

Marx's Capital on the job



by David L. Anderson

There are two terms from Marx's Capital that have come to light at work. They are being made concrete in our day-to-day fight just to "live." The first is the division of thinking from doing. I see that in the way management at Toys-R-Us in 1989 created the new title of "department head," which is a glorified worker who gets a title, a buck more and lots of grief. This was a way to separate the new, younger workers and the so-called non-educated workers from the older and formally educated worker.

This attempt at separation never really worked out to the boss' satisfaction. Because the department heads were close to the workers by the fact that they were hourly and had no real power, just to be told by the bosses to lean on the other workers, i.e., do their dirty work, they told us what the bosses were up to and helped us to fight them. So now, in 1994, the company is going to replace them with "assistant managers," who will be given more pay and keys to the store, and will be salaried.

I think this action puts to rest those who think that we can have a so-called team concept with the bosses and more thinking put in the hands of the workers. The internal nature of capital and labor puts us into two totally different "teams" and, therefore, the more they try to act as if we are on the same team, the more the division deepens.

The second term from Marx that came up at work is the despotic plan of capital. A week at my job puts this fetish of the plan in its place with its unworkability. Now is the slow time at Toys-R-Us, so the bosses are trying to cut back on hours and people, but nothing ever goes according to plan. Trucks keep coming, people are not

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Black World

Haiti and 'the problem of the 20th century'



by Lou Turner

Her liberty was born in blood, cradled in misfortune, and has lived more or less in a storm of revolutionary turbulence.

—Frederick Douglass, Haiti Pavilion, Chicago Exposition, January 2, 1893

There is an uncomfortable tension underlying these powerful words of Frederick Douglass, uttered in Chicago near the end of his life—a tension, more unsettling today, because, like Douglass, African-American leaders have been used by an American president to further U.S. imperialist aims in the Black world.

President Benjamin Harrison had sought to use Douglass, as the newly appointed Consul-General to Haiti, to secure a U.S. naval base at the Mole St. Nicholas in northwest Haiti from newly elected Haitian President Louis Hyppolite, in 1889. In 1893, Douglass could still tell his audience at the Chicago Exposition about the proud, unbowed Haitian masses and declaim against any colonialist moves by Western powers to dominate the Black republic, forgetful of the opportunist use to which U.S. "national interests" put his stature and his loyalty to the "Party of Lincoln."

The heirs to this contradictory legacy of Frederick Douglass today are many and, unlike Douglass, representative of the ruling-class pretensions of the African-American bourgeoisie. President Clinton has strategically deployed African-American leadership in carrying out his imperialist Haitian policy: former Congressman William Gray has served as point man for Clinton's policy inside the Administration, even as TransAfrica's Randall Robinson, a major critic of the policy, has beat the drum for invasion outside the Administration; the Congressional Black Caucus has pressured a waffling Clinton into action on Haiti, only in the end to be used by Clinton to get badly needed votes for his anti-Black, anti-crime bill; and finally, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell provided the denouement with his 11th hour resurrection of the bloody military dictator Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras as an "honorable man."

"'Colin Powell was the star,' a high-ranking policy-maker said afterward," writes Anthony Lewis. "He per-

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Under the whip of U.S. occupation

Who will listen to the Haitian masses?

by Peter Wermuth

The entrance of the Haitian masses onto the streets of Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haitien the week of Sept. 25-Oct. 1, marching against Haiti's police and demanding "Out with Cedras!" and "It's Our Time!" has unchained the dimension which the U.S. military invasion of Haiti aimed to subsume—the self-activity of the masses. By making their voices heard despite a de facto alliance between the U.S. forces and the dictatorial regime of Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras, the Haitian masses have begun to strip the pretense off the invasion and expose its class nature more starkly than could any anti-imperialist.

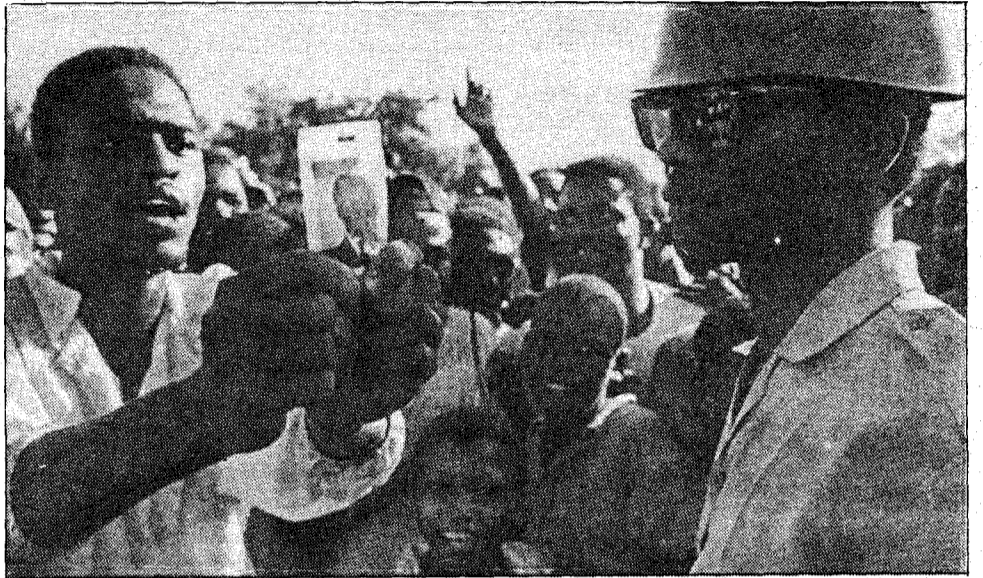
The demonstrations and attacks on police stations are hardly what the U.S. had in mind when the triumvirate of Jimmy Carter, Sam Nunn and Colin Powell arranged a last-minute deal paving the way for the de facto U.S. alliance with Haiti's military. Not only does the agreement leave Cedras in power until Oct. 15 and provide for a total amnesty for the military thugs who murdered over 4,000 Haitians since 1991, but it calls for the U.S. to work in tandem with the Haitian military to "restore stability" to this troubled island.

The Clinton administration was so concerned that the interests of the Haitian ruling class not be threatened by the eventual return of President Aristide that at first it even ordered U.S. troops to stand by passively while Haitian protesters were clubbed to death by the Cedras regime's police forces.

Though the U.S. quickly reversed itself on this, its military presence did not prevent a bomb from being tossed by pro-Cedras forces into a crowd of Haitians demanding democracy on Sept. 29 in Port-au-Prince.

TWO TYPES OF 'DEMOCRACY'

It would nevertheless be the gravest mistake to focus on the imperialist machinations of the U.S. to the detriment of the actions of the Haitian masses. The depth, daring and reason of their self-activity provides the only basis for effectively opposing Clinton's policies. At a moment when many in the U.S. support Clinton's invasion by ignoring its intended aim to shackle Haiti's mass movement, while many on the right oppose the invasion on the basis of the racist notion that Haiti "is not worth the life of one U.S. soldier," we cannot afford to stand on any ground other than the self-determination of the



Supporters of ousted President Aristide courageously show his photo to a policeman.

Idea of Freedom.

There is no question that the Haitian masses face many new barriers in the way of their self-activity. Not only has the structure and power of the Haitian military been left intact, but the island is now occupied by over 18,000 U.S. troops. The troops are there to ensure that the conditions laid down by the U.S. for Aristide's return to power will be obeyed: "no retribution" against the agents of the old regime, "maintenance of public order" through a refurbished police force based on the old military hierarchy, and implementation of a World Bank-International Monetary Fund plan to restructure the economy along the lines of "free market" capitalism.

According to Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, head of The Peasant Movement of Papay, Haiti's largest peasant organization, Clinton's objective is to ensure that "Aristide's hands will be tied, crippling him from carrying out the popular projects for which he was given an overwhelming mandate of 67% of the popular vote in 1990. Haiti would be further entrenched in the U.S. sphere, and subjected to more of the U.S. notion of 'democracy'—a notion rejected by the Haitian people, who want democracy rooted in popular participation in economic and political decisions."

It is precisely this subjective factor—the determination to be free on the part of the Haitian masses—which

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First of two parts...

'Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning'
Raya Dunayevskaya's 1974 lecture to the
Hegel Society of America • • • • • Page 4

Contradictory results of Quebec elections

Toronto—As is to be expected in the labyrinth of Canadian electoral politics, the results of Quebec's provincial election in September are ambiguous, inconclusive and subject to a myriad of interpretations.

After ten years in power the Liberals did well to end up in a virtual dead heat (at 44%) with the Parti Quebecois (PQ) in terms of popular vote which, however, translated into a comfortable majority for the PQ in the provincial legislature. The newly formed Parti Action Democratique du Quebec, a splinter of the Liberals which calls itself sovereigntist but not separatist (whatever that means) won 6.5% of the vote and one seat.

Because the PQ has made it clear that a referendum on independence will follow in the immediate future (1995)—unlike the four-year delay following its 1976 victory—the "separatist" debate is once again on the front burner in Canada. For PQ leader Jacques Parizeau, the referendum represents the "third period" in the hockey game leading to Quebec independence (the first being the overwhelming victory in the Province of Quebec of the independentist Bloc Quebecois in the last federal election, and the second being the current PQ victory).

In the aftermath of the election, one thing is clear: the Great Wall that has always separated Canada's "Two Solitudes" (i.e., its French and English peoples) is, unfortunately, in no danger of crumbling.

Francophone support for the PQ (and for some form of separation, as reflected in opinion polls) is in the 70-80% range. This confirms the continued existence of a national identity and a passion for some form of special status within Canada if not outright separation. Never-

theless, the media and politicians in the Rest of Canada continue to maintain that separatism means only the destruction of Canada. There is a blatant campaign to demonize the independentist movement and its leaders, who are portrayed only as crude opportunists and nation-destroyers. This French-English polarization fits with the regressive racism that is reflected in the increasing scapegoating of refugees and immigrants and the popularity of the ultra-right Reform Party of Canada.

That is not to say that either the Parti Quebecois or the Bloc Quebecois (with its leader Lucien Bouchard, a former Tory and crony of Brian Mulroney!) represent a progressive nationalism or have a program that addresses the underlying structural malaise that has crippled the Quebec economy. The PQ, which still sees itself as a mildly social democratic movement, showed when it held power from 1976 to 1984 that it could repress labour (particularly its teachers) as well as the Liberals; it continues to support the free trade agreements with the U.S., which have caused the loss of tens of thousands of jobs in the depressed city of Montreal; and it gave full support to the Liberal government in the repression of the Mohawk uprising at Oka.

The PQ is particularly vulnerable, in fact, both from a moral and a practical standpoint, on the question of the aspirations of Quebec's indigenous peoples, who insist that the "land claim" of the French majority in Quebec vis-a-vis the rest of Canada cannot be settled until native

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Feminist theory debate continues

Laurie Cashdan's essay in the March issue of *News & Letters*, "Feminism and Marx's humanism reconsidered," even where I disagree with her, read to me like a genuine working out of complex issues.

I couldn't agree more with her contention that "what illuminates the relationship between Marx's comments on the family [in *German Ideology and Capital*] is Marx's dialectical method." I would have to say that the failure to grasp Marx's "concentration not on any ahistorical pronouncements...but on the process of transformation of one social form into its opposite"—whether we are talking about the family or other social forms—is so common as to be the norm.

And yet what an inadequate read of Marx [this norm] renders! I think missing that dimension begets readings of Marx that fail to grasp its relevance for today. In fact, how could that not be the case, since what is being missed is precisely the motion of history. Without that, one could be led into thinking of Marx's work as an analysis of a moment frozen in time.

