest countries on earth. In April, when the price of wheat shot up 100% and rice 38%, there were riots and looting in several cities. Hunger and starvation stalks five to six million people. The UN World Food Program already supports 3.5 million people and projects much greater needs than can be filled because neighboring Pakistan, which usually supplies Afghan food markets, now has its own food crisis and has banned food exports. The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force says the food crisis may become more of a threat to stability than the insurgency.

Whether because of its military tactics that rely on bombing or its global food shortage, capitalist imperialism has been incapable in six long years to even provide a viable alternative to the reactionary and misogynist Taliban. More than ever the struggle for self-determination in opposition to war has to include a vision of the new society beyond capitalism and its inherent state of permanent war. Nothing being said by the candidates in this election, who are now supporting more troops for Afghanistan, indicates anything but more of the same.

QUEER NOTES

By Elise

On July 27, Jim Adkisson opened fire at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (UUC), killing two and wounding seven. "He hated the liberal movement," said Police Chief Sterling Owen, based on a letter found by police in Adkisson's SUV. Historically, the UUC welcomes the LGBT community and works for social change including for gay rights.

* * *

Aug. 15 marked one month of weekly protests against Crews Inn gay bar in Dallas and a call for an official apology to the LGBT community for the bar's ban of drag queens on Tuesday nights. Calling drag queens "divas" who "think they can do no wrong," bar co-owner David Moore based the ban on the bar's policy that customers' appearance must match that on their IDs.

* * *

Because of the May proclamation by Dubai Police Chief Lt. General Dahi Khalfan Tamim to arrest transvestites seen in public, 40 foreign men were arrested by Dubai police on allegations of being gay and dressing like women in public. Lt. General Dahi stated that a possible reason for the "problem" of men and women behaving like the opposite gender is, "studying in a mixed environment" (co-ed education).

—Information from *pinknews*

* * *

The federal Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ruled the rights of members of the anti-gay group Repent America were not violated when the city of Philadelphia arrested them for disrupting OutFest, an annual pride event. Repent America went beyond their constitutional right when they used a bullhorn to shout Biblical passages to drown out speakers at OutFest, and when they began to move into the Fest itself, still shouting into the bullhorn. Repent America brought suit against Philadelphia.

clear-thinking and creative.

But it is precisely that kind of thinking that may have led to the creation of hikikomori. *Shutting Out the Sun* holds that original, independent thinking is frowned upon in Japan. It traces the taboo to Japan's zeal in catching up with the technologically advanced West starting in 1863. Rote learning and suppression of individuality were essential to the intense commodity production required to beat the West at its own game. There were few avenues open to creative thinkers. Now that Japan needs such people in the aftermath of its economic collapse in 1989, they are out of the country in supportive cultures, or at home locked in bedrooms. The hikikomori represent an exaggerated backlash to the culture of self-sacrifice for the good of the whole.

Zielenziger sees a larger social problem in which Japanese society itself wants to go into hiding and fill the void it finds at its core. To him, Japan cannot begin to heal until the preponderance of collective over individual thinking is reversed.

It may be true that individuality is the key to recovery if Japan is to regain its status as an economic superpower. But is that what the Japanese people want? When the Marxist-Humanist Raya Dunayevskaya toured Japan in 1966, she met many youths who told her they wanted to "develop relations with the Second America—the America of the Negro Revolution, of the Free Speech Movement, of rank and file labor struggles" (*News & Letters*, February 1966). That call for solidarity comes from a Second Japan—one that still desires collectivity, but collectivity that aims to unleash full human freedom without sacrificing the individual to the whole.

—David Mizuno'oto

Crisis in Georgia

Continued from page 1

cleansing" in South Ossetia, and thousands of civilian dead, haven't been verified by Human Rights Watch.) This justification for intervention in South Ossetia and Georgia actually had been raised by Russian diplomats for months, if not years, beforehand.

Far from being outraged by the independence of Kosova, Putin and his mouthpieces were happy to grasp this most cynical and false comparison. It has been echoed widely, in fact, by Russian propagandists, Buchananites, and some leftists alike.

REAL LESSON OF KOSOVA

It becomes imperative here to look back at the work that News and Letters Committees did on Bosnia and Kosova to recall the real issues there. One was the question of the kind of society that would arise in post-Stalinist Eastern Europe and the dire consequences of the failure to project a revolutionary alternative for the future. The void of a revolutionary vision was filled in Serbia by Milosevic's ethnic chauvinism, and his harsh oppression of the Kosovars' non-violent freedom movement, which was followed by the horrors of actual genocide in Bosnia.

