

# ORGANIZING WITH THE MARXIST—HUMANIST BODY OF IDEAS

Report on Organization to the 1984 News & Letters Committees Convention

by Michael Connolly  
National Co-Organizer, News & Letters Committees



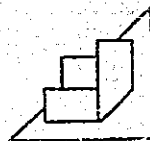
# OBJECTIVE CRISES COMPELLING THEORETIC CLARIFICATION OF REVOLUTION

Report on the Black and Third World to 1984 News & Letters Convention

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I. "Objectivity/Subjectivity": Our Participation in Today's Freedom  
Struggles

Six short weeks after our 1983 Constitutional Convention ended, we witnessed counter-revolution in Grenada on Oct. 19, followed by the U.S. imperialist invasion Oct. 25. We participated across the country in the protest demonstrations--from the spontaneous marches in New York and California, to the Nov. 12 rally in Washington D.C. In the solidarity committees to which we all belong, how to link protests of Grenada to support for Central American revolutions was a burning issue.

And yet everywhere the horror of counter-revolution within the revolution opening the door for the U.S. invasion was not taken up, much less analyzed. Some turned to the kind of Stalinism that attempted to glorify Austin and Coard. We, on the other hand, called for an urgent new dialogue to stop this "death of the dialectic". Our pamphlet Grenada: Revolution, Counter-Revolution, Imperialist Invasion drew some of those who did catch the new in this most sobering crossroads close to us. Three who participated in those demonstrations joined us in the weeks that followed. One kind of ramification from our Grenada pamphlet is still developing--its listing in Africa News, which has brought orders and inquiries from both Africa and America.

But here I want to stress a different aspect of that pamphlet--

Raya's discussion of "The Challenge from 30 Years of Movements from Practice that were Themselves Forms of Theory". We need to re-read that crucial document now, not alone to understand the revolutions of our age, but to grasp more fully what revolutionary "objectivity/subjectivity" means today.

Raya sums up the highest moments of the revolutions of the 1970's, singling out Portugal 1974-75 raising the question of apartidarismo; the women's liberation movement worldwide challenging the "unfreedom" of a Khomeini; and the internationalism of the 1970's which saw revolutions in the Third World create their own category. When she tests these questions against what Marxist-Humanism was learning at the same time about Marx's last decade, we can see on what a different ground even these highest moments of the 1970's can be considered. Thus, when we are speaking of form of organization, the Critique of the Gotha Program underlines how its consideration raised in isolation can end by being an evasion of a philosophy of revolution. The difficulties women's liberation has had developing itself theoretically, despite its emergence as a world movement, are linked to the disregard of the Ethnological Notebooks' view of women as Subject within the totality of a philosophy of revolution. And internationalism is shown to be not alone "solidarity" but Marx's concept of internationalism as seen in the 1882 Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto, where he writes of a relationship between the Third World and the industrialized world that is a concretization of "revolution in permanence."

The point in tracing all this is to focus on the "new sense of objectivity" made possible when we understand that it was Marxist-Humanism alone which so combined the revolutions of the 1970's with the re-discovery of new moments of Marx's Marxism that a "trail to the

1980's" could be seen. Put bluntly, the Grenada PPL proved, by summing up three decades of movements from practice that were themselves forms of theory, that unless the movement's sense of objectivity includes Marxist-Humanist subjectivity as world, historic, objective--"the innermost and most objective moment of Life and Spirit"--it is incomplete.

In that sense, the ramifications of the Grenada PPL inform all our activity, and not just our continuing support of revolution in the West Indies. We need now to fully internalize that new sense of objectivity for our daily work.

Take our work with rank-and-file labor struggles (what we called "fighting Ronald Reagan, strike-breaker"). Toledo, Ohio was only the latest and most exciting in the wave of strikes against "permanent concessions". We participated in McDonnell-Douglas and at Greyhound, with hotel workers in Las Vegas and oilworkers in the Bay Area as well as copper miners in Arizona. In Britain, we have worked with striking miners.

But the new for us in labor this year is two-fold. First, the dimension of sweated immigrant labor--their struggles and questions, as "abroad"--in the sense of Third World conditions of labor--is now "at home". We began the year by posing that dimension with John Marcotte's essay and developed it in the Workshop Talks columns. Second, the intensification of unimation/robotization, now including thousands of women office workers riveted to VDT screens, and continuing in autoshops and electronics plants.

Our new 1949-50 Miners General Strike pamphlet combines both with another view of three decades, tracing Marxist-Humanism's unfoldment from, and continuing return to, the new in the world created out of that historic strike. Look at our latest pre-convention



discussion bulletins. We find there a young immigrant worker like Sam telling of his discussions on Marx's Marxism with other workers on the floor of his Silicon Valley sweatshop. And we find Ron exposing today's "fetish of high-tech", rampant in that same Silicon Valley, through a study of Marx's 100-year-old Mathematical Manuscripts. Don't they prove the objectivity of Marxist-Humanism's view of labor from 1949 to today? Isn't it possible that if we discussed the 1949-50 Miners General Strike pamphlet together with these bulletins with worker friends, we would find not only new writers for the labor page, but new members from the shops? The only way that we can test our new sense of objectivity is in projection--breaking down the division between "internal" and "external" discussion of our ideas.

