

**We won't
get used to
starvation**



by Felix Martin, Labor Editor

So many American workers are losing their jobs due to Automation and plant closings that a government task force of businessmen, union leaders, and a few politicians recently joined together to try to figure out how to keep buying the workers off. What is getting these damn rascals worried is that up to two million workers a year are being laid-off to lower paying jobs — or no job at all. I think they are afraid of workers starting to think about revolution.

President Reagan's new budget calls for more horrible cuts in domestic spending. To me, he must feel that those millions of workers who have already lost their jobs and homes have finally adjusted to starving. But Reagan is asking for \$980 million to supposedly help newly laid-off workers — I call the kind of help they will probably get, help to adjust to starving, too.

'YOUR PROBLEMS ARE NO PROBLEM'

Malcolm R. Lovell Jr., director of the George Washington University Labor-Management Institute and Chairman of the task force said that "Worker displacement in a rapidly changing society is indeed a problem," but he called the plight of displaced workers "manageable." That is, he is confident they can make the workers think that someone is watching out for them, as they adjust from eating while sitting at a table, to eating out of a garbage can.

The task force recommended that 80% of the proposed money would be turned over to the bureaucracy of each state to spend as they see fit. One suggestion was that subsidies be paid to workers who are forced to work at low-paid jobs, less than they were used to being paid. But what is never mentioned is how long this money would last. The whole point of Reagan's so-called "economic recovery" is that American workers adjust to working for lower wages.

(continued to page 3)

Black World

**New study
of Langston
Hughes**



by Lou Turner

*...I, Shabine, saw
when these slums of empire was paradise.
I'm just a red nigger who love the sea,
I had a sound colonial education;
I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me,
and either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation.*

—Derek Walcott

The Star-Apple Kingdom

There is a telling yet ominous sameness about the recent appearance of the first volume of Arnold Rampersad's biography, *The Life of Langston Hughes, 1902-1941: I, Too, Sing America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986; 468 pp.), and the appearance of Hughes' own autobiography, *The Big Sea*, in 1940. At the time of its publication, *The Big Sea* had to share the spotlight of critical acclaim with Richard Wright's *Native Son*. Now Prof. Rampersad's biography of Langston Hughes appears at the same time a new film production of *Native Son* is released.

What that coincidence tells us about the Langston Hughes Prof. Rampersad wants to portray as against the Langston Hughes who, Gwendolyn Brooks tells us, had the "subtle largeness, the remarkable symbol-radiance that enriched our lives," cannot, in my view, be separated from the ominous sameness of American racism, then as now, that Hughes' poetic vision indicts with its compelling simplicity.

POET OF BLACK PROLETARIAT

We read in today's headlines about the resurgence of American racism in a north Georgia county dating back to 1912 when all the Black folk were run out en masse by lynchings and church burnings following the rape of a white woman. Here's how directly present within the American character the poetic vision of Langston Hughes remains:

*Sometimes a wind in the Georgia dusk
Scatters hate like seed
To sprout its bitter barriers
Where the sunsets bleed.*

"Georgia Dusk"

(continued to page 2)

China's youth challenge Deng's state-capitalist regime

by Bob McGuire

The removal of Hu Yaobang on Jan. 16 as Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party—and thus the disruption of the tidily-arranged succession to Deng Xiaoping—is the most startling evidence of the degree to which China's youth—workers as well as students—have shaken up their rulers with demonstrations for freedom and democracy. The demonstrations which began in early December, continued for a month and spread to a dozen cities throughout the country, despite efforts to control them ranging from a news blackout to virulent attacks in the press, from police bloodshed to harsh new regulations and threatened jailings.

A purge of intellectuals, spearheaded by Deng, began with three highly respected men who have contributed to discussions on the nature of Marxism. One was Liu Binyan, who uncovered corruption among local officials as a *People's Daily* reporter, and as author of *A Second Kind of Loyalty* critiqued cow-like devotion to the Party's ideal; another was Wang Ruowang, a Shanghai editor, and a third was Fang Lizhi, an astrophysicist and vice-president of China Science and Technology University (CSTU) in Hefei, capital of Anhui province. It is no accident that each is from one of the three cities which represent high points of the youth protests.

**THE MONTH OF PROTEST:
FROM HEFEI TO SHANGHAI TO BEIJING**

The wave of protests began on Dec. 5 at CSTU, when, under the slogan "No democracy, no modernization," 1,000 students demanded the right to name candidates for the college's representatives to the local people's congress—no students had known any of the official candidates. A second demonstration on Dec. 9, the same day students in Wuhan held an electoral protest, involved 5,000 students from several Hefei-area colleges.

Fang Lizhi acceded to the students' demands by postponing the election and opening up the candidate list. But this would not be reported in any newspapers, local or national.

Yet wall posters appeared in Beijing and Shanghai praising the demonstration over the next week. Be-



Students burning a copy of *Beijing Daily*

cause Deng had eliminated the constitutional right to put up such posters as part of his prolonged attack on the Democracy Wall Movement, the posters at Beijing University were pulled down quickly. One said in part, "Democracy is our standard. Under this flag, let tens of thousands of Chinese awaken and start to think about problems apart from filling our bellies...Take to the streets, push forward democracy." Another said, "We don't need fake democracy. We don't want to be the rubber stamp of the people at the top...China is now like a pile of tinder but it lacks the spark. Stand up comrades, let us be the spark."

(continued to page 8)

On the Inside

Raya Dunayevskaya—writes on Reagan's grand illusion: *Star Wars* from skies, p.5.

Platoon—How youth see this Vietnam War film speaking about Central America today, p.7.

Also—Meatpackers organize, p.3; Editorial—Reagan's budget: trillion dollar lie, p.4; Rich-Dunayevskaya exchange, p.2.

Outrage at Howard Beach racism

Queens, New York City—Two lynchings have taken place, one in Howard Beach, a "white only" community of 18,000 in Queens. The racist terror running rampant in this Queens community was quickly fol-



Marchers in Howard Beach

lowed by another form of lynching unleashed by the police and by the white media, with the N.Y. Times as the leader of the attack.

What are the pertinent facts that occurred Dec. 20, in the first few minutes of that new day, ending at 12:39 a.m., and in the last few minutes in the life of Michael Griffith?

Three young Black men, Michael Griffith, 23, a construction worker, Cedric Sandiford, 36, a mechanic's helper, and Timothy Grimes, 18, whose car broke down, seeking help, met three foul-mouthed young whites riding in a car driven by Jon Lester, 17. After an exchange, Griffith, Sandiford and Grimes continued on their way, entered a pizza parlor to eat and called for assistance. Jon Lester and his friends returned to a party they attended earlier to get help for the foul deed they were on their way to committing. With tree limbs and baseball bats 10-12 whites in three cars returned to the pizza parlor. When the three Black men came out of the restaurant, the whites proceeded to attack them.

The victims ran, the whites chased them in their cars. Grimes ran one way and escaped. Griffith and Sandiford ran into a 7½-block-long nightmare. Sandiford was caught and beaten about the head, body and legs. Griffith tried to escape by running onto the Belt Parkway and was hit by a car.

When the police from the infamous stun-gun 106th precinct arrived and found Mr. Sandiford on the Parkway, beaten, bloodied and bruised, without offering medical help they frisked him, then put him in a patrol car and began to question him about robberies committed elsewhere that day. Meanwhile Michael Griffith lay

(continued to page 6)

Views on Rich/Dunayevskaya exchange

With Adrienne Rich's breakthrough review of Raya Dunayevskaya's major works, first printed in the September 1986 issue of *The Women's Review of Books* (see November 1986 N&L), and Dunayevskaya's letter in response to Rich, printed in the December 1986 issue of N&L, there has begun a new dialogue on the relationship of Women's Liberation and Marxist-Humanism. Below we print excerpts from letters and discussions that continue this dialogue. We invite you to join this interchange. Copies of Rich's review and Dunayevskaya's response can be ordered from *Women's Liberation—News & Letters* for 90¢.

The New York University Womyn's Center held a public meeting on Rich's review of Dunayevskaya's works. For most of us at the meeting it was an encounter between two minds committed to Women's Liberation in thought and in life...

It is beyond me how Joyce Trebilcot, in her letter in the November issue of *The Women's Review of Books*, could reduce that magnificent dialogue to the accusation that Rich devalues women-only spaces. Rich clearly states that her critique emerges out of her concern that "safety" for women becomes valued over risk taking. It seems to me that "risk taking" is what the women's movement needs to do, in thought as well as action. For Rich, who says "a term like 'Marxist-Humanism' would, in the late sixties and early seventies, have sounded like a funeral knell," now to embark on such a serious examination of Dunayevskaya's concept of liberation, is "risk taking."

Anne Jaclard
New York

I found the correspondence provocative and moving. Rich states that she wanted more from Dunayevskaya on the relationship of sexuality to revolution than a simple affirmation of the gay/lesbian liberation movement. Dunayevskaya's response addressed the question seriously, but with apparent reluctance to presume an explanation of the homosexual dimension.

A first I was disappointed, until I realized she was both welcoming and challenging Rich and others in the gay/lesbian liberation movement to voice their own Subjectivity in a continuing dialogue with Marxist-Humanism.

Revolutionary feminist
Los Angeles

You know I think Raya's books are wonderful. Adrienne Rich's review got to the heart of her books. I'm not surprised to hear that Rich is being criticized; that people think she's asking them to choose Women's Liberation or Marxism. When she made her lesbianism public the literary establishment abandoned her; when she declared she was anti-racist, many criticized that. I consider her a truly brave-hearted woman. She has a voice and she is not afraid to use it.

Feminist subscriber
Detroit

What was so striking to me was that in her answer to Rich's question on Dunayevskaya's relation to "the edges of struggle," Dunayevskaya responds that her greatest experience with "a specific force demanding proof of the concreteness of freedom for itself is with the Black Dimension." She writes on some of that development and adds that each force of revolution has to concretize the question. "No one can do it for Other." In this exchange of ideas, one does get a sense of history as epoch, as philosophy and as new forces of revolution.