That is what Putin wants to validate. On the other hand is the "benign imperialism" of the U.S. which intervened in Bosnia only to impose a "settlement" which settled almost nothing, leaving the fruits of Serbian "ethnic cleansing" in place. This imperialism was described in the May 1993 *News & Letters*: "Like Stalin, who stood outside the gates of Warsaw in 1944 while Hitler slaughtered a mass uprising, U.S. imperialism manages to come to the 'aid' of suffering peoples only after they have been decimated by the forces arrayed against them. The 'benign imperialism' offers humanity its 'freedom' only on the day of its burial." (*Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'* p.23.)

The question of the kind of revolutionary solidarity that was required in Bosnia and Kosova is spoken to by the trajectory of events once the great powers become involved. They only come to your aid on the day of your destruction, and they write the opening lines for the next destructive chapter. Even up to World War III. It should be even clearer now that Bosnia was indeed the "test of world politics," as the Marxist-Humanist Perspectives stated in 1995.

The crisis of vision has only deepened since then. The stakes today are as high as they have ever been. In Georgia, Poland, Ukraine, and elsewhere the tripwires are being put into place for even wider and more destructive wars between rival imperialisms. The peace movement that has been almost silent so far in this moment of crisis will likely have to dig deep into revolutionary ideas to find its voice.

—Gerry Emmett

Learn the real revolutionary history of the unique freedom movement that arose in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the failure of the Left to meet the challenge.



"Nothing more exposes President Clinton's lie that the bleeding to death of the former Yugoslavia was a case of ancient tribal feuds resurfacing than the fact that the very first shots fired in Sarajevo on April 6, 1992 were those fired against a mass demonstration of Serb, Croat and Muslim Slavs standing together against Milosevic's designs. No less than 200,000 marched together that month shouting, 'We want to live together!'"

—From *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'*

Special Offer: Save \$2.50, buy both *Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization,'* AND *Kosova: Writings from News & Letters, 1998-1999* for only \$10, includes postage.

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U.S. criminalizes undocumented workers

Continued from page 1

imposed on their people after independence, they too were Native Americans, in shackles. They stood out in stark racial contrast with the rest of us as they started their slow penguin march across the makeshift court." (For his full report, <http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/2008/07/14/opinion/14ed-camayd.pdf>).

The preparations for the Postville Agriprocessors plant raid included a diabolical scheme to insure that the Guatemalan and Mexican working men and women would have no choice but to face months of jail time **before** deportation. The government would only agree to withdraw the trumped-up charge of "aggravated identity theft" if those arrested would agree to plead guilty to knowingly using a false social security number and serve five months in a U.S. jail, and then be immediately deported without a hearing. If any chose to not accept this plea agreement they would have had to remain in jail even longer, six to eight months awaiting trial, with no access to bail because they were undocumented. Even if found not guilty they would still be deported. And if they lost at trial, they would receive a two-year minimum sentence. No wonder they chose the plea agreement. It meant the least amount of jail time in this charade.

The whole procedure, from plea agreement to five month sentences, to being shipped off to various jails, was carried out in a rapid-fire four days. As Erik Camayd-Freixas put it, "The work had oddly resembled a judicial assembly line where the meatpackers were mass processed."

The result was devastation for the hundreds arrested, as well as for children and family members left in limbo. A third of Postville's population ceased to be a part of the community. Children disappeared from schools. Many families took refuge in St. Bridget's Catholic Church fearing to come out in face of the arrests and future deportation. However at the same time, there began a movement of resistance, starting with exposing Agriprocessors.

AGRIPROCESSORS, THE REAL CRIMINALS

Two groups of those arrested were released before the kangaroo-court proceedings—youth who were underage, and thus had been illegally hired to work in the plant, and women with children who needed to be cared for. The women still faced charges, and the youth and women still would come under deportation orders.

In Iowa, it is illegal for a company to employ anyone under 18 on the floor of a meatpacking plant. At least seventeen youth between 14 and 17 years of age were seized in the raid. Now in oral depositions the youth told their stories.

Elmer L., a Guatemalan young man who started working at the plant when he was 16, spoke of 17-hour days: "I worked from 6 in the morning until 11 at night. I slept from midnight until 5 in the morning—5 hours. . . . They did not pay me for all the overtime I worked. They told me if I did not work all that time, I would lose my job. My work was very hard because they didn't give me my breaks, and I wasn't getting very much sleep. I had to work to provide for my family. They told us they were going to call immigration if we complained about not getting our overtime pay and our breaks. . . . I was very sad and I felt like I was a slave."

Karadzic and the legacy of Bosnia's partition

The belated arrest of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic forces the world to again confront the legacy of the thoroughgoing effort to destroy independent and multiethnic Bosnia-Herzegovina in the wake of the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Time will tell if this opportunity will be taken, or if instead the prosecution of Karadzic by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in the Hague will serve as a symbolic closing of the books on the complicity of the world powers in the genocide carried out by Bosnian Serbs and Croats to achieve their aims.