Lou will shortly take up our work in the Black and Third World movements, and women's liberation and youth will have their own reports in this session. But the new sense of objectivity I am speaking of relates to all of our work, as seen in what we were able to do in a single week this June, when Soweto Day saw Ray speaking to the Black Consciousness Movement in Washington D.C., while the British Marxist-Humanists were joining them in London, and Lou was debating a veteran nationalist in Detroit, not only on Garvey's legacy, but on Marx and the Black World.

Let's see if we can find those kinds of new openings in our work with solidarity committees (what we called fighting "Ronald Reagan, world outlaw"). They are a genuinely new fact of American political life, and whether we look at Africa (as in South Africa, Eritrea and the Gambia); or the Middle East with the Iraq-Iran War; or women's liberation in India, we have been there. But for us in the U.S., the centerpoint has to be Latin America, not only because it is our own

hemisphere and U.S. imperialism, but because its revolutionary ferment has been ceaseless since Nicaragua 1979. We have been active with support committees and exile organizations from nearly a dozen countries, and with Latino High School youth in Los Angeles. And we have published every month Noticias & Cartas, so that at least a part of News & Letters is available in Spanish.

But what characterized this year's solidarity work were struggles over its direction, over what genuine revolutionary solidarity means--struggles every local experienced intimately. And yet, all too often our critique of those who wish to reduce the meaning of "solidarity" to opposition to U.S. imperialism either gets expressed only at our own meetings, or is presented to others in a manner which leaves little room for dialogue.

How conscious are we of the possibilities for a different direction in this work? There is Eugene's thesis, which we are just beginning to discuss. It is not alone on Mariategui. Its full title is "José Carlos Mariategui and Karl Marx: New Pathways to Revolution in the Third World". Our discussion of it with Latin Americans can't stop at the appreciation of the revolutionary dimensions of Indian and peasant, or even at attempts in various parts of the world to re-focus Marxism in the 1920's. In jamming together Marx and Mariategui, aren't we trying to open a discussion on Marx's Marxism as Marxist-Humanism sees it today? Try reading Eugene's thesis together with Raya's Introduction to the 1984 edition of Afro-Asian Revolutions and you will be struck with how the two complement each other so concretely on the relationship between freedom forces and ideas in technologically backward lands and advanced ones.

Many of the debates within the movement spilled over into conferences and campuses this year, where we continued the work we began in the Marx Centenary. We gave presentations, took the floor and sold literature at labor conferences in Detroit, at Third World and African studies meetings in Chicago and Boston, at Marxist/socialist scholars conferences in New York and California, and at the National Women's Studies Conference in New Jersey. Everywhere we continued our challenge to post-Marx Marxists, and to non-Marxists as well.

Two new vantage points for that work were opened by Raya this year. First in the labor of presenting "Marx's 'New Humanism' and the Dialectics of Women's Liberation in Primitive and Modern Societies" to a non-Marxist conference in New York; and second, in elaborating that work into a new category in her "Theory/Practice" column on Terrell Carver, through her critique of "Non-Marxist Scholar-Careerists in 'Marxism'". The ramifications of the New York trip have included the publication of Raya's paper in Praxis, and a new relationship to dissident East European Marxists, as well as the International Women's Day broadcast of her interview on women's liberation over WBAI. The responses to the Carver critique continue to come in from intellectuals both here and in Europe.

When we put together all these labors by Marxist-Humanism this year with the 30-year foundation of our body of ideas, we have before us the possibility of realizing, not as a slogan, but as actuality, a "new sense of objectivity" that includes at the center of revolutionary subjectivity, News & Letters Committees.

At the same time we have to face the contradictory fact that we continue to have great difficulty in getting reviews of RJWL/PR, in breaking through the wall of silence that often claims to "love Raya",

but treats her as a non-person in their presses. Even more urgently, we need to confront the very small nature of our membership growth, which can not possibly satisfy us once we have concretely grasped the objectivity of our historic tasks. As Raya put it in her letter to the Youth last month: "It is that organizational form, News & Letters Committees, which is the test of whether you fully understand what the 'body of ideas' called Marxist-Humanism is."

We can test ourselves by returning to look at what we mean by our "body of ideas" on the eve of our move to Chicago.

## II. Moving to Chicago, or Philosophy's Search for the Right Organizational Form

Reading Raya's letter to the Youth as a letter on organization illuminates what is new in the 1980's. We see first that in our age "not only have objective and subjective merged", but that both have been existing in the organizational form called News & Letters Committees. But now that we have all three books, and can speak of the Marxist-Humanist "body of ideas", the organizational form of News & Letters Committees "is now directly related to Marx's philosophy of 'revolution in permanence' as its ground."

The point is to see that all the summations of our body of ideas, which began in 1980 with the 25 Year History, and continued through the new introductions to Marxism & Freedom and Philosophy & Revolution, the "1980's View" in Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, and all the new pamphlets this year--all of them seek to give us a very different view of ourselves by disclosing the relationship between Marx's Marxism, 1841-83 and Marxist-Humanism, 1941-83. And now we can ask: can this new view of



ourselves bring our organizational praxis to the point where our form of organization fully projects Marxist-Humanism's philosophy of revolution?