Black feminist
Chicago

I would like to know more about what Raya Dunayevskaya means when she writes of "women as revolutionary force and Reason." It seems that she means

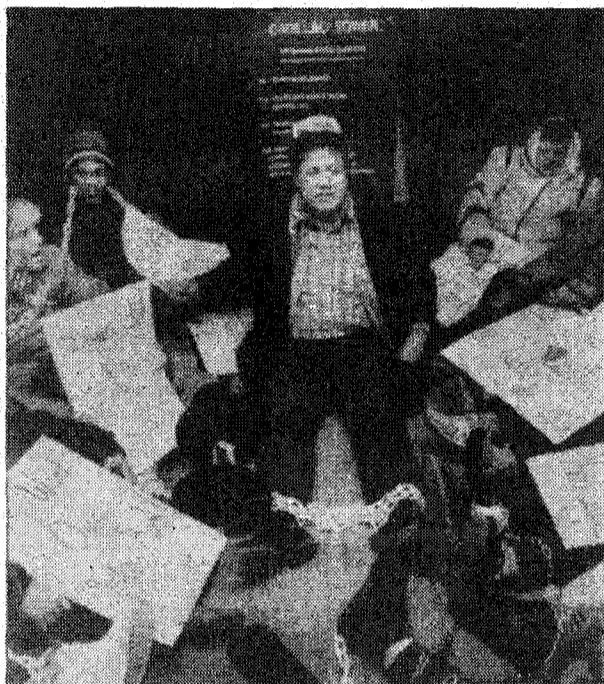
more than intellect and uses reason in a philosophical sense. I am interested in how News and Letters is basing its organization on the concept of breaking down the division between mental and manual labor. It is something that has never been done before—not in the Russian Revolution and not in the Iranian Revolution.

Young Iranian woman
New York

What is so rare is to see a representative of a movement for freedom reaching out to a philosopher of revolution. The Rich/Dunayevskaya dialogue reminds me of when Marx responded to a different movement for freedom when Vera Zasulich wrote him asking if Russia had to go through a capitalistic stage to reach socialism. In his answer he gave no blueprint but referred her to his body of ideas, to what he had developed in Capital.

I think that Raya is suggesting that Rich must work out her questions on sexuality, for which there is no blueprint: "We cannot tell in advance what a fully new human being is because we are not." But the context for working out that question is within the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism.

Student of Marxism
Chicago



Detroit, Mich.—Sixteen discharged Cadillac Tower Building cleaners and maintenance employees along with an officer of their union, Local 79, Service Employees International Union, were arrested Jan. 5 after they had chained themselves together in the lobby to protest the loss of their jobs. Cadillac Tower Associates made a contract with a new cleaning company employing non-union workers at minimum wage. The 20 union workers, many of them Polish women, were dismissed New Year's Eve. Their struggle to regain their jobs continues.

Women fight campus rape

Berkeley, Cal.—On Dec. 12 Debbie McCann, a junior at UC Berkeley, was injured by a man throwing rocks as she left her home to head for campus. McCann had received a threatening note stating, "We know who you are, we know where you live," and had a sexual threat scrawled on her front door.

McCann is an outspoken anti-rape activist with the Coalition to Break the Silence. The coalition has been most active in protests against the university and the county prosecutor's decision not to prosecute four football players accused of gang-raping a young Asian woman in a campus dormitory where they all lived.

The university handled the case behind closed doors, finally "punishing" the men involved by having them write letters of apology, moving them to another dorm, and requiring them to do 40 hours of community service—"less than for a parking ticket," according to one protester. During the whole investigation the men continued to live in the same dorm with the woman and were never suspended from their extra-curricular activities, i.e., the football team. This, in sharp contrast to the university's attempts to ban and suspend students who had been involved in anti-apartheid activities.

The case split the campus community wide open. There were demonstrations at football games where women carried signs reading "U. C. Bears—We See Rapists" and public testimonies where women told of attacks they had experienced in their lives.

At the same time there were others, many of them on the Left, who didn't want to single out this case for protest because the men involved were Black and they feared they wouldn't get a fair hearing on that basis alone.

What is most sickening about this case and the many others like it is that after so many years of the women's movement, rape is not considered serious. At Berkeley it is less serious than cheating and anti-apartheid protests. Rape is seen as "sexual," as something the woman has participated in; indeed, in this case we heard the expression that the woman "must have asked for it" because "you can't force a woman to have sex." But rape is a brutal, physical attack of domination and violence.

Some groups are now setting up anti-rape seminars and calling for better lighting and police protection. While important, these solutions don't confront the fact that the violence against women on campus can't be separated from the atmosphere that the Reagan administration has created. After all, it is Reaganism which has shown its contempt and disregard for our lives by cutting every program that would aid women, fostering an ideology that women are less than full human beings and belong in the home and off the streets, attacking our right to control our own bodies while at the same time pardoning abortion clinic bombers.

Unfortunately for women, it is man's relationship to woman that shows the deep inhumanity of this society and how deeply we must dig if we ever want to create a world on more human grounds. —Deborah Morris



Hundreds of women and children marched through the streets of Muslim West Beirut Nov. 21 and demonstrated outside the Central Bank, protesting "the war of starvation." Many shops, banks and schools closed for a one-hour sympathy strike against soaring prices, devaluation of Lebanese currency and shortages of bread, sugar and drinking water.

As in Zimbabwe and the Chipko movement in India (see December N&L), Kenyan women have been caring for the environment. The Kenyan Green Belt Movement was born in 1976 when Mrs. Wangari Maathai, a biologist, planted seven symbolic trees against the encroaching desert. Now 1,500 mostly women farmers are involved in the program which has created 2,500 green-belts.

Rather than do anything about campus rapes, Wesleyan University in Connecticut has brought charges against six student anti-rape activists that could lead to their expulsion. In October the students began interrupting campus tours to discuss the problem of sexual assaults, which they described as a national problem, and criticize the administration's unresponsiveness.

The Third National Conference on Women's Studies was held in India in the fall of 1986 at Punjab University. More than 356 women and men participated, including ten women from the Mahila Mandal (Women's Groups) in the Gharwal region who spoke about the Chipko environmentalist movement. Resolutions passed demanded an end to female infanticide, a ban on injectable birth control pills, as well as on the process of amniocentesis used for "sex determination" and the abortion of female fetuses. —S. Singh

The annual conference (Ard Fheis) of Sinn Fein met in Dublin, Ireland in November, and abortion rights was a hotly debated topic. Sinn Fein accepts abortion only "where the woman's life is in danger," but last year had proposed this addition: "We recognize that women have the right to choose." It was voted down 212 to 117. During the debate, Councillor Lily Fitzsimmons from Belfast compared "criminalization" of women to that of Republican prisoners by the British. Supporters vowed to keep on fighting.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard
Statement of the National Editorial Board
Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa," by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby \$2 per copy
- The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy
- Grenada: Revolution, Counter-Revolution, Imperialist Invasion
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- Working Women for Freedom
by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan and Mary Holmes \$1 per copy
- Latin America's Revolutions
Bilingual pamphlet on Marxism & Latin America \$1 per copy
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions
by Raya Dunayevskaya \$1.25 per copy
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought, by Lou Turner and John Alan
New Expanded edition contains Introduction/Overview by Raya Dunayevskaya, Lou Turner and John Alan
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- Dialectics of Revolution: American Roots and World Humanist Concepts
Special bulletin on Marxist-Humanism as a body of ideas by Raya Dunayevskaya, Eugene Walker, Michael Connolly and Olga Domanski \$1.00 per copy
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.
by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya \$2 per copy

For Marxist-Humanist books, see ad page 7.

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Iowa meatpackers organizing at IBP

Cherokee, Iowa—Many of the rank-and-file meatpacking workers from the Wilson Foods plant here (members of UFCW Local 179) have volunteered to work in a union organizing drive at I.B.P.'s non-union plant in Storm Lake, Iowa. We are making "house calls," going around to I.B.P. workers' homes and talking with them about why they should join the union. This is part of a drive to organize eight I.B.P. plants.

IBP MAIMS YOU THEN FIRES YOU

We have to organize I.B.P., or soon we will have no jobs. Already about 200 of the 700 workers in Cherokee are on lay-off. The "kill and cut" depart-

ment at Wilson was closed down because I.B.P. took away all the hogs in this area.

I.B.P. in Storm Lake pays \$6.00 an hour to start, and you supposedly go to \$7.50 an hour eventually. But it's not a simple question of money. Conditions in the plant are so bad that most workers don't stay there long. You go out the door if you are injured four times, and that means any injury that puts you off the line. In a packing house you are going to get injured, and I.B.P.'s injury rate is one of the worst. At their Dakota City plant—where workers are now locked-out—the injury rate is 135% a year!

In fact, I.B.P. only pays many workers \$3.00 an hour, because the Reagan administration subsidizes half of the wages for months as part of a "job-training program." The job-training program is only at non-union plants here. What happens is that many of the workers in the program are from Southeast Asia. They are moved to Storm Lake just to fill these jobs. I.B.P. often co-signs the leases on their housing, and they are expected to stay away from the union.

ASIAN WORKERS JOINING

The UFCW International hasn't understood that when you are talking about Asian workers, you are talking about classes and nationalities too. They only have one Asian on their staff in the Midwest, and his background is from the oppressor class: the Asian workers here don't accept him. But in the last few months we have been signing up Asian workers at Storm Lake. Nearly all have joined the union. I.B.P. isn't co-signing their leases anymore; the feeling is that the company wants to dump the Asians now.

Wilson workers here don't have illusions about the International. There is a lot of revolt in the UFCW since the Hormel strike. People in our local have been educated, and they are imbued with the spirit of democracy. It is happening in local after local in Iowa. What we need to do is hook up all these rank-and-file movements, to get all this energy together for the common good.

—Wilson Foods worker

When is next explosion at Ford Rouge Steel?

Detroit, Mich.—On Dec. 18 a coal dust explosion set off a gas explosion injuring seven Ford Rouge Steel workers, but we still haven't heard anything from either the union or company about what caused it. The only reports we have had are what were in the press.