Karadzic was an obscure psychiatrist and amateur poet who clambered his way into political power in the chaotic early period of Yugoslavia's fragmentation. He, along with military leader Ratko Mladic and their patron, Slobodan Milosevic, turned Bosnia into a land of horrors as they sought to annihilate the country's historic ethnic, cultural and religious diversity and transform it into an ethnically homogenous greater Serbia, divided with a greater Croatia. Concentration camps and mass graves appeared throughout Bosnia. Sarajevo, the capital city, was besieged from the mountains that surround it. No tactic was too bestial to use, including systematic rape of women as a means of the psychological and cultural destruction of a people.

The Bosnians stubbornly resisted the attempt to destroy them, despite an arms embargo enforced by the world powers reminiscent of the one levied on republican Spain in the 1930s. The actions of the UN consistently served to facilitate the aims of the Serbian chauvinists. International diplomatic interventions pressured the Bosnians to submit to the dismemberment of their country. Only the Bosnians and their sympathizers the world over, feminists and human rights activists prominent among them, kept the hope alive.

By 1995, Milosevic had fallen out with his Bosnian Serb allies. The world powers, foremost among them the U.S., were anxious to force the Bosnians into a rot-

A 16-year-old young woman, Gilda O., spoke of the speed-up demands: "I worked at night. I started at 7:30 and I got off at five or six in the morning. I worked on line plucking feathers off the chickens. . . . When I started I could hardly keep my eyes open. But later I got more used to it. In the plant they made us hurry up as much as we possibly could."

Those quotes could have come right out of Marx's description in *Capital* of English factories of the mid-19th century.

Long before the Postville raid—not against the dreadful conditions on the slaughterhouse floor, but against the undocumented men and women who took these dangerous, exploitative jobs—Agriprocessors was already well known as a vile, unhealthy killing floor. As the *NY Times* noted:

"A slaughterhouse in Postville, Iowa, develop[ed] an ugly reputation for abusing

animals and workers. Reports of dirty, dangerous conditions at the Agriprocessors kosher meatpacking plant accumulate[d] for years, told by workers, union organizers, immigrant advocates and government investigators. A videotape by an animal-rights group show[ed] workers pulling the windpipes out of living cows. A woman with a deformed hand t[old] a reporter of cutting meat for 12 hours a day, six days a week, for wages that labor ex-perts call the lowest in the industry. This year, federal investigators amass[ed] evidence of rampant illegal hiring at the plant, which has been called 'a kosher 'Jungle.'"" ("The Jungle' Again," *NY Times*, August 1, 2008). But in our upside down world, it is the workers who are criminalized, not the company.

PERILS OF UNDOCUMENTED WOMEN

Terrible dangers especially await undocumented women coming to the United States. At Agriprocessors, it took the form of sexual harassment. If you wanted a shift change or a promotion, you had to grant sexual favors to this or that supervisor.

The terrible threat to the lives of undocumented women often begins far earlier. Rape has become commonplace on both sides of the Mexico-Arizona border. Rape is now considered "the price of admission" for women crossing the border illegally. According to Dr. Sylvanna Falcón: "Anyone from coyotes to U.S. officials, they all have the upper hand here. . . . Our society takes rape seriously, but it doesn't take this type of rape seriously. In all of our national discourse around securing our borders, rarely, if ever, do you hear about any kind of protection for people who might be crossing. Largely, that's because the discussion has been framed around protecting us—protecting the U.S.—and once you get into that framework, what happens to the other person is not even on the radar." (Quoted in the *Tucson Weekly*, June 9, 2008.)

OPPRESSION AND REVOLT

Hundreds of new laws have been passed at the state and city levels seeking to restrict the opportunities and rights of undocumented immigrants. The draconian federal persecution and anti-immigrant state and local laws are capitalism's response to a new mass movement among immigrant workers, the high-point of

ten compromise despite the small but not insignificant military gains they had achieved. The massacre at the nominally UN-protected town of Srebrenica in July 1995, in which over 8,000 of the male Muslim inhabitants of the town were murdered and which was carried out by Karadzic and Mladic, proved to be both the zenith of the war's depravity and the beginning of the end of the conflict. After the U.S.-aided Croatian military defeated the Serb enclave in Croatia, the Bosnians were forced by the U.S. to negotiate with Milosevic and the Croatian leader Franjo Tudjman in Dayton, Ohio.

The resulting agreement created the reality that still burdens Bosnia more than a decade later: a de facto partition of the country into 1) a Serbian entity and 2) a Bosnian Muslim (or Bosniak) and Bosnian Croat federation. Economic development, the return of those forced from their homes by the violence, and the rebuilding of interethnic trust have all failed to materialize.