I also like the way Cashdan took on criticisms such as "gender drops out entirely from Marx's analysis" or that Marx naturalizes and de-historicizes the family. I am always happy to read a good trashing of vulgar readings. That is not to imply I think Marx is adequate to feminism, but Laurie demonstrates that logical possibilities do exist for "revolutionizing our ideas of liberation."

But I have a few problems with the essay. I thought the bits on Foucault played a little fast and loose. (Here I am in that awkward position of seeming to defend something I don't really agree with. I think Foucault, et al., drop the ball, but I think the ball itself is important.)

Jennifer Ring's claim [in *Modern Political Theory and Contemporary Feminism*] that post-modernist theorists act as if "the power of the past is undone by the act of literary will" is at best a gross generalization and at worst a woeful misread of many so-called postmodernists. Some theorists are indeed guilty

of that. But to use it this way seems to feed into a straw-man construction of a wide and diverse body of thought.

Also, I have to question, on two counts, Laurie's assertion that "Foucault's argument that subjects are also structured through this discourse makes it impossible to imagine how individuals have agency." First, even if this were true, I am suspicious of a logic of "I dislike the conclusion, therefore the premise is wrong." I would be more comfortable in scrapping the conclusion if she had gone further into Foucault's work and dismantled the assertions that (supposedly) lead to that conclusion.

Overall, I think she does do a good job of showing the way certain theorists have run into brick walls in their attempts to conceptualize women's agency through discursive theory. But, at least to my mind, she really hasn't done anything to invalidate the idea itself. In other words, she rightly points out weaknesses in certain employments/deployments, but not in the concepts at the center of discursive theory.

But more important is the second count. I am not at all convinced that Foucault's claim that discourse also structures subjects "makes it impossible" to imagine agency. (Note the word also in the original sentence.) It may have made it impossible for Foucault. And it certainly makes it impossible (for me anyway) to conceive of agency in the more traditional configurations. But these are quite different from saying it can't be thought at all.

Think of the two charges leveled against discourse theory. First, it acts as if the past can be undone by an act of literary will. But on the other hand, it is charged with eliminating entirely the notion of agency. See the problem? I think that this contradiction at the very least suggests this area is too diverse to be treated quite as monolithically as it tends to be.

These are some of the reasons I am interested in at least a part of what I understand Gayatri Spivak's project to be about. I like her insistence on keeping several theoretical perspectives—Marxism, feminism, deconstructionism and postcolonialism—in play at once, each continually displacing the other. I'm not advocating a sort of Derridian notion of endlessly shifting sands on which nothing can ever be built. But I do think it is crucial at this historical moment to use the disjunctions among various such discourses to push the limits of current ideas of and for liberation.

That is not to say that Spivak gives equal valence to those discourses. It seems clear to me anyway that she privileges Marxism as absolutely necessary but not sufficient and uses the other discourses to force open perhaps some too neatly covered over seams. And what I especially like is after doing that, she resists the almost overwhelming temptation to rush in and close those gaps. I think confronting those disruptions is perhaps the essential task for the Left today and should be an integral part of the way we take up issues like the dialectics of organization, for example.

Chicago feminist

Letter from a Reader

Latina homecare workers

New York—Homecare workers held a public meeting Sept. 6 in Washington Heights (el Alto Manhattan) to provide information on abuses against home attendants and their struggle for better conditions. The meeting was organized by the Coordinating Committee of United Workers of the Institute Homecare Services.

Among the various abuses and violations of their union contract are the reduction of these women's work schedules, converting them into part-time workers; the hiring of new workers when there are workers with seniority rights willing to work the shifts; the lack of full medical coverage for all the workers and their dependents; and the lack for respect for their human conditions. (The agency does not inform the workers about the health conditions of the clients, who are elderly people in Harlem and Washington Heights. One woman complained that on many occasions she "discovered" by herself that some of her clients had active tuberculosis.)

Because of their union's (OPEIU Local 153) failure to defend their rights, the home attendants have been organizing themselves for almost a year. "The struggle began one year ago. We aren't fighting for ourselves only, but for all the working women that are suffering the same abuses."

Fifty home attendants, mostly Latina women, presented a protest letter Aug. 8 to Suleika Cabrera, director of the Institute for Homecare Services and of the Institute for Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly. It exposed the abuses that they have been suffering for the past year. The response of Cabrera was to fire 10 workers invoking Article 13 of the contract which forbids striking and picketing in the work place. "We only delivered a letter," said one of the women at the meeting.

The organized home attendants are demanding full medical coverage for themselves and their families; that the agency provide the time sheet free of charge and on time (currently a form that they have to pay for from their pockets); that the agency pay for holidays for all the workers; that in any conflict between the agency and a worker, a representative chosen by the worker be present; the rehiring of all of the discharged and suspended workers; and that favoritism be stopped.

For information, call Home Attendants Support Committee at the Latino Workers' Center: (212) 473-3936. Or write: 191 East 3rd Street, New York, NY 10009.

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A voice from the Delta

Editor's note: The following statement was prepared by Sarah White, Black labor activist and catfish processing worker from Indianola, Miss., for the Sept. 2 national gathering of Women's Liberation-News and Letters. For a copy of the proceedings, send \$2 to N&L.

We are a living example, the Delta Pride workers, that if you believe in the dream and have people like you, all that never stops. Things can happen.

Sitting back recalling how our ancestors would sing in the fields and our great grandparents would tell us of the old stories and sing the old field songs, but never facing reality that we were just a remake of the lives they live when that plantation mentality so severely surrounded us that we were blinded to the cause that so many Civil Rights leaders had opened to us. It was the '80s but we lived far beyond that, we lived the life of our foreparents.

Mississippi is where I live but it's a cruel corner of the world where no one would ever want to live, because the plantation-built structure prevails over everything (there's no voice for the little people). What do the little people do? That's the question we had to ask ourselves in 1986. What do we do now?

Sunflower County was not a county of opportunity. It was a cotton growing county so jobs were scarce when farmers took up the catfish business. We were eager to start work and disband the welfare lines. But the picture that was painted was not so beautiful when we had the chance to look at it again. That new-found feeling of being independent and part of the working society was destroyed in 1981 when the doors of Delta Pride opened.

I want you to know if it had not been for you supporting us, believing in us, we could not have had the strength to keep fighting this long. I promise if you stay strong I will dedicate my life to cleaning up the South.

'Comfort' women reject plan

South Korean "comfort" women angrily rejected Japan's grudging attempt at restitution for their war brothels in a demonstration at the Japanese embassy in Seoul, Aug. 31. Shouting slogans and throwing eggs at the embassy, the women denounced as inadequate a \$1 billion Japanese plan to finance cultural and student exchanges to atone for forcing as many as 200,000 Korean, Chinese and Filipina women and young girls to work as sex slaves for Japanese soldiers during World War II. Earlier in August, Filipina women who had also been forced to work in war brothels demonstrated in Manila against Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama demanding direct compensation.

During years of regular demonstrations, the women have demanded not only an apology but direct compensation. The government has refused to provide direct compensation despite a worldwide outcry, including within Japan. The International Women's Year Liaison Group of 52 Japanese women's organizations met with women members of the Japanese Diet throughout the summer insisting on a formal apology and compensation to the comfort women.

—Mary Jo Grey

Novelist Taslima Nasreen still in danger

Taslima Nasreen's novel *Lajja* (Shame) was banned in Bangladesh within five months of its publication (1993) on the grounds that it "disturbed" communal peace. One has only to read Nasreen's 1994 Preface to the English translation to see that in fact *Lajja* is a passionate indictment of communalism and fundamentalism. Islamic fundamentalists have called for her death and the Bangladeshi government has attempted to silence Nasreen, but she has emerged on the global scene as a feminist and a humanist who refuses to be silenced.

Lajja is unapologetic about its political intentions. It is an expose of the persecution of the Hindu minority by the Muslim majority in Bangladesh following the demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu fundamentalists in India in December 1992. While documenting the horrors that rocked Bangladesh following the destruction of the mosque, Nasreen explores the perversion of human relationships by the invasion of communalism, or ethnic chauvinism, into people's everyday lives.

The novel focuses on the political disillusionment of an indigenously Bangladeshi Hindu family, the Duttas. The Duttas are not orthodox Hindus. They have a rich history of involvement in liberation struggles in Bangladesh: from the 1952 Language Movement which declared Bengali the official language to Bangladesh's 24-year struggle to gain independence from Pakistan.

The family is historically woven into the national fabric of Bangladesh which is ripped apart by communalism. In the end, the daughter, Maya (symbolizing the veil of illusion that is lifted), is kidnapped by fundamentalist thugs, and the rest of the family flees.

What Nasreen captures is that there are two kinds of nationalism. While she attacks narrow nationalism based on religious fundamentalism, Nasreen recognizes the power of Bangladeshi nationalism rooted in the mass movements she discusses and in the 1,000-year-old culture and history of the region.

The question that remains unanswered is: how could a country so rich in national liberation movements succumb to the fundamentalism of the religious right? Indeed within eight years of Bangladesh's independence, the secular Constitution was altered to make Islam the State religion.

Nasreen implicates not only the right wing, but also the Left which has failed to intervene in the rise of narrow nationalism. Thus, the title *Lajja* meaning "Shame" calls on all of us to assume responsibility for allowing re-



ligious extremism to blossom in so many nations.

Lajja provides no facile solutions, no automatic redemption. Today, Taslima Nasreen is herself the victim of fundamentalism. She is now exiled from her homeland, and religious fanatics continue to clamor for her life. *Lajja* is an indictment of religious extremism that calls for us in the U.S. to show our solidarity with Nasreen.

In the Preface to the 1994 English translation of *Lajja*, Nasreen writes: "The mullahs who would murder me will kill everything progressive in Bangladesh if they are allowed to prevail. It is my duty to protect my beautiful country from them and I call on all those who share my values to help me defend my rights...I am convinced that the only way the fundamentalist forces can be stopped is if all of us who are secular and humanistic join together and fight their malignant influence. I, for one, will not be silenced." Solidarity with Taslima Nasreen!

—Maya Jhansi

Migrant farm workers battle poverty

Eugene, Ore.—Driving the Wilamette Valley between here and Portland you traverse a rich farm-land—orchards laden with apples and peaches and fields overflowing with berries, tomatoes and cucumbers. But as in so many other agricultural areas, the richness of the harvest contrasts sharply with the poverty of the farm workers.

Here the workers are primarily Mexican, migrating up from the fields of California. They work piece-rate, 12¢ or 14¢ a pound for strawberries, so much per bucket of cucumbers. Sometimes the arrangement for cucumbers is a form of sharecropping, with workers being paid 30% or so of what the farm receives from a cannery.

There is no guaranteed wage, no guaranteed number of hours, no overtime pay. Each day starts out new, with the farms posting their rate per pound. One farm, Kraemer, covered the faces of their scales so that weights greater than 35 pounds could not be read. They denied workers credit for any strawberries they picked over 35 pounds per two crates.

Then there are the labor camps where many of the workers live. At Kraemer Farms the camp is a two-story bunker with low ceilings containing double-decker wooden bunks made from 2x 4s with a piece of carpeting as the "mattress." Perhaps 40 to 50 workers share a shower room with three showers and portable toilets outside.

Against these kinds of conditions the farm workers have begun organizing. A union, PCUN (Pineros Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United), has been formed. Kraemer Farms has been a principal target. It owns or leases some 2,000 acres, producing 16 crops, and operates eight labor camps, charging some 200 workers \$50 each per week for room and board.

In August 1991, 100 of 120 cucumber workers at Kraemer went on strike for higher wages. After three days a wage increase of 33% was won and the union suspended its strike. In 1992 Kraemer refused to hire 21 former strikers and refused to negotiate with the union.