The explosion blew out at the pulverizer, a huge structure about 10 stories high that crushes the coal, and tore it all apart. It was just pure luck that no one got killed, but several workers were severely burned, and we don't know if they're going to make it or not. What we do know is that the dispatcher, whose office is adjacent to the pulverizer, had a stroke.

Workers are just plain leery of working at the pulverizer, and some are using their seniority to refuse to work there. Nobody knows why the explosion took place or when it will happen again. I did hear that this is the fourth explosion there, so you know that workers have good reason to be worried.

Recently some state safety inspectors were at the plant, but all they did was issue a citation for workers riding on a crane. For the workers who work in conditions where there are daily safety violations, the inspectors are considered to be almost a joke, especially when they call the company to arrange for the inspections. This just gives the company time to clear up a lot of violations before the inspectors get there.

—Ford Rouge Steel worker

US Auto makes you sick

Detroit, Mich.—Since last fall at US Auto Radiator we have had mandatory Saturday overtime and a new "point system" of attendance control. If you accumulate 25 points in six months, you are fired. And it is so easy to get points. For tardiness under one hour, or absence with a doctor's excuse, you get one point. If you are more than one hour late, or miss a day, it's two points.

Last Monday one lady didn't come in. I don't know if she had the flu or was just exhausted, but she will get two points because she didn't go to a doctor. You can't just go to a doctor; you need an appointment. If you go to emergency, you'll wait for hours; you'll get a big bill if it's not a "true emergency," and you'll still get a point for your excused absence!

Some women went to the union to ask: Can new work rules be imposed without re-opening the contract? Isn't this a contract violation?

This place is more like Alcatraz than ever. We wonder if we'll keep our jobs. Two workers came in with the flu, to avoid points, and pretty soon we all got sick. I really think there is a link between mental and physical health. The worst is the two points you get if you miss Saturday overtime. To the company, you have no time, it's all "their time."

—Day shift worker

Compton teachers walkout

Compton, Cal.—Teachers of the mainly Black and Latino Compton Unified School District have been working without a contract since September, and on Jan. 13 walked off the job. That day 20 teachers were arrested while sitting in at the District headquarters, and the next morning several hundred rallied in front of the District building with picket signs that included one reading, "United Mind Workers—but the wages are the pits."

At the rally one teacher told us: "We were arrested because we are on strike and are determined to negotiate a contract with a livable wage and better working conditions. The Compton Unified School District had us thrown in jail. Yes, I have been there before. In a sense, every day that I teach at Compton High the conditions are worse than jail."

One student said, "We have no heat in the school—the boiler has been locked down since July. The ceiling leaks when it rains and the classrooms are flooded out. This adds to the crowded conditions of the classrooms, as we have to combine two classes together."

Another teacher said, "I know how Rosa Parks felt because my feet are just too tired. Ever since I left Texas I told myself I am not going to ride at the back of the bus any more. This District Supervisor is just another Bull Connor, George Wallace, and Lester Maddox, and he's Black! And I plan to be 'free at last,' as Martin Luther King Jr. said!"

—Strike supporter

Tent City II

Los Angeles, Cal.—In Los Angeles, some homeless activists constructed Tent City II on a state-owned park across from City Hall, hoping to embarrass the government bureaucracy into meeting their immediate need of shelter and their genuine goal of jobs.

A 60-year old Black woman, who has been homeless for seven years, spoke out: "I'm here to tell America before I die that this country is practicing mass genocide. This country has never had a housing policy for Blacks. Let's talk about the housing crisis, high rents, discrimination, no jobs. I want some stability before I die. No one should be without shelter."

After Christmas, with Tent City's permit expiring, the police forced organizer Ted Hayes outside, started clubbing everyone in their reach and arrested Hayes and several others. As the tents were folded and homeless people wandered back into the concrete jungle, many wanted to continue meeting and continue to exist as some kind of organization.

—Wayne Carter and Michelle Landau

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

This "recovery" is showing what Marx wrote about 100 years ago — that capitalism might reach a point where it would try and make workers work 24 hours a day and live on air — and there would be an "army of the unemployed" at the same time. That still would not stop the crisis of the capitalist system, Marx wrote. I think we are getting close to that today.

A report by the staff of the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, released in December, showed that the number of Americans in poverty has increased by seven million since 1979. The report showed that the cause of poverty is high unemployment and falling wages, not teenage pregnancies and single-parent households which is what Reaganomics tells us is the problem. The minimum wage is still only \$3.35 an hour!

LAY OFF — BUT BE POLITE

As for the government task force, I was following what the union bureaucrats were saying. They were demanding legislation requiring companies to notify workers in advance of plant shut-down. Even though the businessmen said they had nothing to fear — "We could not find any adverse effects on productivity during the notice period," said Frank Doyle, a senior vice-president for General Electric Co., showing the capitalists' bottom line — still they opposed mandatory advance notice requirements!

So the union leaders are pushing for these notices. That is their contribution. Isn't it great to have our union leadership looking after our interests, so that we'll be notified ahead of time that we are losing our jobs because capitalism is replacing us with machines or has found workers they think they can rob easier than they have been robbing us all these 200 and more years.

French rail strike report

Editor's Note: In France, the unprecedented wave of spontaneous strikes which gripped especially the railroads and subways in December and January was a direct result of the mass student strikes, where students had gone to the workers and received their warm support against the Rightist Chirac government. Soon after Chirac was forced to cede to the students on Dec. 8, railroad workers began a wildcat strike in Paris against Chirac's Reaganite proposal to replace seniority with so-called "merit." The strikes spread to the subways, the ports and the electric power facilities and continued for a full month, into mid-January, in the most serious labor unrest in over a decade. The union bureaucrats supported the workers only belatedly, after workers warned in their own leaflet, "The workers will hold their support." The following report was written in the midst of these strikes.

Paris, France, Jan. 1—The railroad strike which has been maintained for 15 days shows that we must distinguish within the strike between the stated demands and the latent content which expresses other things: the student movement at first had only a specific objective, opposition to stiff entrance requirements for the university which would prevent each one from having his or her chance.

The railroad strikes confirm this point. It was begun outside the unions such as they are. The workers' coordinating committees were formed without unions, modeled on the students. Only a few officials were accepted into these committees, watched closely by the workers. This is not surprising when we remember that CFDT union federation leader Edmond Maire said several months ago that the strike is an outdated and archaic method of struggle.

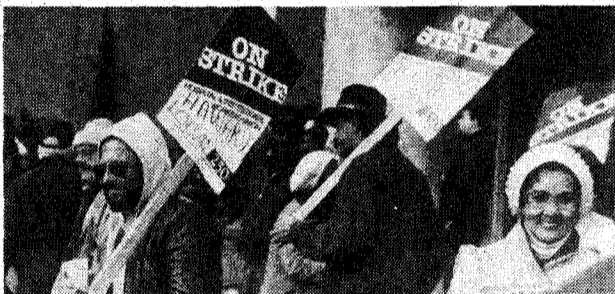
As against the movement in previous times, the struggles today do not proclaim any revolutionary ideal. They unite very particular demands, but at the same time they are permeated with an ideal of, and sometimes the reality of, genuine solidarity with the immigrants, against the big corporations which pollute the environment, and especially against government repression and violence.

The movement is permeated with nonviolent ideals, and with rejection of the domination of money and weapons as well as rejection of the "normality" of politicians' lies. This rejection has also led to a radical refusal to allow any leaders to emerge as "stars" and to a refusal of any attempt at manipulation by negotiation.

It reveals a deep gulf—and this is even truer of the railroad strike—between the political and union leaders on the one hand, and the cultural ideal of liberty and fraternity which has reappeared from below, despite all of the analyses about the selfishness and individualism of modern society, on the other...I hope that 1987 will confirm for you in America the hope which Fall, 1986 (in France) has initiated.

—Professor

SEIU scuttles Kaiser strike



—N & L photo

Kaiser strikers on December picket line

San Francisco, Cal.—On Dec. 11, Service Employees International officials presented a two-tier wage contract to striking Kaiser Hospital workers of Local 250 and pushed through a narrow ratification, just one week after Local 250 workers had rejected a similar contract. The contract that workers rejected on Dec. 4 after 38 days on strike offered 20% less wages for new hires outside the Bay Area.

Local union bureaucrats were sure the strike was over after the first vote. They thought they had planned it well enough because they didn't announce the contract until the night before the vote. People weren't given any word on what the contract contained until the morning of the vote. That morning they announced that the strike funds were ending. The rejection gave us a burst of energy for new actions. It also woke up the union business agents out to steer the strike.

ROVING PICKETS

A day after the vote about 250 came together to push for a roving picket and hold rallies at different hospitals. The whole thing had momentum, we were putting more pressure on Kaiser. Rank-and-file morale was pretty high, though the union was renouncing the militant pickets as bad for its image. The International came in a few days after the rejection. Once they felt the strike was threatening their livelihood, they were very absolute in ending it right then and there.

The International leaders called the most crucial negotiation session at five in the morning to exclude key members of the negotiating team (only 23 out of 49 were able to come). A lot of the people who didn't attend were out on the roving picket. Suddenly there were no strike bulletins. They came back in less than a week with another offer. This time it was 15% two-tier and an increase in the bonus by \$100.

UNION MISLEADERS

They had the International lawyer run the contract vote meeting in Oakland, the unit which had defeated the previous offer by the largest margin (83% against). He told members that Kaiser could legally lay off all the strikers within a week. He didn't mention all the hurdles Kaiser would have, like the solidarity of other unions at the hospitals and promises from other unions that meant Kaiser would lose several hundred thousand members.

Our own contract in Local 29 comes up in March and we're getting ready for a fight against two-tier. The only real way to win our strike and defeat two-tier is to have an active rank-and-file organization and to have our own philosophy and our own direction.