The ascendancy of Serbian moderates permitted Milosevic to be sent to the tribunal in 2004, although prime minister Zoran Djindjic was assassinated not long after by those seeking revenge. Serbia's current president, Boris Tadic, wants to see Serbia admitted to the European Union. With the moderate nationalists in power, the discovery of Karadzic, hidden in plain sight as an alternative healer in Belgrade, followed with suspicious rapidity, as if the police knew all along where to look.

The world powers are anxious to close down the tribunal, even though Karadzic's co-leader, Mladic, remains at large.

The people of Bosnia-Herzegovina deserve to be freed from the Dayton Agreement's yoke of partition achieved through ethnic cleansing. Hopefully, Karadzic's arrest may begin a process in which the need for that development is recognized by the world.

—Sympathizer

which so far was on May 1, 2006. Hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants and their allies gave a new significance to May Day, whose origin was in Chicago of the 1880s, centered on the fight for a shorter working day.

The July 27 march in Postville, Iowa, brought people from a number of Midwest cities. The demonstration included dozens of undocumented women workers from the plant who were out of jail because they had to take care of young children. Required to wear electronic monitoring ankle bracelets openly, and with a future of jail and deportation, they were in the forefront of resistance. They were joined by a coalition of forces:

- Members of the St. Bridget's Catholic Church in Postville who have supported the undocumented workers and their families ever since the raids, providing shelter, food, financial and moral support.

- Rabbis and members of Jewish congregations who were outraged that Agriprocessors runs a kosher meatpacking plant in such a degrading manner. They were calling for the revision of kosher food certification to include standards of corporate ethics and treatment of workers. "I'm embarrassed and ashamed at the way Agriprocessors has treated its workers," said one Jewish activist. "I don't think it's kosher meat. I think they're pulling a farce on the Jews of this country."

- Latino activists expressing solidarity with the undocumented Latin American workers. Labor activists joined in as well, some from the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, who had been trying to organize the plant for a number of years.

Today's persecution and criminalization of undocumented workers is trying to destroy the movement among immigrant workers, many of whom came north after they were forced off the land as a result of trade agreements like NAFTA. Previously businesses used undocumented workers in many areas like agriculture and construction and as strike-breakers. The new demagoguery is aimed at dividing workers in general and especially within immigrant communities between those who have documents and those who don't. Now is the time for the firmest international solidarity with immigrant workers, fighting the chauvinism, false patriotism and political manipulation that is growing in this demagogic electoral moment.

As we go to press, the ICE has mounted another massive and brutal raid in the small town of Laurel, Mississippi, at Howard Industries, where nearly half the 800 workers are Latino/a. There are reports of parents snatched by ICE agents and given no time to make arrangements for the care of their children left alone. Those arrested face not only federal laws, but a draconian Senate Bill 2988 that makes it a felony to work without authorization in Mississippi and imposes a one to five year prison sentence and fines of up to \$10,000. This outrage must end!

No New Nukes

On the 63rd anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, with steam billowing out of two towers of the Fermi nuclear power plant in Newport, Michigan, in the background, presidential candidate John McCain repeated his pledge to continue Bush's policy to build 45 new nuclear plants by 2030. McCain would continue Bush's proposal to produce 125 new nuclear bombs per year while dismantling old bombs.

Barack Obama, who is against the opening of the Yucca Mountain Dumpsite, is for new nuclear power plants only if safety issues are satisfactorily addressed. He has received \$180,000 in campaign contributions from employees of Exelon, which represents the nuclear power plant industry. As over three decades of the anti-nuclear movement has shown, there is no safe way to produce and operate nuclear power plants.

Although nuclear power plants emit no greenhouse gases, highly toxic radiation has gotten into our water, air, land and food. Many Native American reservations, such as the Pine Ridge, Hopi and Navajo, Flathead, Wind River and the Yakima, are polluted from uranium mining.

The 1979 accident at the Three Mile Island reactors, which came within 30 minutes of a meltdown, spewed radioactive wastes over a wide area and resulted in mutations of plants and animals and widespread opposition to nuclear energy. No nuclear power plant has been built in the U.S. since. However, G.E. and Westinghouse have sold nuclear power plants to Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and the E.U. since 1979. Westinghouse is a leader for China's market, which has plans for 27 1000-megawatt nuclear reactors.

Neither Nuclear Non Proliferation, the comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Kyoto Accord nor mass worldwide demonstrations for over three decades, such as the Sane Freeze movement in the 1980s or at the Nevada Test Sites, has stopped the industry's drive for growth. Nuclear energy is touted as economical, but many problems and delays occur during construction with massive cost overruns, and it ends up as the most expensive source of electricity. Developing solar, wind, or other alternative energy sources would be a much saner alternative.

Conventional and nuclear weapons cannot be developed without scientists, engineers and various technicians. These mental workers are the essential laborers in a life-destroying business. As Marx stated, if you have one basis for life (human rights and freedom for all) and another for science (destruction and death), it (science) is a priori a lie.