Look at the motto we chose for our newspaper from Marx's Capital: "Human Power is its Own End". It is a development of what he had begun in 1844 when he wrote of the emergence of all the "creative faculties and talents of the individual". And it reaches its highest expression in Critique of the Gotha Program in the projection of an "end to the antithesis between mental and manual labor". With the publication of RLNLMPR, we singled out Critique of the Gotha Program, when we called "revolution in permanence" ground for organization. We sought then to concretize it for each member in two ways: "Have Thumb, Will Travel"; and the classes in the Marxist-Humanist body of ideas.

1) "Have Thumb, Will Travel" began last year out of the need to spread our challenge to post-Marx Marxism across the U.S. and internationally. Through the national tour of Raya last year, a new Salt Lake City local was founded at our 1983 Convention. This year they experienced the whirlwind visit of Peter--who not only appeared in the press and on the radio, but offered critical direction for the local. This year has also underlined "have thumb, will travel" through the work of the new at-large members in Washington D.C. and Cincinnati. Next year working with at-large members will remain an important perspective, as will continuing travels into areas where we have no members. Just as this year we saw Olga and Andy travel to West Virginia; Peter, Dale and Bob to Denver; Mary to Texas and Lou to every local, so next year will have to see a continuation of our efforts to find new friends for Marxist-Humanism outside the areas of our

six locals. At the same time we have to keep in mind that the category "have thumb, will travel" from its inception never separated the projection of Marxist-Humanism from each member's own internalization as preparation for those trips.

2) Now let's look at the Classes in the Marxist-Humanist Body of Ideas, 1984. They really did attempt uncharted ground. Never before had we tried to present all three books and the whole of our work in that way. We can view the classes as preparation for our move to Chicago, or we can view them as our extension of the Marx centenary year 1983, not only chronologically into 1984, but what is far more important, consequentially by focusing not only on Marx's Marxism, but on its re-creation by ourselves over the whole post-World War II period. But we need as well to keep in mind the perspective of objective/subjective method as it was posed in the brochure for the classes. We said there, "the student will practice that methodology in writing analyses of current events and work them out in a dialectical way leading to new historic relations."

Before we answer how fully we achieved that goal, listen to how Raya put it on the eve of the opening of the classes, when she asked us to focus on RLWMPPR's projection of "revolution in permanence as ground for organization": "Frankly, I fear that this has been handled so abstractly that its test in actual organizational growth as well as its test of our own individual self-development are lost."

If we take these vantage points in drawing up a balance sheet at the end of the classes, we can point to new members won in Detroit and Los Angeles, and to important presentations on women's liberation, on our newspaper, and on our Archives, which were included in the Pre-Convention bulletins. At the same time we would have to conclude

that the membership growth achieved is but the barest of beginnings. And the lack of reviews of RLJLMPR on the one hand, and difficulties with Readers' Views on our trilogy of revolution on the other, point to the incomplete way our daily praxis has absorbed the methodology of the classes.

One thing that may help us transcend these problems is Raya's little addition of the words "living" or "walking" to the category "body of ideas". It centers the possibility of working out "revolution in permanence" as ground for organization within the "self-development of the individual as universal freedom." Yet even this magnificent expression can become a cliché if we pass over it too quickly. It is crucial that we keep in mind the words "as universal freedom" and see that they are never separated from the "self-development of the individual". The letter to the Youth puts it even more strongly when it warns of the danger that "self-development" might be substituted for the Universal--made its alleged equivalent.

A few years ago we began using the phrase: "a new kind of member, including ourselves." And perhaps we began forgetting that the pathway to our own self-development centered on projecting Marxist-Humanism to others who will want to join us. In truth, such projection is the fullest concrete proof that a "new kind of member" has been born.

In this context, moving to Chicago is seen as not only a question of our work with its concrete revolutionary forces--the workers, Blacks, Latinos, women and youth who have made Chicago such an exciting city ever since the days of Eleanor Marx. Nor is it only a matter of adding the fact that Chicago is an intellectual center of world importance. What is most crucial in the "new" of moving to Chicago is that it is also a question of ourselves, of Marxist-Humanism's tasks remaining

to be done. First among them is the need to grow, in the number of members and in the depth of our unique contribution to the Marxist movement.

"Philosophy does not reach its full articulation until it has discovered the right organizational form", Raya wrote as she completed RLWLMPR. Consider that this was written some 27 years after the founding of our committees, 27 years in which we had gone a very long way toward creating the kind of Marxist organization which none had ever attempted before. Even Marx did not have a "Marxist" organization in his lifetime. Yet what RLWLMPR did, in completing the "trilogy of revolution", was to test all our organizational work against the totality of the Marxist-Humanist body of ideas, striving to make our philosophy of liberation inseparable from everything we do. Thus in the deepest sense the move to Chicago seeks to bring to fruition that demand which philosophy--or what we call the "historic mirror"--made on us when we founded our committees in 1955.

### III. Organizational Perspectives: Marxist-Humanism as an "Organizing Idea"

It would be wrong to leave an organizational report hanging on such an abstraction. What Hegel called the "self-determination in which alone the Idea is, is to hear itself speak", may seem far removed from the practical tasks of the year ahead. But if we investigate what happens when you are really organized by the Idea's own development, it may help illuminate our work.

1) Take the move to Chicago itself. We said it would involve the whole organization, and would have to be prepared through the classes.