Kraemer Farms is a member of Steinfeld's, 25 grower-suppliers who market tens of thousands of pounds of pickles annually. As well, they are part of NORPAC, a cooperative owned by 250 growers with national and international distribution under the brand names FLAVOR-PAC frozen foods, Santiam canned foods and Stone Mill Foods.

PCUN requested that NORPAC and Steinfeld's urge Kraemer Farms to negotiate. They refused. PCUN called for a boycott of NORPAC and Steinfeld's products. The boycott is now two years old and still in effect. The union is picketing stores, particularly in the Portland area, which carry products from the grower groups.

Kraemer Farms this summer set piece-rate wages so low that the workers conducted three work stoppages. On Aug. 6 half of the 100-plus cucumber workers halted the harvest after receiving weekly paychecks of \$80 to \$150. On Aug. 22 Oregon Department of Agriculture in-

spectors cited Kraemer for again covering the scales.

Work stoppages have occurred at other farms this summer and at a small non-union cannery where the owner owed \$100,000 in back wages. The new labor militancy is taking place despite the great difficulties Oregon farm workers face, particularly a growing anti-immigrant climate.

For more information on the farm workers union and the boycott, contact PCUN, 300 Young Street, Woodburn, OR 97071.

—Eugene Walker



Cucumber harvesters on strike in 1991.

Faucet plant closes

Morgantown, W. Va.—"The announcement that they were going to close this plant down came like a thunderbolt out of the blue," declared a worker at the Sterling Plumbing Group Inc. "Some workers have been here 40 years," he added, "but in all that time there had never been any idea that they would close the whole plant down."

The worker was referring to the news given out on Tuesday, Sept. 13, that the plumbing fixture plant, in operation since the mid-1940s, would be closed in 18 months. More than 300 workers are employed there, and many of them have never worked elsewhere. As another worker said, "What are these people going to do, where can they go? They can't do anything else."

The company blamed the plant closing on federal Environmental Protection Act (EPA) regulations to go into effect in 1996 that decrease the amount of lead that can be used in plumbing fixtures. The technology at the Sterling plant can't meet the lead requirements without the installation of new equipment that the company says would be too expensive.

There is a union at the plant, United Steelworkers of America Local 6214, but the union officials were unable to tell the workers anything, since the union was not informed of the action beforehand. Some workers are talking about the other plants Sterling runs in Tennessee, Alabama and Arkansas, and charging that Sterling wants to move down South to get away from the union and to have workers who will work for cheaper wages.

Over the years there have been many battles between the workers and management over wages, fringe benefits and conditions of work. Small brass particles that often saturate the air, especially in the buffing department, cause serious respiratory problems and skin infections. Many workers have been ordered by their doctors to leave the plant or face serious physical ailments.

Located in a small community, Sabraton, some two miles east of Morgantown, the plant is an economic mainstay of the town. Not only are there many husbands and wives working in the plant, for some families everyone of working age works there. The plant closing will obviously destroy the livelihood of these families. As the bartender at a local bar frequented by the Sterling workers stated, "This is going to be a ghost town when that plant closes."

—Andy Phillips

Companies always want more

Oklahoma City—Dayton Tire workers are on strike here. The company has hired 100 new people to replace the strikers, and some of the scabs were on TV complaining about the strikers threatening them. Don't these people see what Dayton Tire is doing? The strikers are only fighting to keep their benefits and for no pay cuts and safety. They are not asking for more! Companies always seem to want more from workers!

I'm sure that those 100 new hires needed the jobs, but so do the strikers. Dayton Tire needs workers to produce for them. That's one reason no worker should ever cross a picket line, because they could put Dayton Tire in the same struggle that workers face daily: survival.

There is very little in the news media about this strike, except when it concerns Dayton Tire or the police. It's like they are afraid of the public reaction to the real problems of everyday life.

—Working woman

High fashion sweatshops

Los Angeles—The Asian Immigrant Workers Association has been holding monthly rallies in front of the Jessica McClintock store in Beverly Hills in protest against the exploitation of workers, mainly Chinese immigrant women, in McClintock sweatshops. For a dress that sells for \$175, the workers are paid \$6. A consumer boycott of Jessica McClintock, Scott McClintock and Gunne Sax labels has created a big drop in sales.

At the Sept. 17 rally there were about 100 people, including a large contingent from Justice for Janitors whose members face a similar situation of labor exploitation by large corporations that deny responsibility because they hire contractors who then hire and pay the workers, as does McClintock. We marched for at least two hours in front of the store, despite the efforts from the store workers and the police to intimidate us.

—Mary H.

Ecuadoran Indians scorned

Reading about Peruvian Marxist Jose Carlos Mariategui in the last issue of *News & Letters* reminded me of Ecuador and the stigma that exists there if you have an Indian last name. It affects all the activities a person can do.

This is the experience I had when I suddenly and urgently needed to get an identification card. There was a line of people waiting outside the office about two blocks long. Most were peasants and the poor of the city, and many had slept overnight in the street or come very early in the morning.

I had a friend who enabled me to go to the front of the line. I felt very ashamed and even afraid that the people in line would do something about my going to the front, but my friend told me with a smile not to worry (for her it was natural), and the people didn't look at me with surprise or anger, but on the contrary, with respect.

Once inside the office, when the clerks called out names, they addressed people with Spanish last names with the formal "usted," but they addressed people with Indian last names in a derisive way, making them repeat their names as if to show off that the clerk was not familiar with Indians, and using the familiar form "tu." To this day, the worst insult anyone can get is to be called "indio." What worries me is whether people accept this as natural, or whether they think nothing can be done to change it.

If in addition to being Indian you are also a woman, you are treated as if you are worth nothing, even though Indian women support the economy of the country. They do the invisible jobs that allow middle class and even working class women to be in the job market, and that allow the men in their own families to be able to reproduce their energy and continue to be exploited on their jobs. Some of these women find "freedom" by coming to the U.S. to earn more money, and end up working 12 hours a day, often seven days a week.

—Greta

Labor Day protest

Decatur, Ill.—Labor Day morning began with overcast skies. I visited a local restaurant for breakfast. As the customers came in, it was plain to see almost everyone was dressed in red T-shirts. Soon the participants for the parade gathered, between 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. There were 4,000 people at least.

Just about everyone from the three labor unions having problems in Decatur—UPIU (Paperworkers) Local 7837 (Staley), UAW Local 751 (Caterpillar) and United Rubber Workers Local 713 (Firestone)—turned out. There were other locals—postal workers, AFSCME and so on. By far it was the largest rally in this town.

Spectators lined the sidewalks throughout the entire parade. They showed support by applause, waves and thumbs-up signals. Many were also dressed in red. As I walked the route with thousands of sisters, brothers and their families, I could see and feel the pride in all of us.

At the end the union members and their supports began to circle the courthouse and law enforcement center, making one trip around and then stopping in front of the courthouse. There local union leaders made brief speeches. There were reports of riot-gear cops waiting on a side street; plainclothes officers were roaming through our crowd taking videos of our activities. They soon were identified and the crowd began shouting, "No more pepper gas!" Being outnumbered, they soon left.

The most amazing part of the whole day was when Father Mangan of St. James Catholic Church, the last speaker, asked those who were able to, to kneel down on one knee for a minute of silent prayer. He asked those who would be willing to lay down their lives for this struggle to raise their right hands. I didn't see any hand not raised, with the exception of the local police. After the moment of silent prayer was observed, Father Mangan asked that we all leave in silence. Surprising and mystifying the officers, the crowd filed towards their cars in silence and awe.

Prior to the parade there had been an incident at the Firestone gates, and this caused people (the media, police and general public) to be braced for violence. Because of the way in which we left the courthouse (a form of civil disobedience), people have approached me and said that they were surprised and amazed that we were so much in control. When people that know me ask, "Didn't I see you on television?" it starts a conversation about the working class. Some understand clearly what is at stake and others never will.

The struggle continues. However, for this brief time it was our Labor Day!

—UPIU Local 7837 "Road Warrior"

Fight employer abuses Boycott Howe Apparel!

Workers at the Howe K. Sipes Co. in Memphis, Tenn., voted in September 1993, in a National Labor Relations Board election, for representation by Furniture Workers Local 282. The owners' and supervisors' lack of respect for these workers forced them to seek union representation.

Since the election victory, the employees have been harassed daily by management, including threats of physical harm. The majority are African-American women. Sipes management has attempted to intimidate the workers with threats of firings and suspensions if they continue to organize.

Management people have not even felt restrained in calling members of the union bargaining committee "bitches" and "trash."

Union members at Howe K. Sipes Co. will continue to struggle for a contract with the solidarity that they have received from supporters in Memphis and nationally but they still need our help.

Boycott baseball and softball uniforms and jackets sold under the Howe Athletic Apparel label!

To give support and for information, contact Furniture Workers Local 282 by calling (901) 725-1331.

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

there when they need them, workers get mad and say to hell with what the boss thinks we will do.

In their rush to plan work to the bottom line they remind me of something my grandmother said, that they are penny wise and pound foolish. I think this can be said of capital with its internal need to plan all things more and more, the deeper the crises get. By planning they think they are putting the control on labor, but in this act the underlying revolt deepens.

The more they try to divide us by the plan or by the division of thinking from doing, the more there is in labor a hunger for universality or, as the philosopher Hegel said in his *Philosophy of Mind*, "The will is the immediate individuality self-instituted—an individuality, however, also purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself."

The only answer for us to fight these things that capital throws at us is that internal need/movement for universality of labor. That is why workers need the form of a paper like *News & Letters*, where a dialogue on that needed universality can begin. A worker in the USA has more in common with their own "team," that of labor, whether it be USA, Britain, China, the world over, than with their rulers/bosses. Or, as Karl Marx put forth in the *Communist Manifesto*, workers unite, we have nothing to lose but our chains and a world to gain.

From the Archives of Marxist-Humanism

The Writings of
RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note

We are proud to publish one of Raya Dunayevskaya's most important writings on dialectics on its 20th anniversary—"Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning," first presented as a speech to the Hegel Society of America meeting at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., in 1974. The talk developed the original concept "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning: The Ceaseless Movement of Ideas and History," articulated in her *Philosophy and Revolution* published the previous year, 1973. The lecture takes as its focus the final 27 paragraphs of Hegel's *Science of Logic* which comprise its final chapter, "The Absolute Idea."

While the section on the Absolute Idea remains the least commented upon by Marxists, the nature of the revolutionary dialectic presented in Hegel's *Logic* remains a crucial issue in Marxism. Lenin's reading of the Hegelian dialectic served as preparation for revolution, and Marx, who made constant returns to the Hegelian dialectic throughout his life, structured *Capital* along the lines of the notional concepts of the *Logic*.

Dunayevskaya's own constant returns to the Absolute Idea in Hegel's *Science of Logic* appear throughout *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*. "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" itself appeared first in *New Essays* (News & Letters, Detroit: 1977), microfilm number 5631, and in *Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy*, Warren E. Steinkraus and Kenneth L. Schmitz, editors (Humanities Press: 1980), microfilm number 11535. Bracketed text here is by the editors.

"Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning" will be presented in two parts; the second part will appear in the November N&L. There Dunayevskaya's development of the "The Absolute Idea" through a battle of ideas includes critiques of contemporary Marxists like Theodor Adorno of the Frankfurt School and independent Czech philosopher Karel Kosik, as well as non-Marxist Hegel scholars like Reinhart Klemens Maurer and J.N. Findlay.