—Basho



IowaIndependent.com

U.S. resisters in Canada

As a Vietnam era war resister who found refuge in Canada, I have taken a special interest in the plight of U.S. men and women in the armed forces who have made the choice to desert and seek refuge in Canada rather than participate in Bush's aggressions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Canada and Canadians welcomed us back then, and public opinion today strongly favors giving refuge to these courageous U.S. soldiers who refuse to participate in the slaughter of civilians for the benefit of an imperialist foreign policy and its war profiteers. However, the present Conservative minority government, its Bush lapdog Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, and politically motivated refugee boards and courts have closed the doors to these soldiers, who have risked their futures by taking a moral stand on an illegal war. Approximately 40 refugee applications have been made to date, and the first deportation order has been given. No one knows how many U.S. soldiers have crossed the border into Canada; however it is surely in the hundreds.

The Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration turned down the application of Jeremy Hinzman. Jeremy was the first U.S. deserter to exhaust all legal channels. He has applied to have a "pre-removal assessment" and also to be granted permanent residency in Canada on "humanitarian and compassionate" grounds. The pre-removal assessment was to determine if he faced "torture, death or persecution" if returned to the States. He is now ordered to leave Canada by Sept. 23. He is here with his wife and family, including a child who was born in Canada.

On June 4, the Canadian House of Commons passed a non-binding resolution, supported by all three opposition parties and opposed only by the government, which urged the government to allow deserters to stay in Canada. The vote was 137-110. Subsequent to the vote, the deportation order against Corey Glass, which had been scheduled for June 12, was postponed. But Robin Long was then deported and is serving a 15-month prison term in Colorado.

However, fear and uncertainty continue to haunt these young men and women, many of whom have been waiting in limbo for years for an ultimate decision on their fate. I have met dozens of them. Joshua Keys, who had served eight months in Iraq, in his book *The Deserter's Tale: the Story of an Ordinary Soldier Who Walked Away from the War in Iraq*, tells a common story of being lied to by recruiters and enlisting based upon patriotic motives and a desire to serve their country. Once in combat zones, they learned that they were to consider every Iraqi an enemy and their missions consisted mainly in harassing and terrorizing Iraqi families; they witnessed gut-wrenching atrocities that forced them to reconsider the validity of their mission.

Those who oppose giving refugee status to U.S. war resisters argue that they were volunteers. This ignores the vicious reality of what these men and women faced and their right to invoke the Nuremberg principle regardless of the nature of their enlistment. It also ignores the reality, expressed by one, who characterizes U.S. military recruitment as "the draft for the poor, uneducated and minorities."

It has been heartening to see the work of a network of Canadians that includes many Vietnam era resisters that has provided legal, moral, emotional and personal support to these valiant men and women.

—Veteran Anti-War Activist

From the trenches in Zimbabwe

This view represents a consulted way forward recommended by Women and Men of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA/MOZA). We are an organisation owned by its 60,000 members who hold qualifications in daily survival and degrees in nonviolence despite the deeply polarised political environment in Zimbabwe since 2000. WOZA was born in the community and seeks to draw the attention of preoccupied politicians to people's needs, namely bread and butter issues; or as WOZA likes to put it, bread and roses issues—bread representing food and roses representing the need for lasting dignity.

At the moment, the highway that is Zimbabwe has two "vehicles" going in opposite directions, Zanu PF, the so-called "liberation war" party and the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). These parties speed along, preoccupied with their own importance, hardly ever taking the off-ramp to consult with the suffering masses.

The reality on the ground for Zimbabweans is tantamount to torture. For representatives of political parties to sit at the negotiating table cutting an elite power-sharing deal whilst ignoring the crashing economy and the undeclared civil war by Mugabe against ordinary people is a crime against our humanity. We suspect that they do not understand the day-to-day struggle of ordinary Zimbabweans. As a result WOZA is determined to hold our placards up high to get their attention and demand that they address our needs:

1. Daily life is a form of torture. We cannot get food without being forced to take sides with the ruling Zanu PF who currently controls access to all food in the country. As we have seen before during election periods,



Chanting "We are the ones we've been waiting for" and "We want justice, we want peace, we want love in the Middle East," dozens of mostly Middle Easterners protested in downtown San Francisco on August 2. One organizer told us, "What we have to have is a popular movement. Voting and hoping is not going to do it. Our government is threatening to bomb Iran. They do not respect human lives, nor any human values." Another participant, recently from Iran, said, "People in Iran don't want a war. They believe change will happen from within Iran, they don't want another external conflict deflecting attention from that."

they have also banned distribution of food by international NGOs so that they can further control our fundamental need to eat. Many of our members try to get humanitarian assistance but because they speak out, are punished by Zanu PF and denied food or blackmailed into support in exchange for food. Hunger is the price for their courage.