Some could not believe that the organizational "nuts and bolts" of the move were really not prepared in advance, but would emerge out of the experience of the classes. Yet that is precisely what happened when Mary took "Have Thumb, Will Travel" so concretely that she volunteered to move to New York, as Kevin had been asked to come to Chicago, which in turn meant that Ron would have to meet the challenge and become organizer for the Bay Area. Even the question of where to rent an office in Chicago was not "technical" alone, but based on what kind of location would allow us to have a different kind of Center next year--one in which, because there is no full-time National Office Co-ordinator, the whole Chicago local helps out in its work.

2) Now look at pamphlets. In the last 12 months we have produced six of them: American Civilization on Trial; Marx and the Third World; Grenada; Afro-Asian Revolutions; 1949-50 Miners General Strike and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. They are an explosion of Marxist-Humanist expression unprecedented in our history as an organization. But in 1982, when RLWLMPR was published, we knew none of them; and we planned none of them then. The truth is they came into existence because we followed a few--and I mean a very few--of the pathways down which the "self-determination of the Idea" led once we had RLWLMPR and all three of Raya's works as a totality. The work that Lou has done this year with his re-study of Garvey illustrates how one single page of a work like ACOT contains within it tremendous openings today.

Thus in thinking about reviews, sales, ads, use in movement meetings and campus conferences, don't we have to see the new pamphlets not as substitute for the trilogy, but as creative new ways to open wide a discussion of the trilogy in the movement and the scholarly

press. Kevin's work in getting the review just published in Dimensions, and Olga's response to the non-review printed in Thesis 11 underscore the ongoing character of this work for the year ahead.

3) At the same time we have the opportunity to have "mini-tours" by Raya in the coming year, in advance of the new book of writings on women's liberation. Here we are speaking of individual, brief, and above all well-paid, trips to one area at a time, mostly in the Spring of 1985, but possibly with even one this Fall. When you consider how the proposal for the new book has its roots in the article Raya wrote for Praxis International, the re-study of that article may help us think about how we can prepare ourselves for the book's appearance through arranging lectures. Whether they are in Chicago, which will again be the author's home, or in a place like Denver, where we were not able to finalize a trip last year, we can be sure that whatever the assigned topic, the ground for the lectures will be the same as it was for the Praxis article--Marx's philosophy of revolution.

4) Olga has already spoken of one of our most important perspectives for next year--the new classes in the Perspectives Theses. The focus on the classes brings together the newspaper in which they appeared in draft form for the last decade with the organization which opened its pages for discussion of those Perspectives, not only for the sake of discussion, but to ask readers to consider taking organizational responsibility for Marxist-Humanism. Thus we finally have to confront two organizational perspectives with which we have had difficulties this year: selling subscriptions to News & Letters and organizational growth.

One of the great contradictions of the past year has been the huge response by our subscribers to our Appeal--over \$6,000 from some 112 donors. Yet not only have we added few new subscribers to the

rolls, many of those who did subscribe sent in on their own, rather than through our locals. Add to that the fact that the Appeal donations began after the death of Charles Denby--and they spontaneously named the Fund after him--but resumed with new intensity in response to our analysis of Grenada in the Dec. N&L. Indeed, we could not separate the two in the responses, so deeply were many readers moved by the way we were able to respond to the Grenada crisis so soon after the passing of our editor. All of which testifies to the great appreciation many of our subscribers have for the uniqueness of News & Letters, an appreciation we perhaps don't fully realize.

Charles Denby was such a huge personal presence, not only to so many of us, but to so many of our readers, both workers and intellectuals, that you might think that they would draw away from us with his passing. As Eugene pointed out, the opposite has been what happened. Readers told us as they gave on the Appeal how deeply they felt that News & Letters would be able to carry on his work because his life and our ideas were inseparable.

Two years ago in this report I spoke of the "dialectics of a sale", the way it does not stop at a capitalist commodity exchange but moves on to new freedom relationships. Here I would like to follow for a moment the "dialectics of a subscription to N&L" so that we see exactly what doors are opened through it. From the initial dialogue that results in a name and address and \$2.50, comes a plate and card in the office with a copy to the local, a visit to the new subscriber to discuss the ideas he or she is reading, which may mean Readers' Views or articles for N&L, invitations to meetings, and possibly discussions of membership in our Committees. This is what can happen when the dialectics of a subscription unfolds itself for

one new subscriber who is looking for an organizing Idea.

We all know this very well. Yet Olga's presentation yesterday suggested how slim is our knowledge of what every subscriber has been offered in the Draft Perspectives for the last 10 years. The fact that this year we are placing such emphasis on both the new Classes in Perspectives and the beautiful new Bound Volume of News & Letters 1977-84, should help us to see that a subscription to a full year of N&L opens up our body of ideas in a way a single issue cannot.

I would like therefore to make a MOTION that we initiate a SUB DRIVE after the Aug./Sept. issue is off the press, running through Jan. 1. It is a proposal for a perspective for each member, an individual experience as much as is Have Thumb, Will Travel, but this time without necessarily leaving town to do it.

Naturally, that means selling subs everywhere we go, in all the battlegrounds of the movement. It means more, not less, participation in strikes and anti-war marches, in the Black freedom movement and in Latin American solidarity, in women's liberation and in challenging every tendency that offers their alternative to Marxist-Humanism's vision of a new society.

5) The "dialectics of a sub drive" can truly lead to organizational growth if we realize that it is not alone that "new beginnings determine the end." Yes, we have seen how the new beginnings with the break rough on the Absolute Idea in 1953 led to the founding of News & Letters as organization and as newspaper in 1955. And if we follow the "self-determination of the Idea" over three decades, we come to a new view of ourselves with the publication of our trilogy of revolution in the 1980's.