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Founder of Marxist-Humanism

In the beginning was the Word (*das ursprüngliche Wort*), not as a command, but as the philosophic utterance which vanishes into thin air. The release of the self-movement of the Absolute Idea unfolds, not as if it were in repose, but so totally infected with negativity that throughout the 27 paragraphs that constitute the final chapter of the *Science of Logic*, starting with the very first paragraph, we learn that the Absolute Idea contains "the highest opposition in itself" (*den höchsten Gegensatz in sich*). (*Science of Logic* or SL 824)¹

The dialectic would not be the dialectic and Hegel would not be Hegel if the moment of encounter with the Absolute Idea was a moment of quiescence. Thus, far from the unity of the Theoretical and Practical Idea being an ultimate, or pinnacle, of a hierarchy, the Absolute Idea is a new beginning, a new beginning that is inevitable precisely because the Absolute Idea is a "concrete totality" and thus entails differentiation and impulse to transcend. To follow Hegel, step by step, without for a single moment losing sight of negativity as the driving force toward ever-new beginnings, it may be best to divide the 27 paragraphs into three principal areas. The first three paragraphs, centering around that highest contradiction contained in the Absolute Idea at the very moment of the unification of the Theoretical and Practical Idea, shows its self-determination disclosing not a new content, but its universal form, the *Method*, that is, the dialectic.

Once Hegel asserts (in the fourth paragraph) that "**Notion is everything**, and its movement is the **universal absolute activity**, the self-determining and self-realizing movement," (SL 826) Hegel divides his field of concentration in what I call the second subdivision into two: a) paragraphs 5 to 7, stressing the new beginnings, immediacy that has resulted from mediation, and b) further opens the scope wider (paragraphs 8 to 15) as he sketches the development of the dialectic historically, from Plato to Kant, and differentiates his concept of second negativity as the

turning point of the movement of the Notion...the innermost source of all activity, of all animate and spiritual self-movement, the dialectical soul that everything true possesses and through which alone it is true; for on this subjectivity alone rests the sublation of the opposition between Notion and reality, and the unity that is truth. (SL 835)

The third subdivision I make covers the last 12 paragraphs. These disclose concreteness both in its totality and in each sphere, in each of which, as well as in the whole, inheres the impulse to transcend. And this includes the **system** itself. The intimation of totally new beginnings is not restricted to the fact that there will be other spheres and sciences Hegel plans to develop—Nature and Spirit. Inherent in these intimations are the consequences of what we will have been grappling with in the whole of the *Science of Logic*.

The Absolute Idea as new beginning, rooted in practice as well as in philosophy, is the burden of this writer's contribution. While this cannot be "proven" until the end of He-

1. The "SL" designation together with a number refers to the A.V. Miller translation of Hegel's *Science of Logic* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969).

gel's rigorous and yet free-flowing final chapter, it is necessary here, by way of anticipation, to call attention to the three final syllogisms in the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* which had not been included in the first edition of the work. To this writer, these crucial additions to the 1827 and 1830 editions constitute the summation, not alone of the *Encyclopaedia*, but of the whole cycle of knowledge and reality throughout the long tortuous trek of 2,500 years of Western civilization that that encyclopaedic

Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning

mind of genius, Hegel, was trying to bring to a conclusion. Just as the first of those syllogisms (*Encyclopaedia*, paragraph 575) shows that the very center of its structure—Logic, Nature, Mind—is not Logic but Nature, so does the very last paragraph in the *Science of Logic*.

Whether one conceives Nature as "externality" in the Hegelian sense, or "exteriority" in the Sartrean manner, or as "Practice" in Lenin's World War I view, the point is that Hegel, not Sartre, nor Lenin, conceives Nature as mediation. When I develop this further at the end of the paper, we shall see what illumination our age casts on the movement from practice that helps us in grappling with the dialectic. But here it is best to continue with the three central divisions I suggested:

(1) The same first paragraph of the Absolute Idea that riveted our attention to the highest opposition, cautioned against imposing an old duality on the new unity of opposites reached—the Theoretical and Practical Idea. "Each of these by itself is still one-sided." The new, the highest opposition, rather, has to self-develop: "The Notion is not merely **soul**, but free subjective Notion that is for itself and therefore possesses **personality**." This individuality is not "exclusive," but is "explicitly **universality** and **cognition**, and in its other, has **its own** objectivity for its object." (SL 824) All that needs to be done, therefore, is for the Absolute Idea "to hear itself speak," to "outwardize" (*Ausserung*). Its self-determination is its self-comprehension. Or, put more precisely, "its own completed totality" is not any new content. Rather it exists wholly as **form** and "the universal aspect of its form—that is, **method**." From that moment on Hegel will not take his mind's eye from the dialectic for, as he puts it, "nothing is known in its truth unless it is totally subject to method" (*als der Methode vollkommen unterworfen ist*).

(2) No less than 11 paragraphs follow the pronouncement that the Absolute form, the Method, the Notion is the whole. The pivot around which they all revolve, Hegel stresses over and over again, is the "**universal absolute activity**," the Method which "is therefore to be recognized as...unrestrictedly universal." (SL 826) In a word, this is not just another form of cognition; it is **the unity** of the Theoretical and Practical Idea we have reached. Far from being a "merely **external form**" or the instrument it is in inquiring cognition, the method is no "mere aggregate" of determinations but "the Notion that is determined in and for itself," the middle, the mediation, **because** it is objective and it is "posited in its identity," namely "subjective Notion." (SL 827)

To be swept up by the dialectic is to experience a plunge to freedom. Since, however, the rigor of thought cannot be allowed to dissolve into a "Bacchanalian revelry," it is necessary to work through these paragraphs without missing any links. The first is the beginning—the **Absolute as beginning**. When Hegel refers us to the very start of the Doctrine of Being—where he first posed the question "With What Must Science Begin?"—it is not for purposes of proving that the Absolute is a mere unfolding of what was implicit from the start, the manifestations. It also becomes a totally new foundation—absolute negation. Although from the beginning, Hegel emphasized that everything, no matter how simple it sounded, contained equally immediacy and mediation (SL 68), it is now so permeated with negativity that it is no mere remembrance of things past when Hegel writes, "**There is nothing, whether in actuality or in thought, that is as simple and as abstract as is commonly imagined.**" (SL 829)

The long passageway through "concrete totality" of diverse, contradictory forces and relations from the Doctrine of Being through Essence to Notion makes it clear that though every beginning must be made **with the Absolute**, it becomes Absolute "only in its completion." It is **in** the movement to the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality that transcendence will be achieved in subjectivity and subjectivity alone. In a word, this new beginning is both in thought and in actuality, in theory and practice, that is to say, in dialectical "**mediation**, which is more than a mere beginning, and is a mediation of a kind that does not belong to a comprehension by means of thinking." Rather "what is meant by it is in general the demand for the **realization of the Notion**, which realization does not lie in the **beginning** itself, but is rather the goal and the task of the entire further development of cognition." (SL 828)

Whether or not one follows Marx's "subversion"² of the Absolute's goal, the "realization of philosophy" as a "new Humanism," the unity of the ideal and the real, of theory and practice, indeed, of philosophy and revolution,³ one cannot fail to perceive Hegel's Absolute advance (*Weitergehen*) and "completion" as the conclusion and fulfillment, as the beginning anew from the Absolute, for he never departed

from conceiving all of history, of human development, not only as a history in the **consciousness** of freedom, but, as we shall see, as achievement in **actuality**. Even here, when Hegel limits himself strictly to philosophic categories, to his **story of thought**, he maintains the need to face reality. In tracing the conceptual breakthroughs of the dialectic from Plato to Kant to his own view of second negativity, he calls attention to Plato's demand of cognition "that it should **consider things in and for themselves**, that is, should consider them partly in their universality, but also that it should not stray away from them catching at circumstances, examples and comparisons." (SL 830)

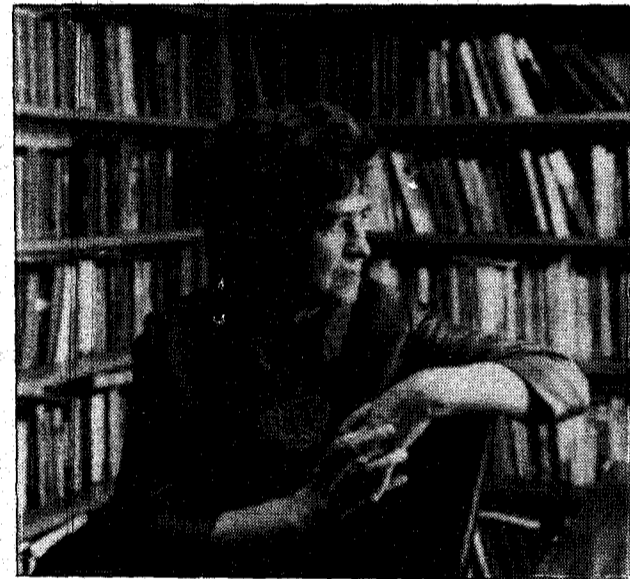
Considering things "in and for themselves," Hegel maintains, has made possible the working out of ever-new unities and relations between practice and theory. This is the achievement of Absolute Method. To whatever extent the method is analytic, to whatever extent synthetic as it exhibits itself as Other, the dialectic moment is not reached until (as the unity of the two) the "no less synthetic than analytic moment" determines itself as "the **other of itself**."

The point is that it is the power of the nega-

tive which is the creative element. It is not the synthesis, but the absolute negativity which assures the advance movement. Since this is what separates Hegel from all other philosophers, and this philosophic ground, how a "universal **first, considered in and for itself**, shows itself to be the other of itself," this idea will dominate the last 12 paragraphs following the encounter with

the **turning point** of the movement of the Notion...the dialectical soul that everything true possesses and through which alone it is true; for on this subjectivity alone rests the sublation of the opposition between Notion and reality, and the unity that is truth. (SL 835)

Before, however, we go to those paragraphs developing second negativity to its fullest, I should like to retrace our steps to the threshold of the Absolute Idea, "The Idea of the Good," and call attention to the Russian Communist celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth,



Raya Dunayevskaya, 1973

which coincided with Hegel's two hundredth. This will illuminate the problematic of our day. Academician Kedrov, Director of the Institute of History of Science and Technology, embarked on still another attempt to "disengage" Lenin from Hegel with the claim that the word, "alias," before the quotation, "Cognition not only reflects the world but creates it," shows Lenin was merely restating Hegel, not bowing to Hegel's "bourgeois idealism."⁴

The simple truth, however, is that the most revolutionary of all materialists, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, witnessing the simultaneity of the outbreak of World War I and the collapse of the Socialist International, felt compelled to return to Hegel's dialectic as that unity of opposites which might explain the **counter-revolution within** the revolutionary movement. Absolute negativity became Lenin's philosophic preparation for revolution, as Lenin's *Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic* shows.⁵ By the time his notes reach the Doctrine of the Notion, Lenin states that none of the Marxists (and the emphasis on the plural makes it clear he includes himself) had fully understood Marx's greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, "especially its first chapter" since that is impossible "without having thoroughly studied and understood the **whole** of Hegel's *Logic*."⁶ His passion at the approach of the Doctrine of the Notion—"NB Freedom = Subjectivity, ("or") End, Consciousness, Endeavor, NB"—had made it clear that Lenin at this time, 1914, saw in freedom,

(Continued on page 5)

2. Karl Lowith writes: "Marx takes over the task of the philosophy which ended with Hegel and puts revolutionary Marxism, as reason becoming practical, in the place of the whole previous tradition." Then Professor Lowith footnotes his comment by referring to Manfred Riedel's *Theorie und Praxis im denken Hegels* (Stuttgart: 1965). It is there, continues Lowith, "where it is established for the first time that, for Hegel, theory and practice share an equal primacy, since spirit as will is a will to freedom and freedom is the origin of all historical practice." This is from Lowith's "Mediation and Immediacy in Hegel, Marx and Feuerbach" in W.E. Steinkraus, ed. *New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy* (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Inc., 1971) page 122 and note.

3. See Chapter Two, "A New Continent of Thought, Marx's Historical Materialism and Its Inseparability from the Hegelian Dialectic," in my book, *Philosophy and Revolution* (New York: [Columbia University Press, 1989]).