As Zimbabweans go about their daily activities, youth militia, police, army and war veterans subject them to harassment and intimidation. Even a neighbour can no longer be trusted, as with the widespread hunger, one can be sold out in exchange for food. Lists of names of all those that oppose the regime exist at ward, district, province and national levels. This highly sophisticated "reign of terror" was re-established between March 29 and June 27. It is an open secret that Zanu PF did not campaign in their normal violent manner in the run up to March 29 and therefore lost the presidential race. They reverted to type and put in place their structures of evil after March 29, resulting in the farcical run-off and Mugabe inaugurating himself.

2. Undeclared civil war during Thabo Mbeki's watch. It was during the SADC mediation process, led by Thabo Mbeki, that Mugabe has continued and intensified his campaign of murder, mutilation, abduction and rape. As a result our placards will also state that we no longer have confidence in Thabo Mbeki. During his watch, babies have been mutilated for their parents' democratic beliefs; their blood is on his hands. The South African mediation team stressed that the aim of the mediation was to have "an election whose result cannot be contested". Yet two elections have been held and the results of both are contested.

We therefore demand that:

- The African Union and SADC have provided a reference group to the mediation team and it is our view that the political parties also need an on-the-ground reference group made up of civic society representatives who can provide input and receive feedback.

- The status of the second SADC team dealing with the economy is clarified and their recommendations be made public so Zimbabweans can know what is to be done about the crashing economy.

- The United Nations is allowed to come in to assess humanitarian needs and set up structures to address these urgently.

3. Zimbabweans have lost faith in politicians' ability to return life to the living. We do not think power sharing or a government of national unity (GNU) can work in Zimbabwe. We need an independent and impartial transitional authority under African leadership. African leaders should not dictate that a GNU be the only solution to our crisis. Zimbabwe is not Kenya and their solutions cannot be imposed on us, especially with our historical experiences of 1987. We need a solution to address the specificity of the Zimbabwe crisis. In Zimbabwe, the military elite runs the show not only on military might but also on political partisanship. For the ordinary soldier, police officer or prison officer to keep their job they have to follow political orders. The violence can only be stopped when the victims can once again report abuses to an impartial body and trust that the perpetrators will be arrested and put on trial no matter who they are. For this to happen, magistrates and judges will need to know that they will also be watched to ensure that there is justice through the courts for all equally.

We would want a transitional authority to have the following mandate during their eighteen-month term of office:

a. Stop the political violence. Depoliticise the police, army and other defence forces. Any political violence must be reported, investigated and prosecuted through the courts without any favour or political influence.

b. Dialogue with the business and professional community to develop policy designed to bring about economic recovery.

c. Supervise the addressing of the humanitarian crisis together with the United Nations.

d. Even constitution-making has become the sole preserve of politicians. It was the constitutional referendum in 2000 that intensified political violence with catastrophic results, and therefore we need an independent person to oversee the consultative process. A transitional authority must neutralise this position and return constitution-making back to the people of Zimbabwe.

e. Depoliticise the issue of land reform, conduct a land audit and consult on a fair and equitable land reform programme. If the economy is to be stabilised, we need our land to be made productive fast.

f. Form a body to consult and develop a transitional justice plan of action designed to bring healing and reconciliation and then deal with justice and restitution for victims in the new Zimbabwe.

g. Bring about a truly independent electoral commission to oversee first a referendum on the new constitution and then a truly free and fair election process.

Thousands of WOZA members have been arrested for exercising their freedoms of expression and assembly. Some were even denied bail and imprisoned for marching to the Zambian Embassy to deliver a petition to the SADC chair, Zambian president Levy Mwanawasa. They remain undaunted by this repression and fully intend to continue to peacefully march for bread and roses, placards held high, until their messages are taken seriously at the negotiation table and in the corridors of power.

Freedom in a fortnight? Woza Moya!

—Jenni Williams, WOZA National Coordinator

Disposable Women and Other Myths

Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism by Melissa W. Wright (Routledge, 2006).

The title of this book refers to the myth that Third World women are disposable, ensuring that they are only employed for a few years with no job security. Third World women are hired for characteristics that supposedly only they possess, including their agile fingers, patience and ability to focus on small objects but, more disturbingly, their supposed submissiveness and willingness to work for low pay. But, over the course of a few years, they lose these characteristics.

Supposedly, nothing can be done about their injuries from repetitive motion or depression resulting from monotony and lack of promotional opportunity. They are said to lose their obedience to authority if their supposedly chaotic female natures get out of control. Therefore, the companies do not have to give them job security or improve ergonomics and safety, but they do have to keep the women monitored at all times to keep them from going on strike or making their own improvements to their job.