But it is not alone that "new beginnings determine the end". It



is also "the End"--the Marxist-Humanist vision of the future in the present, its new men and woman, its new society, its realization of the Self-Thinking Idea--"that determines the New Beginnings". The Marxist-Humanist Idea is an organizer, of ourselves, and of serious activists who have not yet joined us.

If there is one task above all others this year, it is to project that vision so concretely in all our work with the freedom movements, that something as "simple" as a sub drive will become a challenge to those we meet to be a part of a movement for a whole new world. We want to begin by asking those who are not yet members in this room to join with us in our work this year.

Report on the Black and Third World:

OBJECTIVE CRISES COMPELLING THEORETIC CLARIFICATION OF  
REVOLUTION

BY Lou Turner  
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I. Abroad at Home, At Home Abroad

The Black dimension has a way of merging both the objective situation with subjective thought and nationalism and internationalism that makes us face at once the totality of the capitalist crisis, as well as the revolutionary opposition to what is. Take Miami on the one hand, and the invasion of Grenada on the other.

Black Miami has been in revolt for four years with the bourgeoisie sounding the alarm in report after report that the inner cities are on a short fuse and ready to explode. The permanent character of Black mass revolt in Black inner cities like Miami's Overtown and Liberty City taught the powers-that-be more than the Kerner Commission report of two decades ago or the latest studies on Miami. That was clearly demonstrated in the latest Miami rebellion where the whole justice system, not just the police, as an armed bureaucracy moved to preempt Black rebellion against police terrorism. The whole justice system in Miami made a preemptive attack in which the police literally rioted against the Black community, complete with preventive detention similar to that practiced in South Africa.

What the experts and social planners call "distressed areas" to describe today's urban crisis has, as well, become part of the social terrain of today's revolutionary Black consciousness. Four years after

the Black masses in Miami rejected the 1960's leadership, Jesse Jackson embarked on the alternate route of electoral politics. It was following the first Miami rebellion in Liberty City that four years ago the delegates at the Democratic Convention, so fearful of the undercurrent of revolt, approved a multi-billion dollar jobs proposal against the wishes of President Carter. How much sharper will be the demands of Jackson delegates and supporters at this year's Convention for the Democratic Party to face the realities outside the convention hall. Nevertheless, it is even truer now than four years ago when Raya concluded in the Perspectives Thesis that the last word will not be in the voting booth to transform these realities.

The truth is not only that four years of continuous rebellion in Miami reveals how much the Black masses reject the Black leadership associated with the "broken promises" of the 1960's, which they will be told once again to place their confidence in at the Democratic Convention. Rather, it is that the Black unemployed youth, women and men in Miami who reject the established Black leadership look only to themselves to bring forth liberty in Liberty City and Overtown. And it is out of this rejection that the search for a philosophy of liberation springs. The fact is that both the crisis still festers in Black America, and the Black total rejection of Reaganomics, Reaganpolitics and Reagan-retrogressionism in all matters Black will rise again and assure a continuous pre-revolutionary upsurge.

Just as the maturity of the age is shown in acts of opposition to the powers-that-be, even when there is no revolution, such as in Miami, the crisis in Black liberation is shown when actual revolution does not succeed in working out the philosophy of revolution needed to deepen itself. That the objective situation is ominous is most

clearly etched in the Black dimension because there is absolutely no divide between nationalism and internationalism, as is clear from Reagan's invasion of Grenada. The fact that Reagan's imperialist invasion happened the same month that we lost Charles Denby, the Black worker-editor of News & Letters, confronted us with a totally new crisis that extended beyond the Black world to the whole of the Third World. As Raya had noted in the Political-Philosophic Letter on Grenada, not even Reagan's war plans in the Middle East diverted him from his imperialist plans in the Caribbean and Central America. The global shift in politics continued to run its course from the October invasion of Grenada to the so-called March accords that Mozambique and Angola were forced to sign with apartheid South Africa.

Moreover, the famine conditions plaguing Africa at this moment, which have persisted since the 1973-74 Arab Oil embargo fueled world-wide recession, have even more tragically become a part of the global shift in politics. That African tragedy reveals that fully five million people are refugees due, in many instances, to political and social crises in African nations. While starvation, famine, massive refugee displacement and new advances made by national liberation fronts spell out ever deepening crises in the Horn of Africa, Russia designates the totalitarian government of Ethiopia as passing on to full "communism". The reality is that the Eritrean national liberation struggle has recently made new military inroads against the Russian-backed Dergue which could mark a new turning point in the Horn of Africa.

The reports we heard at the Boston African Studies Association Conference on the critical status of Mozambique prior to the announcement of the so-called accords with South Africa disclosed how the failed



administrative planning of the FRELIMO government internally and the military onslaught of South African terrorism externally forced Mozambique into a so-called "non-aggression pact" with South Africa. What we had heard three months before the announcement of the "accords" was that South Africa has succeeded in destabilizing fully nine of Mozambique's ten provinces at the same time that the masses were protesting the administrative plans of the government which reduced the power that the workers and peasant held immediately following independence (See reports of the Fourth Party Congress of FRELIMO).