—Kaiser worker

Editorial

Reagan's budget: The trillion-dollar lie

In the same week that the Reagan Administration sent the world's first trillion dollar budget to Congress, the Dow Jones Industrial Average broke through the 2,000 level. Far from either event signaling the growth and prosperity of the American economy, they instead help Reaganism mask the true nature of the deepest fragmentation of American society since the Great Depression. That fragmentation is one of rich vs. poor, of military obesity vs. urban starvation and homelessness, of commodity and takeover speculators vs. continuing rural bankruptcies and permanent high unemployment.

Nowhere is the lie of the so-called American dream seen more sharply than in the projected five-year military spending versus the incessant deep cuts in human services.

MILITARY'S GLUTTONY OF DEATH VS. CONTINUED HUMAN IMPOVERISHMENT

The proposal for no less than \$1.8 trillion in military expenditures over the next five years comes on top of six Reagan years of the most massive military build-up in peace-time history. Within the proposed \$312 billion dollar 1988 military budget, the greatest increase comes in spending for nuclear weapons and missile defenses: \$5.2 billion is asked for Star Wars research in the Pentagon budget and hundreds of millions more in the Energy Department's budget. (See "Star Wars from the Skies," page 5.) Research money for an anti-satellite weapon would more than double, while billions more are proposed for MX missiles, Midgetman missiles and Trident submarines. The 200 nuclear warheads on just one Trident can destroy an entire continent.

Accompanying this military madness are proposals for cuts in almost all domestic programs: in health care, individual premiums for Medicare for the elderly and poor would rise; no new loans for building housing for the elderly and handicapped would be available; aid for urban mass transit systems would be cut in half; urban development grants and the Legal Services Corporation, which finances legal aid for the poor, would be eliminated; federal funding for food stamps and child nutrition would be reduced; Aid to Families with Dependent Children would be cutback.

Especially severe cutbacks would take place in student aid so that those wanting to go to college would have to be responsible for thousands upon thousands of dollars in loans. The number of Black students on campus will continue to drop. Thousands have already been forced off the college campus during the first six years of the Reagan retrogression.

The only part of the so-called non-military budget proposals that are increasing, turn out to be just one other aspect of the military: increases for the F.B.I. and for policing done by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. At the center of this trillion-dollar military bloatedness and human impoverishment lies the crisis of the American economy.

CANNIBALISM AMONG THE BOURGEOISIE VS. THE REAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

The bursting of the 2,000 mark in the stock market, together with the plethora of corporate raids, takeovers, insider trading scheme millionaires, gives the "symbolic" economy of money and credit rave reviews. All seems well on the Reaganland economic front. But what does this symbolic economy actually symbolize? Certainly not an economy of production. (See Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives: "Capitalist Production/Alienated Labor: This Nuclear World and Its Political Crises," July 1986 N&L). The growth rate for the U.S. in 1986 is estimated to have been only 2.6%. Capital may have swallowed capital in these mega-mergers and takeovers, but the shutdown in the American economy in auto, in steel, has continued at a devastating pace. The symbolic economy may crow about the 31% rise in the stock market last year, but the truth of the real economy lies in the permanent unemployment of 7% and more for all the Reagan years, with double that for Black workers, and astronomical figures for Black youth.

As against big capital eating little capital and big capital eating other big capital in the stock market wars, the reality of the economy remains one of little growth, of continuing unemployment, of a decline in real wages. The minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour has not increased

for the entire Reagan era. And this minimum rate is not a wage of entry-level youth. It is a wage that many a laid-off steel worker and many a woman head of household have tried to raise a family on, year after year, as the cost of living rises while the wage rate remains the same.

Some may be under the illusion that since Democrats now control the Senate as well as the House, the outlook will change. Nothing could be further from the truth. For much of the Reagan years the Democrats have gone along with the Reagan-program.

Most fundamentally, the huge deficits of the Reagan Presidency (adding more to the national debt than all previous administrations combined) are Reagan's guarantee that no fundamental changes can be made through the budget process. The trillion-dollar lie cannot be solved by a Democratic-controlled Congress or for that matter a Democratic President. The lie resides in the very bowels of this economic system. Only its full uprooting can move us in a different direction.

News & Letters

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Raya Dunayevskaya, Chairwoman,
National Editorial Board

Charles Denby Editor (1955-1983)
Felix Martin Labor Editor
Eugene Walker Managing Editor



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a union shop.

REAGANISM VS. 'A PUBLIC ARMED WITH KNOWLEDGE'

The one thing radicals here are interested in discussing is the Iran-Contra scandal. The mood is almost giddy! But what the N&L Editorial makes clear is that the affair actually shows how dangerous Reagan is, ready and capable of almost anything. That is important to stress against the view that Reagan is automatically done for.

Student, Univ. of Utah
Salt Lake City

Reagan's preference for the military—at home and abroad—worries me. Has any previous president ever surrounded himself with so many active-duty men? And used them to subvert the will of Congress and his own State Department, to say nothing of the American people? Isn't this a drive towards a one-party state, American-style?

Young worker
New York

When I read in your December Editorial that "Reagan must be stopped" as part of "the continued struggle for Freedom," what I envisioned was hundreds of thousands of people marching in the streets and going right up to the White House to chase Reagan out. I'm not sure I'm ready for that, but I'm intrigued by the view you present in your paper.

Student
DeKalb, Illinois

It is curious that though the criticisms of Reagan on Iran are in many cases that he wasn't rightist enough, material is coming out that benefits the Left. Next year could be interesting, especially as both here and in your country there seem to be a lot of minor scandals that won't get hushed up because of the major ones.

Laurens Otter
England

Raya Dunayevskaya's articles on Reagan and Gorbachev are a delight to read. She has great insight into both political systems and the characters working in those different systems. I intend to give every issue of News & Letters, after I read it, to others to share.

Hong Kong refugee
San Francisco

I share Raya Dunayevskaya's view that if the Reagan-Iran-Contra affair shows anything, it shows the need of the people for unabated vigilance lest they lose their freedom. The whole Reagan experience demonstrates the crucial importance of a public armed with knowledge.

Iraqi scholar
Washington, D.C.



WOMEN'S
LIBERATION
WORLDWIDE

We are seeking solidarity in a public denunciation of the U.S. Customs authorities for their incredible treatment of four women from the Dominican Republic who were passing through Miami on their way to Mexico City to participate in a conference organized by the Women's Network of the Latin American Council for Adult Education. Although they carried all the legally required documents with them, Eufemia Frias, Alba Reyes, Altigracia Medina and Alejandrina Hidalgo were detained, kept incommunicado all morning, and forced to return to the Dominican Republic without even being permitted to call Mexico. We ask the widest possible support in demanding reimbursements for their tickets and an apology for this violation of their international right of transit. Your readers may contact:

Red Mujeres del Consejo de
Educacion de Adultos
de America Latina
Apdo. Postal 19-493
Col. Mixcoac
03910 Mexico, D.F. Mexico

Many women's organizations are active in helping rebuild our country during its first precious steps towards progress. One of them is the Women's Media Circle, a foundation for media and the arts, which has been producing two programs—Womanwatch on radio and Womanwatch on TV. The women's issues we feel must be discussed with some urgency include ceasefire, peace, the new fundamentalist backlash, the anti-choice provisions in our constitution and the status of women in history.

The programs show what the women in the Philippines are up to.

Women's liberationist
The Philippines

We would very much like to continue receiving your paper as we feel it is a unique and valuable part of the Feminist Archive's collection. As we have virtually no money, we would be very grateful if you could find us a donor to pay our subscription. Is that possible?

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Avon, England

Editor's Note: Readers can contribute to our donor subscriptions either for a particular name or in any amount toward our special fund set aside for this purpose.

NEW JEWISH AGENDA

Did you know that New Jewish Agenda and other groups are running a "progressive Zionist" slate in the 1987 elections to the World Zionist Congress? They are determined to stop control of the organization by right-wing Likud party supporters. The slate's candidates call for negotiations between Israel and representatives of the Palestinian people, and favor "a just peace within recognized, secure borders. We will call for negotiations, including all involved parties, to end the debilitating Arab-Israeli conflict."

If you want to support this effort, write to: New Jewish Agenda, 64 Fulton St., #1100, New York, NY 10038.

Subscriber
Lexington, Mass.

NURSES AND CAPITALISM

For nearly two years, the Oxford Area Health Authority has persecuted Patrick and Carole Duffy for revealing the scale of the crisis in nursing. As nurses, we have been forced to hold together parts of a decaying capitalist system. Often we cannot complain because our unions will not fight for our rights.

We make an appeal to nurses throughout the world who come into contact with News & Letters to write to us in England, to exchange information and where possible to assist each

Reader

other. We are confident that knowledge is power and that, by little steps, we may accomplish our goal.

Nurses Defence Group
243 Marston Rd.
Marston, Oxford, England

The nurses at Kaiser have been unusually supportive of the strike and it has to do with what is happening to their jobs. At Kaiser they have advice nurses—that is, you call and they advise you whether to come in or not. They are tied to the phone and have to handle calls just like the telephone operators do. A computer routes the calls to them and they are timed on each call. Their productivity is measured by how many calls they can handle every day. Capitalism is "rationalizing" (as they call it) every job they can lay their hands on.

Strike supporter
Bay Area, Cal.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

I'm a religious person and have heard "humanism" used as opposite to God. But I agree with an effort to bring about human relations. As a Catholic Worker member, I follow a concept of "personalizing" the revolution, and my work in Skid Row has made me feel less alienated and more human. But the whole society has to change because there's never enough charity. Your principles are sound.

New reader
Los Angeles

I was surprised to learn from your "Archives Guide" that Wayne State University maintains an archive of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings and the history of the movement she started. I did not know until recently that she considered the Soviet Union a type of State Capitalism...I prefer the term Bureaucratic Socialism. But for a general name for Marxism in these nuclear times I like Dunayevskaya's best: Marxist-Humanism. The name awakens all the essential meanings of a world devoid of exploitation, violence, war, social classes, prejudice, ignorance, and power mandarins.