Wright only studied a few factories in China and Mexico, but even so the book is indicative of the very exploitative way women workers are treated in general in these factories. In China, the women, unlike the men working in the building next door, are kept inside the building six or seven days a week for their own safety from violence and pregnancy. In both countries, their menstrual cycles are monitored, and they are often dismissed at the end of a few years because it is assumed that, as teenagers, "they hear that biological clock" and want to start a family.

Wright gives four case studies of Mexican women who resist these attitudes. Two became managers but used their social networks to crush union organizing. A third attempted to become a manager but failed due to her love of bright clothing. The fourth, a supervisor,

improved the quality and rate of production of her product but, because she did so by relaxing unreasonable work rules, was fired for creating a "Mexican product." Wright shows that, even though these women resisted the myth of the disposable woman as individuals and made the job more tolerable for their workers, they did not change or abolish the poverty, job insecurity, or dangerous working conditions that go along with the disposable woman myth and with capitalism itself.

However, Wright states that women protesting the murders in the factory city of Juarez, Mexico, have been much more successful in causing the world to question this myth. She relates the murders of hundreds of young women over the past 15 years to the concept that women who leave the private sphere for the public one become disposable. Local politicians justify their lack of concern for improving safety and catching the murderers by saying that both the victims and the demonstrators had gotten sexually out of control by going out in public. The demonstrators try to get around this by saying that they are mothers mourning good daughters who had gone out in public to work in the factories to support their families. Wright says that, although this framing compromises their message, the demonstrators are "the public image of Third World women protesting their disposability."

This book is useful in describing the methods used to oppress women workers in Third World factories, the racist and sexist attitudes of the factory owners, and the sexist tactics politicians aim at the Juarez demonstrators. It would have been stronger if Wright had also written about the resistance to the disposable woman myth and to capitalism by the woman workers themselves. At least she does show how Juarez demonstrators resist the myth.

—Adele

WORLD VIEW **A tale of two summits**

Two summit meetings in July—of the G8 and the World Trade Organization (WTO)—achieved nothing in the face of the global crises of food prices and climate change. At best they failed to adopt U.S.-backed measures that would make matters worse.

In contrast to the official meetings, real life was found only in the massive protests and other counteractions held near the July G8 summit in Toyako, Japan—despite harsh repression by Japanese police and Customs. Many activists were denied entry into Japan, or detained for hours of interrogation. Nineteen South Korean farmers were held at the airport for 24 hours and then sent home.

Forty Japanese left radicals were arrested before the summit began. Some demonstrators and a Reuters cameraman were arrested at a peaceful protest in Sapporo. Yet this did not stop two days of protests by thousands, a Peace Walk, and a three-day People's Summit, where ideas were exchanged not only about actions but about the deep social transformations needed to address the crises.

The assembled movements immediately exposed the "regression" that the G8 tried to pass off as progress on climate change. Whereas last year's G8 summit promised to "consider" a 50% cut of greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2050—still far short of the 80% reduction scientists are saying is needed to avoid runaway climate change—this year's summit omitted the baseline year, effectively cutting the goal instead of acting to cut emissions.



Muji Itra

On the food crisis, the G8 pushed opening Third World markets as the solution, although that is widely understood as part of the problem. Specifically, they advocated completion of the Doha Round of negotiations to modify the WTO.

The latest Doha Round talks collapsed in Geneva July 29, with India and China resisting U.S.-Europe demands to effectively ban protection of farmers from sudden surges in imports of agricultural products.

Such surges have been common in poor countries where markets are opened to subsidized crops from the U.S. and Europe, contributing greatly to the ongoing food crisis.

The collapse of talks brought a sigh of relief from many quarters, since the Doha Round threatened to accelerate the dispossession of small farmers, the dependence on agribusiness conglomerates, and therefore the vulnerability to more food crises and famines. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the President of Brazil, tried valiantly to save Doha through a last-minute compromise, proving once again how a "socialist" party in power in a capitalist state becomes more beholden to the capitalist plantations and agribusiness than to the Landless Workers' Movement that helped put Lula in office.

The Doha collapse reflects not only the relative weakening of U.S. power on the world stage but the pressure from below from the many revolts sparked by the world food crisis.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Latin American Notes

Plan Mexico

Plan Mexico or the "Merida Initiative" has been signed into law by President Bush. It is an aid package of \$400 million dollars, that could go up to \$1.6 billion over three years. It goes to Mexico, Central American, and Caribbean countries for security aid to design and carry out counter-narcotics, counter-terrorism, and border security measures. Most of the money is going to the Mexican Armed Forces and Federal Police Force, with Customs, Immigration, and Communications receiving the remainder.

The Plan supports (or directs) Mexican President Felipe Calderon's militarization of the border initiative. Since taking office at the end of 2006, he has mobilized tens of thousands of soldiers to the northern border states in an effort to fight drug trafficking. However, so corrupt are the various police forces close to the border, and so infested with rival narco-traffic cartels/gangs are the border states and cities, that the result has been, not an interdiction of drugs, but an escalation of gang murders and kidnappings to unprecedented levels.