Whether in Ethiopia and Eritrea, Mozambique and South Africa, or West Africa, where the first African nations, Ghana and Guinea, won independence from Western colonialism and raised the concept of African Socialism, this period of crisis in Black liberation is also one of new theoretical digging into the relationship of Marx to the Third World.

The global shift naturally affected the Third World Conference in Chicago that we attended. For not only a new battle of ideas resulted, but it at the same time opened new lines of theoretic/practical intervention and established new relations with people who are looking for an alternative to tail-ending Stalinism and Maoism each time a new crisis erupts. We were able to project further in Chicago, Los Angeles, and Berkeley when the discussions turned from Garvey to discussion of Marxist-Humanism and our political analysis of Third World crises.

Take another look at the Caribbean, this time in the period of Garveyism and when the question then too was the invasion of a Caribbean country as prelude to counter-revolution in Central America,

especially Nicaragua. I am talking about the U.S. invasion of Haiti in 1915 and the Dominican Republic in 1916. This set the stage for carrying out the counter-revolutionary invasion against the first Sandinista movement. That defeat of the revolutionary movement led by Sandino left in its place a U.S. trained military government directed by Somoza.

However, it was against the U.S. invasion of Haiti, which lasted until 1934, that there emerged nearly simultaneously the first expression of negritude (before it had that name) and the articulation of an indigenous Haitian Marxism. It led as well to a very original form of the novel by Haitian writers called "the peasant novel."

Thus, it was not alone successful revolutions, but the set-backs of defeated ones which have led to new extensions of Marx to the Third World. This has become the very dialectic of revolution in our state-capitalist age, where despite the death of the dialectic in the minds of post-Marx Marxists, revolt nevertheless continuously arises out of the ashes with the new objectivity of a movement from practice which is itself a form of theory.

Still, if all there was to report was that the defeat of the Grenadian revolution is tied to Reagan's imperialist plans in Central America, international solidarity would not extend beyond taking the most obvious for granted, i.e., U.S. imperialism out! Though Peter and others will have much more to say on the question of our work around Latin America, it is necessary to note the original category we created of the "unfinished Latin American revolutions" which has now to be seen in the context of a whole trilogy of Marx's philosophy of revolution. In other words, there is no pathway to completing the Latin American revolutions which has not made Marx's philosophy of revolution

integral to its process. Such an original expression of revolutionary philosophy is derived as much from returning to the source of Marx's Marxism as it is from the revolutionary origins of one's own conditions. Eugene's thesis on the Peruvian Marxism of Mariategui shows how the dialectic of the Latin American revolution gains new illumination when conditions as source and Marx's Marxism as source find a Marxist-Humanist form of presentation on a subject such as Mariategui.

Where is the proof that it is the maturity of our age which allows us to discover new moments in Marx that no other generation of post-Marx Marxists have? Re-read the single chapter of Part II of Marxism & Freedom--"Worker and Intellectual at a Turning Point in History: 1848-61"--that Iranian revolutionaries translated and distributed inside Iran on the eve of the Revolution. As against Rosa Luxemburg who experienced the 1905 Revolution and thought it was so definitive a break with the 1848 Revolutions that her generation was witnessing a series of new 20th century revolutions, the Iranian revolutionaries saw in that chapter on 1848 and Lassalle (the prototype of the radical intellectual of our age) that the revolutions that Marx participated in "opened the era of mass proletarian revolutions."

It was Marx's writings from the 1848 Revolutions which were also Fanon's favorites. Even the original title of his Dying Colonialism--"The Fifth Year of the Algerian Revolution"--Fanon claimed, was inspired by Marx's 18th Brumaire. The point is that whereas Luxemburg's generation saw 1848 as a bourgeois democratic revolution, today's Third World revolutionaries see the problematic of national liberation struggles reaching not only the national stage but continuing in permanence to a new society.

Thus, our projection of Marx's philosophy of revolution in permanence is not imposed from the outside but flows from our work

with Chilean and Peruvian revolutionaries faced with the unfinished nature of the Latin American revolutions, with Central American and Caribbean revolutionaries confronting imperialist intervention and neo-colonial underdevelopment, and with Middle Eastern Marxists for whom the myriad flash points now besetting the Middle East could not be separated from the defeat of the two 1970's revolutions in Lebanon and Iran.

It is, however, the Black world objectively and the Black dimension subjectively which, as we singled out in the new Introduction to the Afro-Asian Revolutions pamphlet, is "so deep a revolutionary dimension and (has) so intense an internationalism imbedded in their national liberation struggles that, far from being a 'Third' World, it encompassed the whole world."

As we saw earlier on the global shift in global politics over Grenada, this goes beyond the question of the Black world, but not, however, without being rooted in the two-way road to revolution between the U.S. and Africa. Furthermore, this was made the vantage point for the 1980's view of the new fourth expanded edition of ACOT.

## II. From a "Black Worker's Journal" to "Black World"--the Challenge To Unite Theory and Practice

It was August 1983, the double 20th anniversary of the March on Washington and the publication of American Civilization on Trial. And in his June 1983 Worker's Journal column Charles Denby told us what in Raya's new Introduction to ACOT he saw as the focus: "...I was actually glad in a way that your new book, RLWLMPR was already locked up in print when you decided to 'add' a new paragraph to its conclusion summing up Marx's views of the Black dimension...I felt very strongly



that this new paragraph should be the focus of the Introduction of the new edition of ACOT."