Old radical
Missouri

Theory/Practice

Star Wars from skies: Reagan's Grand Illusion

by **Raya Dunayevskaya,**
Chairwoman, National Editorial Board
of News and Letters Committees

Watch out for an abstruse announcement that "foreign participants" in the space station project have been informed about a postponement of a meeting; it is to be issued by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Don't think it doesn't concern you, much less that it isn't a total reversal of space exploration for so-called peaceful purposes. The real truth is that Reagan does not consider his regression completed until he has established superiority in nuclear missiles—and that includes in outer space. Reagan has been pushing for "going it alone"; Pax Americana is now to occupy outer space, and that means excluding NATO from any joint participation in "scientific research."

The reason the whole story sounds so mysterious is that this horrific trial balloon was deliberately not attributable to a designated responsible person. The article in which it appeared was written by John Noble Wilford in the *New York Times* of Dec. 20, 1986. No follow-up article was scheduled, or has appeared since, though the writer held—and not as an individual's opinion only—that the "decision threatened to jeopardize delicate negotiations to arrange broad international cooperation in the project." Clearly, Western Europe, Japan and Canada had "agreed to provide financial support for the \$8 billion station. The Pentagon has now asked NASA to postpone further talks..."

THE OMINOUSNESS OF the situation cannot be exaggerated, though it is impossible to follow through because everyone is mired on the level of "who knew what, when" as they wallow in the details of the U.S.-Iran-Nicaragua contra arms scandal. As if the "presidency" were the question, rather than the specific President, Ronald Reagan, the media as well as Congress itself are looking for a way to let this specific imperial presidency—Ronald Reagan's—off with, at most, a slap on the wrist.

This is true also for the West European Allies, who said virtually nothing when Reagan abandoned the SALT II treaty last month, without consulting them,

though they had shown great opposition when abandoning SALT II was first sent out as a trial balloon. Again, they evidently plan to say nothing as the space station for "peaceful purposes" is perverted into a platform for Star Wars missiles.

Finally, don't hold your breath for the State of the Union message that Reagan gives in late January every year. No doubt he will again feature NASA's space station as the centerpiece of "technology," rather than weapons, and do the exact opposite. Indeed, one such statement was attributed recently to Col. Gerald May, director of space for the National Security Council, in *Aviation Week* (12/22/86): "We must keep our options open for the conduct of national security experiments on board." Anything—Khomeini/hostages/arms/North—passes as "national security."

WHAT APPEARED ON page one of the Jan. 9, 1987 *New York Times* was an article by John J. Cushman, Jr. about the Air Force asking Congress to reverse its law which, until October, prohibits the military from testing weapons against orbiting objects. That clearly does not stop with research but proceeds to military testing which uses a two-stage rocket to launch guided warheads that collide with the designated target. This is what the imperial presidency is trying to drag Congress into doing, without whispering a single word publicly about excluding its Western Allies and Japan from joint participation in "scientific research" in outer space. For that matter, Reagan has been acting as if even the elected representatives of Congress are the "enemy," excluding them from knowledge of his secret dealings and actions, and violating the Constitution, even when something much less ominous was involved, like the whole U.S.-Iran arms sale.

There are still two years to go in this imperial presidency. There is no place for illusions that all the scandals and crises befalling the retrogressionist Reagan will bring him down. He is the one, after all, who has unleashed a Col. North as a Rambo-on-the-loose all over the globe, from the imperialist invasion of Grenada in 1983 to the latest 1986 Iran-Contra arms scheme. Reagan is the one who called North the day he supposedly

fired him, to designate him a "national hero."

WHETHER OR NOT Gorbachev, despite the criticisms levelled against Reagan since the collapse at Iceland, decides to save Reagan from the Iran-U.S.-contra scandal with an arms deal, one thing is certain. Reagan will continue with his phantasmagoria Star Wars scheme—and not just on "research" on earth, but Star Wars from the skies.

It would, of course, not be the first time that Russia saved a most hated presidency which the masses were about to shove out. Brezhnev did the very same thing for Nixon—and, again, saving Nixon meant sacrificing his comrades, the Vietnamese. Indeed, ever since Stalin transformed the first workers' state into a state-capitalist society, Russia has proceeded from betrayal of the Russian masses, first to collaborate with the Nazis in the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact, and then—when Hitler turned against Russia—to become one of the Allies. World War II made it clear that, whether it is state-capitalism or private capitalism, the enemy of the rulers is always at home—the revolutionary masses.

The rulers find greater affinity with a foreign enemy than they ever find with the people whose labor and sweat they coin into profits and statification, while they aim for single world mastery of the bi-polar world.

Editor's Note: The section printed above was expanded from the introduction to Raya Dunayevskaya's report to the Jan. 3, 1987 Expanded Resident Editorial Board meeting on Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, which had four parts:

- I. *Star Wars from the Skies.*
- II. *A New Philosophic Moment of Development: The Marxist-Humanist Significance of Location/Local; "Not by Practice Alone."*
- III. *New Perceptions of Lenin's Philosophic Ambivalence as they Developed during the Preparatory Work for the Biweekly News & Letters.*
- IV. *The Single Dialectic of Philosophy (A Body of Ideas) and Organization: Marx's Humanism, and the Marxist-Humanist Tasks for 1987.*

Copies of the full report are available from N&L for \$1.40, which includes postage.

Views

YOUTH AS REVOLUTIONARY

I am working on a paper on the Nazis and have come to wonder about the category of youth as revolutionary. The youth in Germany were very organized, extremely outspoken, and wanted a change from bourgeois society. They began with the exultation of youth itself, then the nation, and moved to Hitler. Youth are not revolutionary just by virtue of being youth. I hope that the concept of youth does not limit us to just a certain generation, but that we can be open to all ages who can be revolutionary.

Graduate student
Philadelphia

My family is working class and I go to a state college. Because I support myself (as many state students do), I have had to work and take classes, stay out of school and work, go back to school and work. So at the age of 26, out of high-school for eight years, am I considered a student youth?

Marcuse rejected the "proletariat" and universalized youth. But people fit into many dimensions. Many youth are also workers. What appeals to me about Marxist-Humanism is exactly the dimensions it considers as revolutionary—Black, youth, woman, worker—as well as dimensions that can join together as revolutionary forces.

Woman student
Los Angeles

ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

The Mujahedeen exile organization has reported that thousands in Iran were involved in December in protests against the war and the government, and that the Pasdaran Guards opened fire, killing several. Over 8,000 poured out of a soccer stadium on a rampage in Mashhad, a strong foothold of the clerics. In Bakhtaran, 2,000 held protests against the Iran-Iraq war and chanted "Down with Khomeini," while in Tehran 250 mothers of political prisoners continued a two-year protest against the inhumane conditions of the prisoners—and succeeded in the release of some of them. These events are not

reported in the press, and are important to know about.

Iranian revolutionary
Chicago

Brooklyn was the scene of a large demonstration in December to call for the overthrow of Haiti's ruling National Council of Government (CNG). The marchers were overwhelmingly from nearby Haitian communities. The most frequent chant was the Creole: "Pa Vle, Pa Vle KNG, (We don't want the CNG)." Others ran, "Haiti is not for Sale," and, "Only One Solution: Revolution."

A point of great concern was the fate of Charlot Jacquelin, a literacy worker you wrote about in the Dec. issue, who disappeared from a shantytown in Port-au-Prince in mid-September. Speakers made scathing references to CNG leader General Namphy's trip to Washington and the role Reagan has played in supplying the Haitian police and military with weapons for use on demonstrators. As the marchers rallied into the evening hours at Grand Army Plaza, their numbers grew to six or seven hundred.

Participants
New York

That letter from a Polish underground cabbie in your December issue was an absolute gasser!

Cabbie
Minnesota



**SOLIDARITY
LABOR
CALENDAR**

Please tell your readers that the 1987 IWW Solidarity Forever Labor Calendar, which was originally priced at \$4.95, is now available for \$3.45, postage paid, while the supply lasts.

It is filled with important dates of revolutionary labor history and graphics from the archives of the IWW—and orders will be filled quickly.

IWW
3435 N. Sheffield, #202
Chicago, IL 60657

THE 'BLACK EXPERIENCE' — SOUTH AFRICA/USA

The lead article by Jongilizwe (Dec. N&L) is very good, but doesn't come out strong enough against the bureaucratization in the trade unions. He is right when he says there is an attitude that thinks overthrow by itself will bring the ideas of consciousness, just by sloganeering. This is a problem. His critique of so-called Marxists who "make people...objects...as if a blank slate" really hits a lot of groupings. Tambo says workers tend to be reactionary and out of control if they have too much freedom. Mandela himself has ruled out a socialist interpretation of the Freedom Charter.

Tambo is meeting with Shultz, who is trying to win over the ANC from Moscow. This puts the thing right in the superpower conflict context. The essence of struggle is total onslaught on any socialist tendency like AZAPO.

AZAPO organizer
Now in the U.S.

The lead article about South Africa had much that could have just as easily been written about India: the fact that "the response to every strike is repression from the state" and that there are few revolts without loss of life; or the expression that Black "life is very cheap"; as well as the fact that there is much similarity between apartheid and the caste system. As you yourselves wrote in your report on India (Nov. 86), you often found yourselves talking of the experience of Black Americans when you were asked something on caste relations in India.

Correspondent
India

Jongilizwe is a very advanced thinker, and I appreciated hearing such a voice from inside the revolution, instead of a second- or third-hand analysis. I'm struck by his warnings about what can happen to a revolution when a new state calls itself a workers' state, but doesn't let the unions continue to exist...

His point that youth need to get an education for liberation, to be responsible for their actions, is also true. Here in the U.S., too, Black youth say they don't need an education, but like the South African youth, they are rejecting the state-imposed education. Jongilizwe

made concrete what theoreticians always say about the importance of thinking, and not just getting caught up in activity—although it's hard not to.

Black mother
Los Angeles

AS N&L GOES BIWEEKLY

Despite my previous reservations about N&L going biweekly (because I am not sure you can handle it at this time) I do wish you all the luck in your new venture and enclose \$10 for a new sub. It is a course N&L ultimately must take if it is to challenge all the new changes taking place in the late half of the current decade.