4. See the article by Academician Kedrov printed in *Soviet Studies in Philosophy*, Summer 1970.

Hegel's Absolute

(Continued from page 4)

in subjectivity, notion, the categories with which both to transform the world and to gain knowledge of the objectively real because he had already, in the Doctrine of Essence, recognized, in Hegel's critique of causality, the limitation of "science" to explain the relation between mind and matter.

Lenin then proceeded to grapple with the role of practice in Hegel, especially when Hegel writes of the Practical Idea as having "not only the dignity of the Universal, but also the simply actual." Lenin's quotation about cognition that the Communists are presently trying to expunge is significant, not because he accords such "creativity" to cognition but rather because Lenin, in "granting" that creativity to cognition, had followed it up by calling attention to the fact that Hegel had used the word Subject "here suddenly instead of 'Notion.'" And to make matters still worse for those Russian epigoni, it was all in the sentence about "the self-certainty which the subject has in the fact of its determinateness in and for itself, a certainty of its own actuality and the non-actuality of the world."

Vulgar materialists are so utterly shocked at Lenin writing about the "non-actuality of the world" and the "self-certainty of the Subject's actuality" that they quote, not Hegel, as Lenin did, but Lenin's "translation": "i.e., that the world does not satisfy man and man decides to change it by his activity." But the point is that, after that "translation," Hegel is quoted in full, on the contrast between inquiring cognition where "this actuality appeared merely as an objective world, without the subjectivity of the Notion, and here it appears as an objective world whose inner ground and actual subsistence is the Notion. This is the Absolute Idea." (SL 823)

It is this appreciation of the Absolute Idea, not as something in heaven or in the stratosphere, but in fact in the objective world whose very ground is the Notion, that has statist Communism so worried about Lenin, ever since the East German Revolt of June 17, 1953, and the emergence of a movement from practice to theory and a new society. They have rightly sensed that Lenin's break with his own philosophic past of the photocopy theory of reality plus voluntarism produced the Great Divide in the Movement that has yet to run its course.⁸

Continued next month

- This is my own translation which was published as an Appendix to my *Marxism and Freedom* (New York: 1958). However I am cross-referencing here the "official" translation which was published out of context, in 1961, as "Conspectus of Hegel's Book *The Science of Logic*" in Lenin's *Collected Works*, Volume 38. See also footnote numbered 221 on page 317 of my *Philosophy and Revolution* for evidence of the interest Lenin displayed in the study of Hegel by Professor Ilyin who was then sitting in jail for opposing the Bolshevik revolution, and whom Lenin freed. The reference to this in the Archives of the Lenin Institute for the year 1921, was included in Russian, only in the first publication of Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks*, specifically in the Introduction by Deborin.
- Lenin, *Philosophic Notebooks*, page 180.
- Philosophic Notebooks*, page 213.
- Elsewhere I have developed more fully the ramifications and break in Lenin's philosophic development. See Chapter Three, "The Shock of Recognition and the Philosophic Ambivalence of Lenin" in my *Philosophy and Revolution*, pages 95-120.

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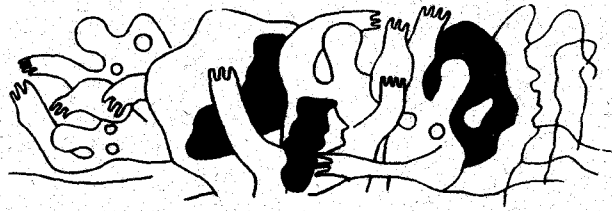
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Bosnia arms embargo 'deadline' is put off

Chicago—As we go to press, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic seems to have agreed, under great pressure from the United States, France, Britain and Russia, to postpone the Oct. 15 date for the lifting of the arms embargo on his besieged nation. This provides yet one more way for Clinton to avoid serious conflict with his allies over Bosnia policy. So as the military band plays at the White House, an unctuous Clinton embraces a sneering Yeltsin, and Sarajevo continues to suffer a tightening stranglehold as one more winter of war approaches.

While all eyes have been focused on Haiti, "ethnic



Vaclav Havel and the crisis in post-modernism

We are going through a transitional period, when it seems that something is on the way out and something else is painfully being born. It is as if something were crumbling, decaying and exhausting itself, while something else, still indistinct, were arising from the rubble.

—Vaclav Havel, Philadelphia, July 4, 1994

Vaclav Havel's American Independence Day speech echoes Hegel's famous depiction of our epoch as a "birth-time and period of transition."* The speech describes a new sense of foreboding and disarray felt in today's post-modernist intellectual milieu. Havel, the former revolutionary dissident who is now President of the Czech Republic, challenges humanity to create "a new model of co-existence among the various cultures, peoples, races and religious spheres within a single interconnected civilization." Havel recognizes that post-modernism's obsessive opposition to universals doesn't help face the real world's pervasive crises.

The present day horror of "cultural conflicts" which "are more dangerous today than at any other time in history" impels Havel's search for new universals to help "new meaning be born" in an age that is "crumbling, decaying, and exhausting itself." Havel sees the "multicultural era" as identical with its opposite, "a signal that an amalgamation of cultures is taking place." This causes humans to "cling to the ancient certainties of their tribe."

Never has each one of us and each culture been so thoroughly integrated in a global division of labor, in a unitary commodity culture. At the same time the sentiment has never been stronger for viewing the world as made up of isolated individuals and many separate, purely distinct cultures. Even radicalism is often equated with a turn inward to one's identity while the goals of mass movement are being limited to democracy within the framework of capitalist commodity culture.

Havel isn't "shedding an intellectual tear over the commercial expansion of the West that destroys alien cultures." He is crying over alienation that has come from within this new unitary world. For him this alienation is not that of the laborer who faces the constant introduction of science and technology as a weapon to more completely dominate or eliminate the live human being. His concern is not with the worker being restructured out of a job or the peasant in Chiapas or China being "freed" from any way to make a living in this new globally integrated capitalism. Alienation for Havel is "science as the basis of the modern conception of the world" wherein "man as observer is becoming completely alienated from himself as being."

Havel sees hope in science revealing its limits at "the moment it begins to appear we are deeply connected to the entire universe" and "science...returned in a round-

* See "The New Measure of Man," *New York Times*, 7/8/94.

Quebec elections

(Continued from page 1)

peoples' prior land claim to large areas of the province is dealt with. Canadian federalists are more than happy to "play the indigenous card," i.e., to rush (cynically) to the defense of Quebec's native peoples and thereby frustrate Quebec nationalism and take the moral high ground on native issues at the same time.

In all of this no one has yet come forward with real answers to the problems of unemployment, under employment, the rollback of wages, employee benefits and once sacrosanct social programs, and the growing impoverishment of large sectors of the population in both Quebec and the rest of Canada. Certainly not Canada's so-called socialist New Democratic Party (NDP), whose regressive rule in three Canadian provinces has mirrored that of the Liberals and Tories (in Ontario the "labour-friendly" NDP has attacked public sector workers in a way that no mainstream party would have dared).

The retrogression of the times is deep, and the struggle to recognize and transform the decaying structure of capitalism continues at the street level and awaits the smallest sign of enlightened political leadership.

—Canadian activist

cleansing" has reached its most intense level in at least a year with thousands of Muslims driven from their homes in the northern areas of Bosnia. Anyone who is under the illusion that Clinton is about helping the Haitians need only look at how he has helped the Bosnians.

Under these circumstances, it was a very moving experience to hear a voice from Sarajevo like that of Nada Selimovic of the Center for Anti-War Activities there. She told how her group was trying to collect data on the many war crimes committed in the genocidal march toward Greater Serbia by Milosevic and Karadzic, and of how the Center's offices have twice been destroyed by shelling. Because they stand for a multi-ethnic society they are also a prime target.

Most important, Nada called for the lifting of the arms embargo, as well as prosecution of war criminals. But rather than heeding a voice like that of Nada Selimovic, citizen of Sarajevo and the world, Clinton now prefers to bargain away lives while he lifts the sanctions on—Serbia.

—Gerard Emmett

about way, to man...offers him his lost integrity." For Havel that means a new form of worship of nature in the "Gaia hypothesis" where the earth is viewed as a single living "mega-organism."

Doesn't today's reality demand a new look at Marx's re-creation of Hegel's dialectic of spirit for the capitalist epoch? Marx posed, not a "roundabout," but a direct return of humanity to itself out of the commodity fetish and its false concept of objectivity, which includes that of the "observer" of science. Because past forms were themselves dissolved by capitalist alienation, a return to self can't be merely to a new version of the tribal world's "ancient worship of nature" or "the immaturity of man as an individual."

However, what Marx singled out in the struggle of so-called "alien cultures" against their dissolution, was not the opposition of a static entity, but an encouragement for all humanity to gain a higher form of conscious life. Marx saw all movement through a view of objectivity based not on relations between things but on humanity freely taking responsibility for the objective spiritual existence that shapes material life and impacts nature. There is no shortcut to such responsibility. It can only come through a free association of laborers and the development of the total individual.

—Ron Brokmeyer

Urban revolt in Iran

Another urban rebellion broke out in Iran in the city of Qazvin in August. A protest rally in front of the home of Qazvin's religious leader became a demonstration by 30,000 people. When police fired on the crowds they responded by surrounding the police station and burning it down. Then they broke into stores and banks, burning down government buildings. According to Mojahedeen, 750 buildings were burned down or attacked.

What triggered the demonstrations was the rejection by the Majlis (national assembly) of a bill to secede Qazvin from the Zanjan province and attach it to Teheran province. Throughout Iran, geographic divisions reflect attempts by the government, pre- and post-revolution, to take away local political power. Qazvin is a city of nearly 3/4 million people, located about 100 miles from Teheran. It is an important commercial and agricultural center. The minister of internal affairs was booted out of town. Next he announced on the radio that Qazvin is part of Teheran. But the demonstrators continued, chanting "neither Zanjan, nor Teheran— independence, independence."

The city was surrounded by armed forces. The newly formed Baseej forces were sent in. Tens of thousands of Baseejis occupied the city, standing in groups, 50 feet apart. The next day they began their own street march in support of the regime. Several papers attacked the fact that the regime surrendered to the demands for a change of status of Qazvin warning that "today's protest might become tomorrow's norm" and lead to many more clashes in the future all over the country.

—Cyrus Noveen

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THE REVOLUTIONARY MIND OF THE HAITIAN MASSES

Aristide's character assassination and the Right's opposition to intervention reveals that xenophobia is inner xenophobia, America's deep-rooted racism. This contradictory content is elided in Clinton's intervention, democracy being "ordinary" in spite of its contradictions, democracy as the only alternative. The unrecognized contradiction is the self-determination of the Black masses, American and Haitian, against the abstraction of democracy. Aristide, despite his own ambivalence, is the symbol of the Haitian masses, thus the ruler's ambivalence toward him. However, what distinguishes abstract (Left) from concrete, revolutionary opposition to the rulers is no mere recognition of the basic fact of Blackness, but to begin to draw the Idea of freedom that rises ever upward from the Haitian masses.

Steven
California

* * *

It looks to me as though the U.S. only invades Black countries. Look at Panama, Somalia and Grenada—but nobody invaded Bosnia. There they just prevented the Muslims from defending themselves.

Reader
Los Angeles

* * *

Why couldn't they let the Haitians voice their opinion? What are they scared of? Here, in the U.S., you have freedom of speech sometimes, but sometimes not. When you tell them what they want to hear it's all right, but when you tell them something they don't want to hear you don't have that right.