This was Denby's last Worker's Journal column, in a real sense. And yet, its being on ACOT and especially its focus on Raya's new paragraph to RLWLMFR on Marx and the Black World rounded out his 30 years of writing, not as ending point but as pointing to the need for a new beginning. For Denby that new Introduction and paragraph was important because, as he concluded, "it does away with all the attempts to isolate the last 20 years of the Black struggle in the U.S.A. Many times when I hear members of the Left or narrow nationalists speak about our movement, they act as though it could be torn out of the international context of freedom struggles. But that is exactly the opposite to what we showed in ACOT and what Marx did all his life."

There is one sense in which as the writer of the new Black World column of N&L, following the nearly 30 years of Charles Denby's Worker's Journal column, I feel a certain relationship to Marx's 1841 doctoral dissertation on Epicurus. Namely, the question of "where to begin?" after such a theoretic/practical foundation has been laid is by no means an abstract question but a living reality which appears all the more serious as one confronts newer crises in the Black and Third World.

I was reminded of Marx's 1841 dialectic by Raya's Letter to Denby on it in her June 1981 Theory/Practice column. At the conclusion of that letter Raya asked Denby if he saw any relationship between the questions that preoccupied Marx in his 1841 dialectic and the new stage of production in Automation and the new stage of cognition Raya had discovered in splitting Hegel's Absolute Idea, on the one hand, and Denby's Indignant Heart pointing to a new stage of Black

consciousness which was soon manifested in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, on the other hand.

Ever since Denby's last trip to the South in the Summer of 1982 he had written of the crisis he saw there that seemed as great as that which brought on the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950's. Whether or not Jesse Jackson's campaign ever saw the crisis in the same terms or saw itself as a response to it, there is no doubt that the mass movement that has resulted from Jackson's campaign is one response to the crisis that Denby saw, and has transformed electoral politics in this country.

My own trip through the South in the Summer of 1982 allowed me very briefly to catch what Denby had always written about in Worker's Journal, namely, that the Southern root of the Black condition is as well the root of Black consciousness in America. His last trip South coincided with my first trip there and for News & Letters, I wrote about the Tchula 7 and the new political consciousness developing especially among women, farmers and youth.

Denby had asked me to write several more articles on objective developments in the South. But it was writing as a guest columnist on the March on Washington under Worker's Journal which gave me a sense of how different it would be writing after Denby. The March on Washington seemed to be the real point of transition for me because Denby was so excited about our being able to meet this new stage with a new edition of ACOT which we took with us just as he had taken the first edition to the 1963 March on Washington.

At the same time, it represented another kind of point of transition for our organizational outreach and the development of a Black Marxist-Humanist cadre. I am talking about the fact that Gene, Karl and

Bess in Los Angeles didn't stop seeing the newness of ACOT after the March on Washington, but continued to extend our outreach into the Black movement with record sales of ACOT at Jackson and other mass rallies and demonstrations. As Gene said, "People in the community see themselves at this historic moment reflected in ACOT." The uniqueness of our history of America is that those who are conscious of making history desire most to read our history of America.

That, it seems to me, was what Denby saw whether as international context or as Marx's philosophy of revolution. In other words, the 30 year movement from practice, that anyone serious about human relations could not help but recognize in Denby's journalism as a form of theory, demanded that a new relationship of theory to practice, of philosophy to revolution be worked out. Though naturally, the difference of worker and intellectual is most obvious in the two columns Worker's Journal and Black World, however, another point here concerning the question of critique is of the essence.

When a Black worker takes up the subject of the crisis in Black liberation or in the labor movement, he, of necessity, becomes part of the critique, part of the contradiction. His attitude as a writer, his own subjectivity, is posited as a voice from within. What I had missed in my article on the "Crisis in Black Liberation" was that critique was also self-critique because as a revolutionary you are so serious about working out a new direction for the movement with others. Indeed, the opposite of the overly critical remarks on the objective situation in Africa, for instance, can be seen in the discussion with the Black intellectual we talked to during the mini-tour in Los Angeles who was interested in the method of making Marx's philosophy of revolution concrete for Black liberation in America.

The point is how to be engagedly critical, so that those we want to discuss Marxist-Humanism with see that we don't exclude ourselves from the critique, and that we made the critique in order to clear the ground for serious discussion and actual working out of philosophy.

III. Some Thoughts on the Black and Third World on the Way to Chicago

Ever since the Marx centenary year when we had the trilogy of revolution in hand, the many openings we found at conferences and platforms we created for ourselves have brought us into contact with a number of serious Black and Third World revolutionaries, women's liberationists and anti-war activists.

I discovered one new relationship to our work on Marx and the Black world recently when I read the Master's thesis of one of the Black intellectuals we have known since the Black Thought pamphlet. His thesis is on "The Concept of Freedom in the Philosophy of Locke, Rousseau and Marx" written in 1977 when we were working on the Black Thought pamphlet. More surprising than that however is the fact that his 30 pages on the concept of freedom in Marx's philosophy develops quite profoundly Marx's notion of freedom from the Humanist essays through the Grundrisse and Capital to the Critique of the Gotha Program; of the latter, the author says it returned Marx to the source of his concept of freedom he first articulated in the 1844 Humanist Essays. And the "subjective reason" that the author gives for choosing such a topic for a Master's thesis he tells his thesis advisors, is that being the descendant of slaves is the "natural reason" for his choice. Jim and I visited him recently on our trip to Toledo where he teaches at the University there. Not only does this open up an area of

discussion with Black intellectuals directly on subjects of RLWLMPR.



but may be an opening for a lecture for Raya later in the year.