One of those changes is how labor relations with corporate management have changed internationally. It used to be that our masters went abroad to get slaves to bring here, but now they go abroad to where the slaves are. The smokestack industries used to do this to find cheap labor; now the service industries are beginning to do the same. We in this country may soon have to move abroad to find masters in order to make a living. Could the current situation lead to workers finding new pathways to international relations among workers that would put the unionism of the IWW on a whole new level?

Longtime reader
Florida

I'm enclosing a check for \$15. I know it isn't much and that the costs of producing a biweekly paper will be enormous. But I would like at least to renew my own sub which I get on tape, and buy two more for friends I think should read this paper. The best to you in producing the biweekly—and here is some news on activities that have been going on here.

Supporter
Minneapolis

Editor's Note: All contributions, large or small, are what keeps N&L going. So are your stories. See p. 7 for the news sent by this supporter in Minnesota.

Direct from South Africa Freedom Journal

Johannesburg, South Africa—We are an unregistered and non-affiliated trade union here in South Africa. Our union has been victimized. The state is against us and our officials are the ones who are being victimized and arrested more than the officials of registered trade unions. This always surprises us because we are only in one industry. The South African labour laws provide every union with an opportunity of settling its dispute in the Industrial Courts, but the employers are now busy forming a committee that will fight against unregistered trade unions.

The fundamental issue is this: This employers committee is against unregistered unions being granted a hearing. We would like to know, is there any use to register our trade union? We appeal to News & Letters for advice, as we realize that trade unionists in Chicago and other areas can help us on this issue as they have been struggling with this for ages.

The South African government would now like to abolish trade unions, but as the movement has spread throughout the whole country, the question is where to start and where to end. The workers are strictly sticking to the movement as their spear and life. To eliminate the unions, it would have to be the end of the whole of South Africa.

One day our union proposed a meeting with a certain company and it was accepted. We arrived and sat down to a discussion without realizing that we were discussing issues with policemen. After the meeting we saw that a tape recorder had been put on a table in the corner. One of our organizers also saw a gun stuck inside the sock of one man. It was useless to argue then, because a tape had already been made.

This is an illustration of capitalism in South Africa used against our union. They claim our not being registered is causing strikes and leading the workers into a form of injustice. What is the difference between registered and unregistered unions? We do not register because the workers in our union refuse. They are the union. To register would show that we were not serving the workers' aspirations, but only the capitalist, and leading us to be the capitalist puppets.

In our union we have a special policy that differs from other federations. We only have a council of five members representing the Federation and all its affil-

Movement is our 'spear and life'

ates. There is no president, nor special council for each affiliate. This is in order to avoid a split by which an enemy could betray the council and weaken the union.

Some executive committees have betrayed and end up serving the employers' aspirations by accepting what oppressed the workers. Police informants have been used as tools to abolish the union. Union officials have created problems by clashing against each other and causing splits.

As a female official of one of these unregistered trade unions in South Africa, and also in charge of a branch union, I do not feel like employing males in the union. I notice that they are people who are influenced first by people promising them that they can earn a lot of money. The poor women who are offered only low earnings don't bother to accept any confidence from any police. Women in South Africa are organized into individual trade union groups to oppose these sellouts. What about the males? None of them are organizing working men as a class or organizing trade unions.

—Organizer of Unaffiliated Trade Union

Ella Baker



Ella Baker, veteran of Black freedom struggles since 1927, died Dec. 13 in New York City. An organizer for the NAACP from the 1920s through the 1950s, she became executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) after the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and in 1960 helped Southern Black students organize the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Respected by a new generation of civil rights workers in the South for her passionate advocacy of mass movement direct action against racism, her memory lives on.

Outrage at Howard Beach racism

(continued from page 1)

lifeless up the road. He lay there with his head bashed in for 3½ hours. "No one seemed to care anything about it," Cedric Sandiford said.

What about the other form of lynching unloosed by the police and white media?

TURN THE VICTIMS INTO CRIMINALS

Surely since they are Black they are suspect. Listen to the whites asking, "What were they really doing in Howard Beach?"

The fact that Mr. Maddox, attorney for Sandiford, refused to let his client participate immediately in an open hearing let loose rantings and ravings for his disbarment. It was made to appear as if Mr. Maddox was incompetent, not only by the press, but from Mayor Koch to Black Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward, who blatantly called it a matter of Maddox wanting to make money.

By Jan. 4, Mr. Sandiford publicly said it was his decision not to participate in what he considered a sham investigation by the police: "At the time I am trying to tell the story, nobody is paying attention."

The Black community knows Howard Beach for the white man's land it is, and as the place that gave Koch 80% of its vote when the Mayor was courting white votes. They got his message.

They know this as the lynching it is and as the kind of justice dealt out to the Black community. The three youth arrested in Howard Beach are out on bail and the charge of murder has been dropped. The Black community and especially its youth are incensed. It is not a change in education, which the schools Chancellor here in New York City anguishes for to make our children understand each other, that will teach the racist, young and old. Only through struggle that makes freedom real, makes it concrete by and for the Black citizen, will the racist be educated. —Angela Terrano

Rally held for Sandiford

New York, N.Y.—Over 2,000 turned out for a rally to support the actions of Cedric Sandiford, the main surviving witness in the Howard Beach attack. Sandiford, whose stepson Michael Griffith was struck by a car and killed while fleeing the attack, refused to testify, stating that both the police and the D.A. were covering up for the driver of the car, who was a participant in the attack.

The rally was held at the Boys and Girls High School in the heart of the Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto. Whites were not allowed into the rally on the pretext that the press was not allowed. The speakers represented the loose coalition of Black groups from around the city. They ranged from the Black church to the ultra-nationalists. Also present at the rally were the mother and brother of Michael Griffith. Most of the speakers were

very anti-white in their remarks.

The main speakers of the night were the two lawyers of the survivors, C. Vernon Mason and Alton H. Maddox Jr., who have a long history in the Civil Rights and Black Movements. Both stated that this rally and other actions could well form the basis of a new movement. This movement must be for and by Black people only, they stated, since white liberals can no longer be trusted.

Those present at the rally were asked to support a "Day of Rage and Mourning" on Jan. 21, at which time they asked Black people not to buy anything from white businesses.

—Ray McKay

3,000 at protest march

New York, N.Y.—One week to the day after a gang of white racists killed Michael Griffith in Howard Beach, upwards of 3,000 people assembled and marched through the neighborhood of the attack.

Most were Black New York City residents, many belonging to civil rights groups and unions. However, many Latino and white protesters came to demonstrate, too. After a short walk, the march stopped in front of the New Park Pizza parlor where the three Black men were first confronted, beaten and chased. As the march resumed, white counter-demonstrators—in a scene straight from the 1960s—poured abusive taunts over police barricades at marchers. At one point cadences of "Howard Beach, have you heard? This is not Johannesburg!" were overcome by shouts of "Go back to Africa!" The racists followed the march to the edge of Howard Beach and met it again upon its return four hours later.

Amongst the marchers were many young people. A young Black man, there with three friends from neighboring Richmond Hill, said when word got out about the killing, they first thought about revenge. He then said the racist New York City police were really the source of their problems. He was glad to see an integrated march.

After pausing for a rally, the march turned back, but not before stopping in front of the notorious 106th police precinct. Minority people in police custody have denounced cops there for using torture—shooting victims with electric "stun guns"—to extract confessions.

It was in the rally itself where serious questions emerged about the direction of this mass action—and others in the future. When Laura Blackburne of the NAACP announced that the "Star Spangled Banner" would be sung, the crowd booed and hooted "No!" so loudly that she announced "Lift Every Voice" would be sung instead. Another Black woman declared, "We've been singing 'We Shall Overcome' for 25 years. It's time to start doing something new." Nothing short of that will challenge New York City's deserved reputation for racism. —Jim Mills

Revolutionary Reading for Black History Month

- "American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard"
- "Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions," by Raya Dunayevskaya
- "Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought" by Lou Turner and John Alan

(see Literature Ad on page 2)

Black World

(continued from page 1)

What the then-radical Black journalist George Schuyler meant in 1927 when he extolled Langston Hughes as "the poet of the modern Negro proletariat," (p. 140) continues to make Langston Hughes popular in the Black community. Unfortunately, it's that same presence of Black and proletarian, race and class, in the poetic sensibility of Langston Hughes, that Prof. Rampersad reduces either to the real and gnawing inequities Hughes had to confront in his struggle to make a living by his writing, or to the vicissitudes of the Stalinist Communist Party line.

If the picture of so great a poet as Langston Hughes, having his talent ground down by the humiliating inequities of the American publishing and artistic world, is set in the sharpest and most colorful detail by Prof. Rampersad, nevertheless, the significance of Hughes' place in the modern development of Black literature and thought gets painted in the palest of greys.

The same is evident in Prof. Rampersad's treatment of Hughes' relationship to Stalinism (which Prof. Rampersad for some unexplained reason refers to as "the far left"). When Hughes moves away from the Communist Party, according to Prof. Rampersad, it's only because it is white and remote from the Black masses, rather than because of any disillusionment with the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism.

REDUCTION OF VISION

This whole reduction of Hughes' authentically Black and proletarian poetic vision comes to a head in Prof. Rampersad's last chapter, "The Fall of a Titan." Despite his dismissal of method ("I make it up as I go"), it's in the last chapter, where he must pull all the strands together, that Prof. Rampersad's pragmatist method surfaces. Opening with the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact in 1939, the chapter climaxes with the publication of Hughes' autobiography, *The Big Sea*, which Prof. Rampersad contentiously believes was inopportunistly eclipsed by the publication of Richard Wright's *Native Son*.

What is not examined, however, is to what extent the new departure in the mode of Black literary expression that unfolded with the Harlem Renaissance, and which Langston Hughes developed more than any other writer over the next two decades, had laid the ground for Wright's *Native Son*. That is of particular interest since Prof. Rampersad informs us that Hughes had gathered notes on Chicago's South Side during the Depression for a novel that he never published at the same time that Wright was engaged in his own study for *Native Son*.