Latino youth
Chicago

* * *

As should be evident from the way it has given vent to some of the most open expressions of racism this country has seen in years, the right-wing attack on Clinton's Haiti policy has nothing whatsoever to do with the caution many Aristide supporters have expressed in recent weeks. Gingrich's open racism and classism doesn't have to do with Haiti but with this country and the L.A. rebellion two years ago. It can have far-reaching conclusions.

Philosophy professor
Illinois

* * *

I read that some of the soldiers who witnessed the beating of the coconut peddler in Haiti the day after the U.S. had arrived said "it was like watching the beating of Rodney King." It's exactly the way I had felt seeing it on TV. I'm sure that angry reaction of the GIs—a lot of whom come from impoverished U.S. backgrounds and are in the Army because it's the only job they could find—worried the U.S. military as much as the "riot" (read: rebellion).

Waiting here too
Chicago

* * *

Jesse Helms praised the Mexican election results but says Aristide, who won

70% of the vote in Haiti, doesn't deserve to be in power. They want to undermine Aristide because of his ideas. They'll let him return only with his ideas diminished. That's what the invasion is for, but it may turn out to give breathing room for people to do the type of work that will let ideas flourish.

Latino worker
Los Angeles

* * *

The Haitian youth rap group that said they didn't want "an embargo on our minds" put it eloquently for the Haitian masses.

Black revolutionary
California

RELIGION AND THE RIGHT

There is a very large bloc in the ruling class of this country that sees American racism as a way to win the next election. Every time I see the "Christian coalition" in action and the organized way they are working for conservative candidates like Quayle, I think of the Goldwater election back in 1964, when that open-shop segregationist won the Republican primary in California after the Republican Party was captured by the 1960s fanatics, the Birchites. The November elections bear studied watching.

Worried
Illinois

* * *

The Republican right-wing Congressman, Henry Hyde, has built a career on denying poor women their Constitutional right to abortions by banning Medicaid funding through the infamous Hyde Amendment. And last year he enraged Black women lawmakers in the House with his racist attack on pro-choice supporters, saying "We'll give you a free abortion because there are too many of you people and we want to refine the breed." Does anyone still have illusions about the Catholic Church's attitude toward women when he was the one named "Catholic American of the Year" this year?

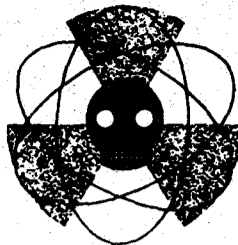
M.J.G.
Chicago

* * *

I was incensed when I read about the 19-year-old woman in Florida who, not having enough money to pay for an abortion—between \$1,300 and \$1,800 for a 20-week pregnancy—was charged with murder for shooting herself in the stomach in a desperate attempt to abort the fetus. This young woman has a three-year-old son, was unable to find work and was living with her grandmother who she feared would not accept another child. The third-degree murder charge comes from the death of the fetus. This legal torture of women desperate to control their own bodies has got to stop. If we had a human response to unwanted pregnancies instead of the degenerate Hyde Amendment cutting off Federal funds for abortions for poor women, this tragedy wouldn't have happened. This is a case we need to follow and protest to make sure nothing like it ever happens again.

Women's Liberationist
Chicago

Readers' Views



ENVIRONMENT AND GLOBAL CATASTROPHE

We are poisoning our whole environment and ourselves at an alarming rate. Agriculture has been turned into "Agrobusiness." To speed up the weight gain of various animals and their "productivity," animals are fed and injected with all kind of hormones and growth-enhancing products. Because of the totally unhealthy and crowded conditions in which domestic animals are kept, they are prone to mass infections. To counteract it heavy doses of antibiotics are fed to them which also end up in our daily food. As if all that is not enough, the tobacco industry provides nicotine addiction and lung cancer. If we add to this the doubling the world's population in the next 15-20 years parallel with the destruction of ecological systems and pollution of the whole environment, we have the scenario for a global catastrophe. All of it contributes to the feeling of hopelessness and impotence permeating our society.

L. Gati
British Columbia

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In northern California, 97% of the original two million acres of old growth ancient redwoods have been successfully destroyed by Pacific Lumber Company and more recently, with more rapidity, Maxxam Corp. The remaining 5,000 acres of forest, being "unprotected," are in danger of being completely clear cut, notably as a means to pay back Maxxam Corp.'s \$864 million of junk bond debts!

In Congress, the "Headwaters Forest Act" has been introduced with lobbying by environmental groups against the total destruction of the forest. With the law (Maxxam Corp. supports the bill), the "protected" forest will be a means to remind humanity of its certain perverse but inexorable "nature."

Environmentalist youth
Los Angeles

MARX AND MARIATEGUI



It's a very hard thing to pose a close relationship between Marx and Mariategui as Eugene Walker did in his essay in the August-September issue. He said that it's not that the two said the same things but that it's the "spirit" of their efforts that brings them together for us today, when we have such weighted questions facing us. But what does that mean?

Can we really say that this great Peruvian "re-created" Marxism on native soil? That word "re-creation" is a very big question. Didn't Raya Dunayevskaya discuss a lot of great thinkers who nevertheless failed to re-create the dialectic? What I liked about the essay was that it suggests we can discuss the nature of Marx's relationship to subjects of revolt by looking at what Mariategui did. But can "discovering a new Subject of revolution" be as different an experience as Marx, 1844, and Mariategui in the 1920s? The author brought the two together, but did Mariategui? Did he bring 1844 up to the 1920s?

Mitch Weerth
Bay Area

PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE

The Left is just as confused here in Puerto Rico as in the U.S. The various "Marxisms" that try to dominate discussion of social change here see Cuba as their model, all the more since the fall of the Soviet bloc. They are still obsessed with state power and usually fall into a narrow nationalism which views "inde-

pendence" from the U.S. as an end in itself. I support independence as a means to a revolutionary end. I view the Caribbean as potentially one country, one archipelago with a multi-ethnic and multi-language population.

As against Castro and the deformation of the revolution, I support the revolutionary process in Cuba, the people's movement, and think the embargo should cease. It's a stupid policy and hypocritical especially in light of Haiti. The Chiapas insurrection proves the revolutionary capacity of the peasantry and indigenous peoples, which Marx pointed out in his last decade, as underlined by his *Ethnological Notebooks*.

Caribbean correspondent
Puerto Rico



THE CRIME OF PRISON

Because of the crime bill and "three strikes you're out," they'll have to build a lot of prisons and waste a lot of money. It's all going to come from the taxpayers, so the people will end up losing, especially with cops like a couple in my neighborhood who pin people for no reason. They grab you out of the street, show you drugs and say, "These are yours, and you're going to jail." All the real criminals are downtown working in suits. Instead of going after the big guy, they're going after the guy on the street trying to make a buck to stay alive. Putting more people in jail will make things worse. When they take me to jail, I don't think about what I did wrong because I didn't do anything wrong. I just think about getting out.

Latino youth
Chicago

* * *

I want you to know how much I enjoyed the issues of N&L I've seen, and so did the other prisoners I've shared them with. If you are interested I can send you information to publish on HIV and AIDS. Are you aware that prisoners with AIDS have a life expectancy half that of people in the free world, and the transmission rate is a lot higher? In New York prisons at least one in six are infected. In Texas it's about one in 15. I'd like to change this sad statistic by any means necessary.

Prisoner
Texas

* * *

Today there is a lot of crime and it is combined with a lack of work. If people had the opportunity to do something with their lives, there wouldn't be all the crime we see. What do they expect people to do without a future? Roll over? People keep trying to get something out of life. They don't really give up.

Black worker
Decatur, Ill.

WORKING TOWARD WELFARE?

The corporations in the U.S. want all of us to be immigrants, to work for \$4 an hour, 50 hours a week. They reap the harvest and we get the crumbs. And unless the unions stand up, benefits will be a thing of the past.

Staley worker
Decatur, Ill.

* * *

I know what you mean about working people needing welfare in Mississippi. We had a couple of workers at the Caterpillar Decatur plant who were eligible for a certain amount of assistance. They were working for \$7.50 an hour on Caterpillar's two-tier wage system.

Production worker
Morton, Ill.

* * *

The capitalist class glorifies suffering. They don't care how much they punish you. No matter how much work you do, you'll never satisfy them. If the capitalists take over heaven, I won't go there—I don't want to be anywhere near them.

Retired auto worker
Detroit

WHY READ NEWS & LETTERS ?

News & Letters is a sight for sore eyes. I'm enclosing postage for sample copies for four friends along with my own subscription. I'm a non-denominational Marxist in central Indiana. The Committees of Correspondence is the only leftist group here. We wish you wouldn't criticize it so bitterly. We're fighting behind enemy lines here. If you unleash your aggression against the racist Right, more progress will be made.

Non-Stalinist grad student
Indiana

* * *

I just drove across the country, and my impression is that, more than ever, we need the strong, independent, revolutionary voice of N&L. Cynicism, the limits of the possible and anti-intellectualism are running rampant. They are being reinforced by a lowest-common-denominator media circus. We must all try, from whatever liberatory perspectives

possible, to project an exhilaratingly human future.

Women's liberationist professor
Irvine, Cal.

* * *

Marx said something to the effect that philosophy has its place but the need is to change society. I agree with Lenin and Trotsky, a Democratic-Centralist Party is needed. But here's my renewal and a name to send a sample copy.

Long-time radical
Philadelphia

* * *

Most left groups that I have come in contact with don't say what they stand for. They only ask you to participate in activities with them. What I like about the Marxist-Humanists is that you say what your philosophy is, and you are constantly rethinking questions.

Chicana youth
Chicago

1844: NEW CONTINENT OF THOUGHT AND REVOLUTION

Perhaps, like Axel Honneth's recently published *Critique of Power*, it will become a new fashion among some circles concerned with "critical theory" to do a book of several hundred pages with either only passing reference to Marx, or none at all. Hence, we certainly need a celebration of the 150th anniversary of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Essays of 1844*, such as appeared in N&L last month. It has me reflecting on the fact that, though I have studied Dunayevskaya's work for a while, I had assumed, up to reading her essay in celebration of 1844, that Marx's "transcendence of and return to Hegel's dialectic" referred only to Marx's later writings in relationship to his earlier. Seeing that the transcendence of, and return to, the Hegelian dialectic occurred first within the 1844 "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic" renewed for me the power of the "actual birth of a new world concept."

Victor Hart
New York

A number of scholars—Cornel West, for example, and others with a bent to a so-called "new pragmatism"—have singled out Marx's 1844 Essays to show what they consider to be Marx's turn away from philosophy. Dunayevskaya argues from the opposite point of view, saying they represent a new concept of philosophy. The question is whether there was something in the nature of Marx's critique that would allow him to remain Hegelian or whether the critique of Hegelian philosophy represents "the end of philosophy" that today's epigones talk so much about. Central to this question is the very notion of Humanism: what categories central to Hegel's dialectic led to Marx arriving at a "thoroughgoing naturalism" or "new Humanism."

Black intellectual
Chicago

It may seem like a small point, but I do not believe the title, "Karl Marx's Economic and Philosophic Essays of 1844," to announce Raya Dunayevskaya's writing published in the August-

September issue, was true to what Dunayevskaya always tried to convey about these writings. Marx never gave a title to them, but Dunayevskaya referred to them as "Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts." I don't believe the use of a hyphen rather than an "and" was accidental. Dunayevskaya was arguing that Marx's new world view would brook no separation between philosophy and economics. A number of Dunayevskaya's original categories in her philosophic work were such a jamming together of words to help bring forth new ways of thinking about concepts. Two that come to mind are "state-capitalism" and "Marxist-Humanism."

Eugene Walker
Oregon

There are two important things this Archives writing helps us do. One is to grasp the process of creation of Marx's philosophic moment that he continued to develop for the rest of his life. The other is to show us the process of development of Dunayevskaya's thought. I am not familiar with anyone else who dealt with the Essays in a way that lets us "hear Marx think." It is what Dunayevskaya also did in her study of his *Ethnological Notebooks* at the end of his life.