Another kind of relationship developed when a Black professor and friend was instrumental in getting the Detroit Afro-American Museum to invite me to speak on Garveyism in their lecture series on early 20th century American Black Thought. The debate that arose at the lecture even resulted, the following day, in an offer to teach Black history at Wayne State University. It was also around the work on Garvey that we have entered into a serious correspondence with a Trinidadian Garvey scholar, who may purchase the Archives collection. Here too, the relationship is not limited to Garvey but extends to our critique of C.L.R. James and our view of Fanon and "Black Marxism".

But these recent developments flowed out of the theoretical and organizational work which developed around Raya's lecture tour during the Marx centenary on the trilogy of revolution. The classes allowed us to extend the Marx centenary year and extend our "Have Thumb, Will Travel" projection of the trilogy.

With the trips to New York and Washington D.C. we were given platforms to speak by South African activists and Caribbean intellectual as you will hear from Ray on his lecture at the Black Consciousness Movement Soweto Day Conference in Washington D.C. At the Boston African Studies Association Conference which Kevin and I attended, and where Kevin presented his paper on Tanzania and African socialism, we made contacts with African scholars. The British Marxist-Humanists have also worked jointly with the BCM on a meeting and demonstrations protesting the visit of Botha to London.

Some of our greatest outreach has been in Los Angeles. The four talks there gave us one of the largest audiences ever to hear us on the Black question. And the literally overnight organizing that the

Bay Area was able to do, especially Alan, showed that one-to-one contact and not just leafletting remains the key to the kind of work we can look forward to doing this year around Raya's mini-tours.

The pathway that leads from the new moments Marx discovered in his last decade to the 1980's is such an active idea when we are actively on the road with the trilogy of revolution, that it often means simply making a trip across town. That too is a "Have Thumb, Will Travel" phenomenon.

The African, Middle Eastern and Latino students and intellectuals who came to the lectures on Garvey, Marx and the Black World also showed what Raya had singled out in the Introduction to the Afro-Asian Revolutions pamphlet about the Black dimension being so deep and revolutionary as a dimension when it is grounded in a philosophy of revolution that Third World revolutionaries see in its internationalism elements of their own national liberation struggles. This is what John Alan, in his essay article on Black anti-imperialism, showed historically.

However, we have discovered, as well, in this recent period that Marx's relationship to the Black and Third World is not a given which can simply be left as a summation or as a question of extending Marx's view from the West to the Third World. That was what Raya warned us of in the Introduction to Afro-Asian Revolutions when she singled out the passage from the text on how the emergence of the Third World in the post-World War II period saw various and sundry ideological bridges being built to Marxism, especially from religion masquerading as a philosophy of revolution. Islamic fundamentalism has developed that perverse dialectic to its counter-revolutionary end, when religious-based anti-imperialism is substituted for Marx's philosophy of

revolution.

The two extremes of theory and activism have in the period since the 1979 revolutions in Iran, Nicaragua and Grenada seen the re-emergence of Maoism behind the new studies of Marx's last decade and his studies on the peasantry. And the pull of the Third Worldism of Cuba has exerted its "hegemony" over nearly all the anti-imperialist and anti-war support activity for Latin American revolutionaries.

Whether accidental or not, the fact that the major document of the Johnson-Forest Tendency in the 1950's, State-Capitalism and World Revolution, stopped at Contradiction, like Mao, allows us to show the Marxist-Humanist view of the Third World through presenting the dialectic method by which the 30 year movement from practice which is itself a form of theory went beyond contradiction. Rather than leaving Marxism to Europe, as Grace Lee stated then and holds now, the philosophic development of Marxist-Humanism would make for an encounter with Marx's concept of the Third World and revolution in permanence.

In other words, philosophy, Marx's philosophy, is not an evasion of the objective situation, but allows you to anticipate objective developments. James and Lee, as well as other post-Marx Marxists who want to leave Marxism to Europe were no more ready for the developments of the late 1950's that emerged with a whole new Third World, than today in response to the tragic events in Grenada, which merely reduced to sloganeering about anti-imperialism and no serious discussion about the contradictions within the New Jewel Movement.

We got a view of the new tasks for Chicago when we participated in the Third World Conference. It is our second year participating in the Conference and there is no mistaking the outstanding feature we have brought to the conference with our presentations on Marxist-Humanist

views of women's liberation in the Third World, on Africa and African socialism, on Black economic reality and on Black history in the U.S. And in each case it was clear that we weren't there for any scholastic reasons. Clearly, that is what the academic Stalinists were counting on from the audience in the sessions on Grenada and Central America, when we challenged them for attempting to white-wash the fact that the first act of counter-revolution came from within the Grenadian party.

However, the fact that the Chicago area has been the site of a Third World Conference for the last 10 years indicates an area of our work in Chicago that can be extended, especially in the Black movement. Here, I think that Harry, who took off from work to attend the lecture at UIC on Marx and Garvey, has already expressed his excitement in wanting to find us platforms in the Black community where he has many contacts. Jesse Jackson's campaign, will, of course, close some doors and open some others for us.