The impact of Marxism on the literary thought of Langston Hughes, his move away from its Stalinist distortions just as Richard Wright was making his celebrated break with the CP, and what that signalled in Hughes' conception of the Black masses as the U.S. moved toward World War II is an "idea...there; but as yet, wants filling out," to quote Melville. We sincerely hope that Prof. Rampersad does so in his eagerly awaited second volume of *The Life of Langston Hughes*.

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'Platoon': not just the past

by Sheila I. Fuller

Recently I went to see the movie, "Platoon," because as a youth of the 1980s I wanted to find out what the Vietnam War was like. Afterwards I spoke with some youths who had just seen the movie, and it was clear that many were shaken up by it and thought "Platoon" was not just about the past but about Reagan's war drives today.

One sixteen-year-old high school student told me: "No movie or history book had ever shown me what happened to the people in the Vietnam War, both the Vietnamese and the U.S. soldiers. It makes me think of Central America. But what is also very much on my mind is Reagan's attack on Libya. He could have started a war. So many students in my school were against what he did. A lot of us think of being sent to war but will kill ourselves if we have to go."

"Platoon" is the story of a young U.S. college student, Chris, who volunteers to go to Vietnam in 1968 with many illusions about "patriotic duties." But his illusions begin to shatter the moment he lands in Vietnam and witnesses the dead bodies of U.S. soldiers being taken away. He soon finds out that most U.S. soldiers are there because of the pressures of poverty at home and are desperately looking for ways to get out. Indeed, the soldiers ridicule him for having volunteered to go to Vietnam.

THE WAR'S BRUTALITY

What really shakes up Chris is his participation in an attack on a Vietnamese village. At first he too participates in horrifying and humiliating the villagers but suddenly he cannot believe that he is witnessing the most vicious murders and rapes of children, committed by the American soldiers. When a sergeant in his platoon protests against another Rambo-like sergeant for his brutal murder of a Vietnamese woman and his threat to kill her child, the Rambo secretly kills him too.

The movie ends with the wounded Chris leaving the site of dead Vietnamese guerrillas and U.S. soldiers, and

Children of war

Los Angeles, Cal.—Over 200 students from 15 high schools in the Los Angeles area gathered with urgency and anticipation at Crenshaw High in late November to hear youth from war-ravaged areas of the world—including economically-ravaged areas of the U.S.—on the Los Angeles leg of the "Children of War" tour, sponsored by UNICEF.

The young speakers were from as far away as South Africa and the Gaza Strip, and as near as Wisconsin and Kentucky. Victor Lala, a South African, made the whole audience feel we are all in South Africa, and urged us not to let the censorship make us forget the youth there. Gustavo Velasquez of Guatemala moved us to tears describing the attacks on his family by the death squads.

Michael Simonson from Wisconsin revealed the human dimension in the present economic crisis in the U.S., reading from a eulogy to his father who was killed in an accident on a tractor last year. He spoke of how his father refused to separate his work from thinking and struggling to reveal the truth about the plight of the farmers. Shelly Ochs, from Kentucky, spoke of the importance of the ideological battle to free our minds.

Afterwards, people met in small workshops to speak out and discuss how to form anti-war student groups. SCLC had helped coordinate the L.A. event, and youth in the armed services had come. One Marine Corps youth was so moved he wrote a poem for the "Children of War."
—Anti-war youth

saying to the viewers: "The enemy was not outside. The enemy was within ourselves. It is the responsibility of those of us who survived the war to tell the truth and try to search for a meaning in life."

RESISTANCE WITHIN THE MILITARY

A nineteen-year-old Black youth who was waiting in line to see "Platoon" told me of how concerned he was about Reagan's sending the National Guard to Central America and wanted to talk about the "second America." "I too was in the National Guard but what made me quit was that as a Black man I felt my opinions don't count. I live in a city (Chicago) with a large Black population which is highly segregated. I think we have to look at the poverty within this country."

An eighteen-year-old Latino who had recently quit the army reserves wanted other youth to know of the resistance to war within the military: "During our training when the question of actually fighting in a war came up most of us would say to each other that there was no way we'd fight. And when the sergeants began training us about 'how to survive a nuclear war', we began laughing. How could anybody think that a nuclear war is 'survivable'? I made up my mind to leave and my advice to other high school students who are thinking about registering for the reserves is don't go."

What this movie made so vivid for me was not only the genocidal nature of the U.S. intervention in Vietnam, but the direction of Reagan's war moves in Central America today. In 1987 it is not only a repeat of the Vietnam War that Reagan has in mind, but nothing short of the nuclear annihilation of humanity with Star Wars. Reagan thinks he can get U.S. youth to fight for him, but they are sure to fight against his war drive.



Palestinian youths at the Bureij refugee camp on the Gaza Strip protested the Dec. 4 killing of two students at Bir Zeit University on the West Bank by Israeli troops. The West Bank and Gaza Strip were swept by more than a week of junior high and high school boycotts, a general strike, barricades and stone-throwing. The protesters' average age was 14.

Attacks on immigrants

New York, N.Y.—A panel discussion was held at Hunter College on Dec. 6 entitled "New Attacks on Immigrants: Refugees, Racism, and Class Oppression."

A member of the Northern Manhattan Center for Immigrants' Rights argued that the immigration policy is a cornerstone of Reaganomics, because it insures a pool of cheap labor without any rights. He said the real reason for unemployment is not immigrants taking away American jobs, but the crisis of capitalism.

A member of Latinos United for Political Action showed that 90% of the people picked up by the INS are Latinos. He said that American immigration policy has always been racist.

A member of the Sanctuary & Refugee Interfaith Coalition said that the Simpson-Rodino Bill was based on the myth that if you fine the immigrants then they will stay in their country, and there will be more jobs for Americans. But she said that there were never enough jobs for Blacks.
—Hal Stone

Guard out of Honduras!

Minneapolis, Minn.—On Dec. 31, over 6,000 people gathered at 5:45 a.m. for the Peace Is Possible Now action. Even though I don't agree with the heavy religious overtones, I was impressed with how many people participated in this event, both here and around the world.

On Jan. 2, over 200 people met at Fort Snelling to protest Minnesota Air National Guard troops being sent on "supply" missions to Central America. Seventy-two troops were to leave the airport sometime in the early morning hours on the 3rd, on the first of three missions. Early on the morning of Jan. 3, 22 protesters who had remained on the scene scaled the airport fence.

At the rally Friday evening, a speaker from Women Against Military Madness said that there was evidence that the National Guard was involved with training and arming troops in Honduras to fight in Nicaragua. She called on National Guard members to dialogue with organizations that are working against a U.S. presence in Central America.

Though the governor of Minnesota says he is opposed to the National Guard missions, he is powerless to prevent the troops from leaving. This was a Reagan administration decision. This whole situation shows me just one more way that this corrupt government has power to bring death and destruction to the people of other countries.
—Anti-war feminist

Brazil general strike

Detroit, Mich.—Brazilian workers faced thousands of soldiers and police to demonstrate against government price increases during a one-day general strike on Dec. 12. The government had imposed a wage-price freeze as part of its economic "Cruzado plan" a year ago. Then the ruling Democratic Movement Party lifted the price freeze on Nov. 21 ("Cruzado II"), only six days after it won victories in the national elections.

Workers in the Sao Paulo industrial sector made the Dec. 12 general strike felt by shutting down nearly all production. Auto has been one of the primary battlefields in Brazilian labor struggles. Alberto Eulalio, a coordinator in the factory committee at Ford Motor Company-Sao Bernardo do Campo and a director of the Metal Workers Union, spoke at the Labor Notes conference held near Detroit in November:

"This year [1986], on Feb. 20, the present government passed a new economic plan known as the Cruzado plan...The United Workers Federation (CUT) was against it...the workers had wages frozen, but distribution of food has been practically stopped. We lack milk, meat, a lot of basic foods in the country. Most products have been taken out of the market, in a campaign to avoid the price freeze..."

"This year [1986] we had a major strike in July, and Ford again fired over 200 leaders...Ford has refused to negotiate with the union, and they haven't answered any of the demands of the workers. But production has risen, and also the price of the automobile. And the repression inside the factory continues..."

"After the factory committee was thrown out...the workers organized themselves in protest anyway because they were so angry. They held another strike to ask for the rehiring of the members of the factory committee, and for a wage raise as well. Ford just said no. The workers became very upset, and decided to do a sabotage operation. They assembled the cars all upside down..."

"Ford was attempting to have 'quality groups' implemented and the union, the factory committees and the workers were fighting it. Ford was trying to tell us that...the worker participation program was good for Ford, and we were against it because we said it's definitely not good for the workers...The situation has become so difficult that Ford, because of its political problems with the union, has decided now to merge with Volkswagen..."

"What we want is that the multinationals understand that they now have to respect the union, and they have to respect the workers...We have had a very long struggle, especially in the last three years. It has resulted in the outright cancelling of agreements and the firing of the factory committees...We ask you to support our struggle and that workers here denounce to Ford what they are doing."
—Mary Holmes

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News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcats against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation — activities which signalled a new movement from practice which 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. A Black production worker, Charles Denby, author of Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal, became editor of the paper. Raya Dunayevskaya, the Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees, is the author of Marxism and Freedom, Philosophy and Revolution and Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, which 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. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.
News and Letters Committees, an organization of

Marxist-Humanists, stands for the abolition of capitalism, whether in its private property form as in the U.S., or its state property form as in Russia or China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

We organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." The world development of a half-century of Marxist-Humanism is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title, The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Detroit, Michigan.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, 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 the mass activities from the activity of thinking.

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Editor's Note: From Oct. 31, when the racist Chirac government bundled 100 Africans onto a plane and deported them to their native Mali as part of its fight against "terrorism," to December, when hundreds of thousands of students took to the streets, France is a changed land. What began as a student protest against the elitist education "reforms" designed by Chirac's ministers Monory and Devaquet to cut drastically the number of places in French universities, soon developed broader overtones, prompting even the staid newspaper Le Monde to editorialize about the "new humanism" of European youth of the 1980s, who were taking to the streets against "war, the destruction of nature by overindustrialization, and the racist and xenophobic resurgence," from Basel to Paris. What follows is a day-to-day report sent in to us by a participant.