Revolutionary environmentalist
Illinois

There are a number of new discussions underway concerning the relevance of the Marxian concept of socialism for today's world arguing that Marx's concept of socialism is no longer fully relevant. What seems to be missing in these discussions is what you have been focusing on—the cogency of the dialectic of second negativity, as found in Marx's *Humanist Essays of 1844*. It's unfortunate that the 150th anniversary of these Essays has not elicited broader rethinking in the Left. It makes it all the more important for *News & Letters* to have something to say about these ongoing debates.

F.L.
Illinois

THE
AFRICAN
LEFT



The situation in Africa is challenging for the Left. The marginalization of the African masses is creating a new political arena. It seems very dark now when the African Left seems to be drowning, as the recent Pan-Africanist Congress, its declarations and resolutions give clear evidence. But a mature Left has a chance to emerge from this crisis.

In the Gambia the military has taken over state power and the Left has rejected all offers from the military dictators, who are now on the offensive against the Left with a decree which reads: "All political parties shall cease to exist and no person shall assemble or associate for the purpose of forming a political party or engaging in any political activities." Activists from a left organization called PDOTS are now awaiting trial under this decree. The hope is that this new situation will bring the Left together for a more mature and militant struggle.

Ba Karang
West Africa

CHINA, NIGERIA AND
MARX'S MARXISM

There is nothing wrong with the communism of Marx. What is wrong is the generation of leaders who made of communism a way to get privileges for themselves and their families and have no concern for the average people, and you will find there a tremendous anger against these leaders. The worst is Li Peng. He is one who came up in the center of power and has no relation to average people. When we, the students, confronted him in Tiananmen Square in 1989, he did not even know how to answer us, he is stupid. If you go to China, Russia, Cuba, you will find many people with this idea, that there is nothing

wrong with the original idea of communism, the problem is what these leaders made of it.

Chinese exile
New York

N&L has been of tremendous assistance to our political groups for gaining a new perspective on Marxism and on the resurgence of socialist politics in this part of the world. Humanism is an entirely new school/tendency in the Marxist movement which answers some of the questions we have been asking. The movement we inherited here was too structural/structuralist, almost lifeless. We asked why democracy and humanism were missing and were told these were petit-bourgeois ideas. Now we see that historically and theoretically we are not alone.

Marxist
Nigeria

INDEPENDENCE UNDER PQ

The Parti Quebecois (PQ) victory in the Sept. 12 election is probably more of a "throw the bums out" vote than one for independence from Canada. Independence under the PQ would be living hell. It is no longer the populist party it once was. It has become increasingly xenophobic, anti-labor, authoritarian and yuppified. Conditions for the Amerindians of Quebec, already deteriorating with the 22-year-long James Bay hydroelectric project and the incredible violence against the Mohawks in the summer of 1990, are sure to worsen in an independent Quebec. The PQ is openly racist against the Amerindians, especially since the very presence of the Amerindians challenges the mystical narrow nationalist concept of "rights to the land." I also fear for the well-being of recent immigrants and of long-established English-speaking Quebecois. On the other hand, to be French Canadian still means second-class citizenship in Canada, and some of the pro-PQ vote reflects genuine outrage at this condition.

Former Montrealer
Oakland, Cal.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalogue
A full list of publications (many publications are not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees
..... 50¢ postage

BOOKS

BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today**
1988 edition. New author's introduction. \$17.50
- Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao**
1989 edition. New author's introduction. \$14.95
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution**
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- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Liberation: Reaching for the Future**..... \$15.95
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** \$8.50
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**
Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes."
..... \$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

BY CHARLES DENBY

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

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Editorial

Unholy war at UN Conference

Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, under threat of death from Islamic fundamentalist fanatics, the 20,000 attendees from 150 nations at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) ended up battling the unholy alliance of the Pope and Islamic fundamentalists over the very ground of the conference. From Sept. 5-13 and even before, the Vatican led in spouting the big lie: that the ICPD was supposedly a forum for "cultural imperialism" run by the U.S. and "Western feminists" who were pushing a pro-abortion agenda, while the Pope, et al., were for development.

The opposite was the truth. The ICPD revealed to the world the daily struggles and determination of poverty-stricken women from hundreds of countries and every continent to take control of their lives—from deciding when and how to have children, to the struggle to end poverty and get an education. In fact, it was women activists—particularly those in the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)—who had demanded that the word "development" be in the Conference title. That was why the Pope tried to divert the attention of the entire Conference to the Church's twisted concept of morality and anti-abortion, anti-abortion, anti-abortion.

The question of abortion is, indeed, central as Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway made clear, declaring to thunderous applause: "Morality becomes hypocrisy if it means accepting mothers...dying in connection with unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortions, and unwanted children living in misery.... Decriminalizing abortion should therefore be a minimal response to this reality."

What was gnawing at Brundtland and the 1,000 NGOs that had so much to do with making women's freedom central to the Conference was the horrible reality of 200,000 women dying in agony every year from illegal botched back-alley abortions—two million women dead since the last population conference, whose guiding document the Vatican refused to sign.

CAPITALISM STULTIFIES DEVELOPMENT

The super-conciliatory Vice President Al Gore and the self-congratulatory U.S. Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs, Timothy Wirth, were only too happy to fall into the Vatican's trap. While Gore sold women's right to abortion down the river even before the ICPD began, Wirth tried to make the U.S. government look like the great champion of women's rights.

How far that is from the truth is seen even in the U.S. government's refusal to allow a sentence recognizing "the right to family reunification," insisting it be replaced by the pusillanimous phrase that governments make efforts to "enhance the integration of the children of long-term migrants." This argument over a half sentence shows that beneath the self-serving rhetoric about development lies the fact that the U.S. economy is in such shambles that it can't even meet the needs of its own population.

That, in fact, is an essential part of capitalism's law of motion: the creation of a "surplus" population that capital is incapable of employing. This inability to create real development elicits new demands from those capitalism has marked for poverty.

WOMEN PURSUE THEIR OWN GROUND

What the delegates came to discuss is seen in the "Statement on Poverty, Development and Population Activities" prepared by the U.S. Women of Color Delegation to the ICPD. They rejected the notion "that women's reproductive capacity is to blame for poverty," and looked at "rural America" to point to "the root causes of poverty...[as] lack of access to land, credit, markets, education, and training." They saw their participation as "a chance to...rectify the inconsistencies and inequities which have arrested development and entrenched poverty for marginalized groups in the U.S. and abroad."

That the ICPD fell far short of what women were demanding is clear from the fact that the final document is non-binding, and almost 65% of the funding is ear-

marked for contraception while only 28% will go for reproductive health. And all the other questions of real development—ending poverty, land redistribution, education, new relations between men and women—got only lip service.

It is the determination for self-development, to become whole human beings, that marks our age. Women have been fighting for that concept of development from Latin



Egyptian Muslim women protest inclusion of anti-abortion slogans at prayer meeting at conference.

America to Africa and from Asia to the USA and nowhere more profoundly this year than in Chiapas. There, even before the revolt, Zapatista women declared the "Women's Revolutionary Law" in March 1993 that not only stated women's right to decide when and how many children to have, but proclaimed: "Women, regardless of their race, creed, color or political affiliation, have the right to participate in the revolutionary struggle in a way determined by their desire and capacity." It was the fight for full human development, and therefore implicitly for revolution, that was the fuel smoldering beneath the ICPD.

Fighting the Right in Oregon

Portland, Or.—This November Oregonians will again have the "opportunity" to vote on whether to deny legal protections to gays and lesbians. This year's Ballot Measure Thirteen and the infamous Ballot Measure Nine in 1992 have been sponsored by a fundamentalist Christian right-wing group misleadingly called the Oregon Citizens Alliance (OCA). The OCA is attempting to make unconstitutional in Oregon any legal protections against discrimination for gays and lesbians. The OCA also wants to prohibit using taxpayer funds for anything it deems "promotion" of homosexuality.

As someone who has been an Oregon resident for over 20 years now, who is also a lesbian, who is also a teacher at a community college, I don't find this an abstract, academic issue. A literature class, for example, read *The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker. Since the book contains a lesbian relationship, I told the students that if Measure Nine had passed, *The Color Purple* would have been illegal in a school setting. Or conceivably, I could have taught it if I condemned the relationship between two women characters which is central to the novel.

As an employee of the college, my union contract contains sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination clause. The college includes sexual orientation in its nonharassment policy. Both these types of protection would have been wiped out if Measure Nine had passed, and Measure Thirteen would likely have the same effect.

The sophisticated and tricky language of OCA ballot measures suggests the influence of right-wing think tanks. Measure Thirteen, for example, is titled the "Minority Status and Child Protection Act." With "minority status" the OCA plays on people's fears of affirmative action and "special rights." With "child protection" the OCA seeks to exploit the stereotype of gays as child molesters from whom children need to be protected.

My partner and I were foot soldiers in the fight against Measure Nine. We polled voters, went door to door with information to counteract the lies the OCA was putting out. Huge numbers of citizens from all backgrounds were involved in the fight against Measure Nine. I remember one rally in downtown Portland. Ten thousand people absolutely jammed the square.

Many people, myself included, feel tired of fighting what seems like an endless battle just for the right to potentially have what should be protections against discrimination. I hear some saying: Even if Measure Thirteen passes, the courts would wipe it out, as they did with Measure Eight, which attempted to strike down civil rights protection based on sexual orientation for employees in the executive branch of Oregon government.

I am convinced that it's essential to keep fighting the right. In Oregon the OCA has gotten members elected to school boards and has taken control of the state Republican party. To say something is just a "gay issue" seems, on one level, to trivialize it. It seems to me that the OCA and similar groups represent a kind of fascism, the attempt to institutionalize one political view as the only correct one. The OCA and some other right-wing groups are rising to power by appealing to hate, just as Hitler did.

The OCA and similar groups must be fought and fought hard. Ballot Measure Thirteen in Oregon is one example of a fascist-type political maneuver which must be defeated.

—Sara Edelstein

Profits from poisoned meat

Recent deaths from a deadly strain of E. coli bacteria carried by beef are the latest pretext the nuclear industry and its allies have seized upon in their campaign for food irradiation. This industry, reeling from the cancellation of every U.S. reactor ordered since 1974 plus the early deterioration of older reactors, seeks to find a new life for itself on the domestic scene under the guise of food safety. Allied with it is the meat industry, looking for a high-tech, low-labor solution to its image problem.

Far from being a quick fix, technology relates to food safety in a contradictory way. Where and how it is developed and applied tells a great deal about a society. In agriculture as in all businesses, production technology has been transformed rapidly and frequently, while safety technology lags far behind.

The modern factory farm is as mechanized as possible. Livestock are raised in cramped, crowded, unsanitary—and quite inhumane—conditions that promote the spread of bacteria and viruses. Diseases are controlled through the least labor-intensive medical technology: drugs, which tend to breed drug-resistant pathogens. Often, chicken feed is highly contaminated with salmonella and rodent control is neglected.

These conditions are the result of capitalism's drive to get the maximum production out of the minimum number of workers. For the same reason, kill lines at slaughterhouses are run so fast that workers report it is impossible to keep cattle guts from splattering on the meat—and on the workers themselves.

At the same time, the concentration of capital is manifested not only in greater numbers of animals being raised together and slaughtered together, but greater amounts of meat being stored together and transported together—the dirty contaminating the clean.

Compared to the investments in mechanizing husbandry and meatpacking, and in drugging and genetically engineering livestock, almost nothing has been invested in ensuring the safety of workers and consumers. The Government Accounting Office reports that federal meat inspectors are overworked and equipped with antiquated technology.