Mexican society, particularly at the border, has become more militarized than ever, obscuring the difference between organized narco-trafficking on both sides of the border and the migration of Mexicans and other Latin Americans in search of work. As an American Policies Program Special Report on Plan Mexico notes: "Plan Mexico intensifies border conflict by viewing immigration through the same military lens as terrorism and organized crime" (<http://americas.irc-online.org>). Meanwhile, human rights protections that were supposed to be written into Plan Mexico were greatly weakened, thus turning a blind eye to Mexico's frequent repression of social protest at the federal, state and municipal levels.

Bolivia's referendum

In a complex referendum vote, Bolivia's President, Evo Morales, was reconfirmed in office with an approval of some 65%, surpassing his initial (December 2005) election vote of 53%. He won majorities in five of Bolivia's nine departments, including La Paz and Cochabamba, approximately 50% of the vote in two other departments, and lost two departments. Clearly, among the vast majority of Bolivia's ten million people the President has increased his support since the end of 2005.

However, the governors in five regions—who oppose Morales, seek control of revenues and oppose possible nationalization of industries, and the new Constitution that has been drafted—also won their individual recall elections. Thus, they retain political power within their own regions. This is particularly important in the wealthy Santa Cruz department, where Morales did not receive a majority vote and where Governor Ruben Costas, using racist ideology, was reconfirmed in office. Much economic power remains outside of Morales' control. Costas and his supporters continue to perpetuate a racist division of the country: Indigenous vs. white, which is class-based. It is their economic class power combined with racist ideology that threatens Bolivia's new beginning post-2005, even as a substantial majority of the population supports Morales. Where autonomy demands were originally raised as part of Indigenous demands for self-determination within Bolivia, the governors and the business class are attempting to use it to defy the will of the Bolivian masses.

How the issue of autonomy, together with approval and implementation of the new Constitution, plays out, remains a crucial question for Bolivia's immediate future.

—E.W.

Many faces of Beijing Olympics

NBA star Yao Ming carried the flag to lead China's athletes opening the Olympics, alongside a little boy who kept up with his long strides on the march. We were told he dug himself out of the rubble of his collapsed school after the earthquake that hit Sichuan on May 12, then returned to rescue schoolmates because it was his duty as class monitor. Government organizers used the face of a child, equipped with a story on the model of the selfless heroes promoted in Mao Zedong-era campaigns, to misdirect world attention from the man-made disaster within the natural disaster.

Before the Olympics, officials had forced settlements on parents of the nearly 10,000 schoolchildren killed in shamefully shoddy buildings that had been erected with the connivance of contractors and officials, to end the parents' widening protests and demands for investigations.

Authorities had instituted new press rules permitting foreign journalists freer access, but roughed up journalists in the earthquake zones, and rescinded access to Tibet and areas with large Tibetan populations—police have stopped more reporters' activity this year than in all of 2007. Reporters arriving at the press box for the Olympics found websites blocked, even the BBC, contrary to promises of unfettered internet access.

China has the technology to block websites, which has been used to restrict access for dissidents and ordinary citizens alike, because companies like Google and Yahoo provided it as the price of doing business in China. Much as Hu Jintao's regime seeks to control its image abroad, the focus remains on quashing opposition within China.

The migrant workers who had largely built the Olympic facilities had been evicted from Beijing, along with other homeless people. Of 77 requests to stage protests during the Olympics by citizens, not one was approved. Most notoriously, two Beijing women pushing 80, whose houses had been demolished and who were trying to demand compensation, received sentences of a year in a labor camp.

—Bob McGuire

Turkish TV back on

Turkey's alternative Hayat TV has been allowed to resume broadcasting. It was closed July 15, following Ministry of the Interior accusations that it supplied newsfilm to Roj TV, an international Kurdish television channel. Based in Denmark, Roj TV is accused by the Turkish authorities of having ties to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

The closing of Hayat TV was seen as a heavy blow to press freedom in Turkey. Strong protests were lodged by the Association of Intellectuals for Democracy, which includes the Turkish Writers Union, Turkish Journalists Union, PEN Center for Turkey, International Press Institute, and many trade unions and individuals. Mustafa Koz of the Writers Union stated: "The shutting of Hayat TV forced us to think about our situation. This act told us to stick to each other."

Hayat TV describes itself as the voice of workers, women, and minorities in Turkey. "We, the millions of workers and labourers, are obliged to watch whatever is presented on the television that we put in the key place of our homes. We are either alienated from ourselves, our problems and culture or identified with a different world which by no means resembles us. Let us be neither alienated nor identified with phenomena outside of ourselves. Let us be ourselves, protect our own existence."

The channel is carried on TurkSat in Turkey and the Caucasus, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe.

—G.E.

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*.