Paris, France—Oct. 23: This country was sleeping—we were less than one thousand to protest against the deportation of the 100 Malians.

Romanian strikes

On Nov. 1, strikes broke out in factories in Transylvania, in a region where the Hungarian minority has been chafing under the ethnocentric rule of the Romanian Stalinist Nicolae Ceausescu. The Combinatul de Utilaj Greu factory in the town of Cluj went out when food rations for workers were reduced to 300 grams (11 oz.) of bread per day. The strike ended when supplementary food rations were brought into the region, but 25 of the strikers have since "disappeared."

Ceausescu's foreign policy is somewhat independent of Moscow's, but his internal rule follows the Russian "model" in its vise-like totalitarian grip, tolerating no open dissent, even by intel-

Nov. 23: 200,000 people in Paris, coming from all of France. Demonstration organized by the unions (close to the SP and the CP) to defend the schools. Many organized groups of Socialists.

Nov. 27: 200,000 high school and college students—in the provinces 350,000...a strictly apolitical demonstration organized in two days. Refusal of any union banners—no political slogans—but several chants of "Devaquet-Monory, a charter for Mali."

Dec. 4: In Paris at least 500,000 high school and college students coming from all over France or maybe even more. In the provinces 350,000 marched too. The teachers' unions, on strike for the day, were allowed to march, but in the rear of the demonstration. The high school students were afraid of being "co-opted." The Minister refused to withdraw the education law in its entirety—he will take out only the provisions which the students oppose. Incidents with the police at 11 p.m.—three seriously wounded. A student from my high

school had his skull fractured by a tear gas grenade—he was part of a line to prevent the high school students from joining the "provocateurs." Another, a nonviolent, had his eye torn out under the same conditions.

Dec. 5: In the night, incidents in the Latin Quarter. The police club an Algerian student, Malik Ousseki, who dies from his injuries.

Dec. 6: 30,000 people in a quasi-spontaneous demonstration to mourn Malik Ousseki's death. Incidents in the Latin Quarter: the police give the "casseurs" (violent ones) a free rein. Three hours go by before they intervene.

Dec. 8: We learn that on Dec. 5 in the (working-class) suburbs a policeman killed a 19-year-old Algerian (French citizen) who was trying to separate some people in a drunken brawl. A national day of mourning including work stoppages is called for Dec. 11-12. Chirac announces the withdrawal of the new law on the universities and on the high schools. After that, we learn that discussion will be postponed on the

posed nationalities (immigration) law, as well as on the law to establish private prisons, and that abortion will remain reimbursed by social security.

Dec. 10: The students maintain the demonstration. In Paris 300,000 people: high school and college students, teachers, parents, union members (especially the CGT)—plus demonstrations in the provinces. "Never again." Many signs and banners for those killed on Dec. 5.

Dec. 11: The student coordinating committee dissolves itself. (It is estimated that the delegates were a third of them 'organized'—in other words every type of Trotskyist, Communists, SOS-Racism—but the representatives on the committee changed each day.) This movement, beginning from the problems of the university and the high school—that is to say with unemployment—came to pose the question of the police, of solidarity with the children of immigrants, etc. Never did it speak of revolution—it spoke of justice and solidarity and equality.

—Teacher
See p. 3 for another report from France

with police outside parliament. In Argentina, a few top generals and colonels have been sentenced under the Alfonsini regime, while in Uruguay the amnesty from President Sanguinetti has been enacted before any prosecutions at all.

Zambian food riots

In early December, food riots broke out in the copper-belt mining region in the north, involving up to 10,000 people. The immediate cause was President Kenneth Kaunda's decision the day before to double the price of the country's food staple, maize-meal (corn flour). The sharp decline in world copper prices has brought Zambia to a crisis point, with Kaunda under pressure from the IMF to cut still further the living

standards of the masses. The December riots left more than 15 people dead, as youth and women roamed the streets appropriating food and other scarce commodities that they needed, after which Kaunda called out the army.

In 1984 Kaunda cracked down hard on student youth who had gone on strike at the university, while in 1981 he attacked the country's independent labor unions, jailing their leader Frederick Chiluba. While generally supporting the liberation struggles of Southern Africa including giving refuge to the African National Congress, Kaunda has sometimes waffled toward conciliation with South Africa, but usually changed course rapidly when these conciliatory policies came under attack at home and abroad.

Argentina & Uruguay

In late December, the civilian governments of both Argentina and neighboring Uruguay voted total amnesty for murders and other abuses committed during the previous fascist military dictatorships both experienced. In Argentina, 60,000 people demonstrated against the new law, while in Uruguay a smaller crowd of several thousand fought

China's youth challenge Deng's state-capitalist regime

(continued from page 1)

And when thousands of young people demonstrated in Shanghai on Dec. 19, to guarantee their right to demonstrate itself, and up to 300 were beaten or arrested, they hadn't appeared from thin air. People's Daily belatedly acknowledged that between Dec. 10 and 15 there had been a wealth of posters being discussed, especially at Jiaotong University in Shanghai. The following day over 30,000 protested the arrests, and the next day over 70,000 young people marched through the city to People's Square for freedom and democracy. The demonstrations had become nearly continuous, with nightly vigils before city offices.

The massive character of this Dec. 21 march, plus the participation by large numbers of young Shanghai workers, led Shanghai authorities to declare all demonstrations without a permit illegal. No permit would be granted. The national press blackout was now ended in order to attack the methods of the demonstrators and, just when it had been taken away in practice, guarantee their legal right to demonstrate!

The authorities felt threatened by the presence of workers demonstrating in Shanghai, the greatest industrial city in China. They had reason to worry. Part of the Four Modernizations under Deng had meant readjustments in the economy, from closing factories to increasing basic agricultural prices. For the past two years, wages of industrial workers had not kept pace with the cost of living, and just that week 20,000 tractor workers in Henan had gone on strike demanding higher wages. The Chinese press demanded that anyone who used slogans to call workers out of the factory be punished.

The marches in Beijing, which began immediately on Dec. 23, were never so massive or so proletarian in character as those in Shanghai. But they too prompted a new municipal code to make legal demonstrations into illegal ones, and, with a massive police presence, to make Tiananmen Square completely off limits. The students openly challenged the new regulations by publicly announcing a New Year's Day march to Tiananmen Square, with several hundred of their number succeeding in breaking through police lines. Students then marched in the early morning hours of the next day to demand and obtain the release of 24 students who had been arrested at Tiananmen Square. They had entered 1987 ignoring the authority of the state and Party.

THE DEEP ROOTS OF PROTEST

The December month of progress from Hefei through Shanghai to Beijing, along with protests in such widely separated cities as Wuhan, Kunming and even the brand new city of Shenzhen in the border zone near Hong Kong, demanded tremendous self-organization to spread and develop. Though we have not seen the diversity of organizations and tendencies that exploded around Democracy Wall in 1978-79, these current protests are on a higher level. Illusions were possible in the

first glow of life after Mao's death and when Deng, respected because Mao had twice purged him, was newly in charge. Many had hopes that merely dismantling the worst of Mao's legacy, or carrying out the Four Modernizations, would answer their critique of China.

Now, not only do the youth know that so many dozens of the Democracy Wall activists still rot in Deng's jails, not only have they seen the direction of economic modernization—but these weren't even the same youth. Ex-chairman Hu had talked of the generation which Mao had called to become Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution as the "lost generation." They had become disenchanted with Mao, and suspicious of both leaders and political phrases, when they realized Mao was using them in his power struggle. What Hu did not say is that many of the Red Guard generation chose to work out what had happened by studying Marx for themselves.

The current college generation, some of whom were not even born when the Cultural Revolution began in 1966, was supposed to be different. Instead we see the continuity of revolt has bridged the generations. It is that continuity and solidarity among the students which the Chinese leadership has sought to break, particularly in the press.

When, on Jan. 5, Beijing students dared to burn copies of newspapers to protest biased news coverage, they selected Beijing Daily. All the coverage had been biased, but Beijing Daily had virulently called protesters anti-socialist and had used a letter from bus drivers to try to divide workers from students.

At the same time as the student demonstrations, the ongoing border stand-off with Vietnam suddenly heated up, with thousands of casualties reported on each side. Remember that China's initial invasion of Vietnam in Jan. 1979 came during the Democracy Wall period, and caused splits among dissident organizations on whether

or not to support that war. National security was used then as the basis for arresting the first dissident, Wei Jingsheng. Patriotism is the last refuge of more scoundrels than just Reagan.

The very authorities who are calling young protesters anti-socialist know of course that the regime itself is the leading importer of Western bourgeois ideas, as in border areas like Shenzhen, where foreign capitalists can contract for Chinese labor much as they might in similar zones in Taiwan or Mexico.

If the youth have taken ideas from bourgeois society it has been the ideas of revolt they have witnessed among the youth in Taiwan and Korea demonstrating against their own repressive regimes. And the youths' demand to choose their own representatives and recall them at will did not come from what they saw in U.S. elections, but from what Marx saw in the Paris Commune.

If one is not a dissident in China, the best way to be called one is to take Marxism seriously. In 1981, Deng moved to quickly dismantle the unions modeled after Poland's Solidarnosc, which workers had established in Shanghai and Wuhan. In 1983, Liu Binyan's former boss Wang Ruoshui was removed as editor of People's Daily for raising questions on alienation in China and writing on the humanism of Marx.

The very generations that were and are a product of the People's Republic of China have become its severest critics. In 1982, Lin Xiling, the great woman orator of the first massive youth revolt against Mao's state-capitalism calling itself communism—the 100 Flowers Campaign of 1957—could still find "in what we have claimed is the most classical 'socialist society,' so many titles, ranks and labels in the relationship between man and man." Today in 1987 a Beijing student has put it even more briefly: "The Chinese state is a tool by which one class oppresses another."

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