The simple expedient of slowing the production line would allow cleaner conditions and reduce the strain on workers at risk of injuries like carpal tunnel syndrome. That is one thing meatpacking workers have been fighting for. (See "Poisonous Profits," March 1993 N&L.)

But to the capitalist such a solution is unthinkable. A high-tech solution is preferred, even if it means more radioactive waste, more chance of nuclear accidents, more unknown chemicals in our food.

In short, the proposed solution is dangerous because it is another manifestation of the way technology is shaped by the drive to exploit labor. To point out the folly of food irradiation is good, but not good enough. It is essential for environmental struggles against the inhuman use of technology to align with labor struggles for the human control of technology and of the production process in which it is used.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Legacy of Stonewall

New York City—"Becoming Visible: The Legacy of Stonewall," the exhibition on New York gay and lesbian history at the Public Library, broke the library's attendance records, attracting 17,258 the week of the 25th anniversary of Stonewall and 1,000 a day all summer.

You enter the exhibition and are surrounded by images of the Stonewall Rebellion and its immediate aftermath, and you can pick up the receiver of one of several pay telephones to listen to taped oral histories of participants in the 1969 rebellion. Then you swing backwards in time to decades before 1969 and encounter evidence of rich gay, lesbian and bisexual culture before Stonewall.

What got to me most was the blue—or dishonorable—discharge from a gay serviceman in World War II. At least 5,000 gay men received these blue papers by 1946, making them ineligible for any G.I. Bill benefits. The Brooklyn man whose discharge is displayed is still a messenger, as he was before the war, because of his blue discharge.

I found especially interesting the section on political groups in the 1950s and '60s. The exhibit included photographs of a tiny demonstration at the army induction center in New York in 1964 by the Homosexual League of New York and the League for Sexual Freedom, and picketing at the White House in 1965 by the Mattachine Society. It also showed the "Annual Reminder Marches" initiated on July 4, 1965, which took place each year until 1970, when it became the Stonewall commemoration.

You could see the Civil Rights Movement's influence. A song by a Mattachine Society member began: "Mine eyes have seen the struggling of the Negroes and the Jews / I have seen the countries trampled where the laws of men abuse / But you crush the homosexual with anything you choose / Now we are marching on."

A 1970 "Gay Manifesto" by Carl Wittman of Red Butterfly says, "Our first job is to free ourselves; that means clearing our heads of the garbage that's been poured into them....But not every straight is our enemy. Many of us have mixed identities, and have ties with other liberation movements....And face it; we can't change Amerika alone."

A wonderful, colorful array of posters, buttons, photos, and writings filled the following section on the post-Stonewall movement. A beautiful 1981 poster for a meeting that featured a "dialogue between two poets," from which Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde's faces looked out, reminded me of the continuing discussions in the movement, such as on the relation between white lesbians and lesbians of color.

—Laurie Cashdar

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'A battle of ideas on every street corner'

by Gene Ford

With the upcoming November elections we can see the beginnings of a democratically elected police state. Two reactionary bills have hit California. One is the crime bill—three strikes you're out; and two is Proposition 187 on the November ballot. Many immigrants classified as illegal, who will lose all public assistance except emergency care if it passes, will see this bill for what it is: another form of ethnic cleansing. It is the "democratic" form of extinguishing undesirables from the "richest soil" within the Americas.

Proposition 187 would make it illegal for an undocumented immigrant to attend any public school from elementary to college level. It would refuse health care, including prenatal and postnatal care. It would create new felony laws and stiffen penalties for those who violate the proposed immigration policy, making doctors and teachers agents of the state.

To the capitalist drive toward the absolute law of capitalist accumulation, subjects become objects to be exploited and controlled mentally and chained physically to the production process. Where that production process becomes bankrupt, then the revolutionary subject becomes an object of despair to be despised and hated for all the system's problems. Mainly these problems are economic shortcomings. So the weak links in the capitalist chain are used by the state as a pressure relief valve for a frustrated majority population of white society. The bourgeoisie needs a scapegoat.

Proposition 187 lays the ground for a full-fledged attack upon welfare benefits for all, even citizens. Welfare has already been cut to the bone; what is to stop the state from cutting deeper once it has set the mood? Cuts in benefits for minorities seem to be a capitalist wave of the present to protect its future profit. California is laying the groundwork.

DEFYING THE SYSTEM OF POVERTY

The crime bill is another part of that new wave of reaction. In this country when you mention crime, most people see Black. While the bill in a certain sense is massive in scope, billions of dollars will be spent to build more prisons and add 100,000 more police officers on the streets. Some of the finer points of the bill cut into basic constitutional rights, like the right to assemble. It defines street gangs as five or more youngsters who are seen together for about a month. If one commits two "predicate gang crimes," all are considered gang members, even if some have never committed a crime or have only an informal relationship with the other youth. Participation in a so-called street gang will become a federal offense punishable by up to a 20-year prison sentence.

Society as a whole is beginning to see two or more Black youth on any inner city street corner as a threat or a gang, and they are classified as such and singled out for a systematic attack by the police. But within the inner city of projects and poverty there is a certain amount of comfort in numbers. The mood of the masses is the need for new human relations. A fierce battle of ideas on every street corner is a threat to the poverty existence which can be characterized as "no job, no money, no future." Poverty can afford no hiding place but stands defiant on every street corner of the inner city.

A new movie called "The Fire This Time" recently

Debating multiculturalism

John Alan's "Can multiculturalism transcend alienation?" (N&L, August-September '94) does not mention Hegel's conservative aesthetic or his antipathy toward non-European cultures as well as some troubling male chauvinism in Fanon (notably, the "Conclusion" of *The Wretched of the Earth*). What makes such insights possible? It is the historicity of multiculturalism (as well as postmodernism, postcolonialism, feminism, etc.) that captures the fact of societal precariousness, dissent, though one confined in a grotesque gallery of mirrors.

No, "[c]ulture is not an absolute, i.e., an unmediated phenomenon without change or development" and is totally cheapened in capitalism not to mention the reactionary morality of much culture these days, but culture is also not a promise, is not an abstract "totality," however great its promises. (Also, identity, not to be viewed one-dimensionally as fixed identity, determines totality, not vice versa, that is, unless all is determined in some preternatural "misty realm.")

It is one thing to have an historicist insight on multiculturalism, but it is another to be more multiculturalist than multiculturalism, to transcend its limits, to penetrate its humanist dimension. It is one thing to perceive culture from the "outside," waiting for its next doomed expression, but another to express culture from the "inside," that is, from the standpoint of "positive Humanism." Culture alone is not the pathway to freedom, but freedom is nothing without culture, culture making freedom truly objective.

Also, why has much of the "battle of ideas" been from a predetermined viewpoint, the predetermination of postmodernism, multiculturalism, etc., as base consciousness with little or no internal delving, that is, after the fact? And rap, for instance, is reghettoized into the limbo of Black youth culture, of Black (reflection of) reality, with its truths perhaps, though its only significant contradiction up to now being its contradictory views from Marxist-Humanism—it is arrested only to let go, deserted again. What of the '70s revival in Black as well as popular youth culture nowadays, what it reveals, etc.? Postmodernism, by comparison, is much more concrete in its affirmation of culture. Marxist-Humanism must be much more concrete.

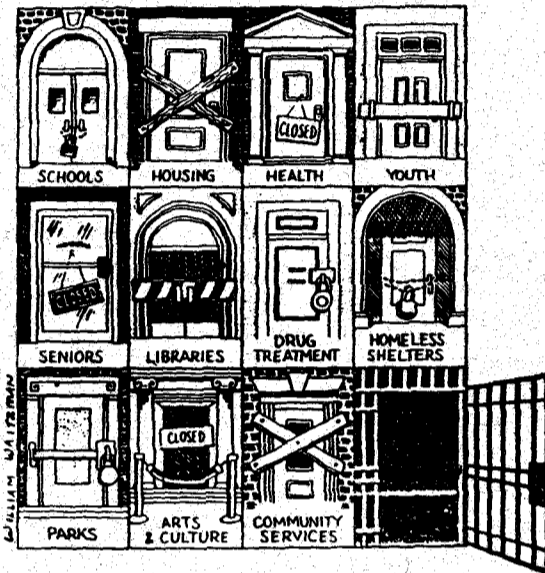
—Steven J.

took up the 1992 L.A. rebellion as rooted in the 1965 historic Watts rebellion. In this film one Black gang youth who was interviewed stated that living in the projects of Watts reminded him of being in prison, because either you went to school in the morning or you stayed in your house: "Around here most people are out of work, but you get up early, 6:00 or something. It's like school. You learn the streets, to live. If you don't get out early, it's like this, you're dead!"

So the dream of freedom to determine our own destiny is very much alive among the most oppressed, those imprisoned in the poverty of life as half dead, but who possess the wealth of thought and demand recognition. We dare to dream the same dream that has filled the ghetto.

VICTIMS OF DEMOCRACY

However, we have come together to do more than just dream. We have come together to make concrete plans for action that will rid this world of the curse (injustice fueled by greed and exploitation) that has plagued humanity for centuries, as stated by Theresa Allison, founder of Mothers Reclaiming Our Children, which publishes the voice of prisoners hungry for freedom as well as the voice of mothers who are living in pain from their children's existence within street gangs and under



police repression and false imprisonment. The curse has laid a mental path of Black self-destruction, a chain of events that must be broken if a freedom living future can be found.

These so-called democratic bills or propositions have been or will be voted into law. The majority will say that Proposition 187 will not affect me because I am Black and a citizen of this country, or I am white and the crime bill will protect me. All of you with limited vision should learn to connect the dots. When you connect the dots to all these new bills, you find an economically depressed capitalist system where no economic boom of recovery can be found anywhere in sight, and the need is for another and another victim. When the dots are finally con-

nected we find a noose around each of our necks because the system of capitalist accumulation always needs another victim to further its deadly existence.

The victims of the accumulation of capital are not just at the point of production: workers as an appendage to the machine or in the unemployment lines where robots have thrown many out of work across the country. It can be seen in the attack upon intellectuals as well, where the robotization of the mind by the capitalist system needs the intellectual to continue to perpetuate their control over the masses' thinking.

We can turn to the most recent exodus from Cuba. It is not just the poorest laborers who are risking their lives crossing the open seas in makeshift rafts to reach U.S. shores, but also the intellectuals, teachers, doctors, etc., professionals rushing out of Castro's Cuba. One teacher stated that he had a large house and a good wage in Cuba but that he will not gain intellectual freedom. "The main repression was here in the mind. When you teach the children in Cuba as I did, you must speak what Castro says. You never speak your own words. That is the biggest jail. The jail of the mind." I would like to re-emphasize that the 1992 L.A. rebellion expressed anew the bankruptcy of capitalist democracy. Under capitalism the idea of democracy is embodied in the accumulation of wealth, it dominates all that exists even down to that individual act of voting.

So the concept of mind, thought itself, is lost. We as a people and as an organization are in the process of redeveloping that thought, Marxist-Humanist revolutionary thought, anew for today. The battle lines have been drawn.

Who killed Simeon Stinson?

Anaheim, Cal.—Simeon Stinson was a rebel with a cause, a fearless 52-year-old union organizer at Weber Aircraft Company whose body was found at an intersection here at 12 a.m. on Jan. 29. Prior to his death, Stinson's mother said some men in a car who may have been skinheads threw cans at him as he walked the three miles from the plant to his home near Disneyland.

His family warned him to stop his normal journey from work to home. But his mother, Mrs. Ruth Stinson, who is the aunt of this reporter, said he continued to walk despite their concerns. He also continued his skillful union organizing at Weber Aircraft, where he was one of the main people pushing plant officials to restore a \$4.00 cut from the \$14.00 hourly wages. Angry Weber officials only wanted to give back \$2.00.

No one really knows who killed Stinson or the real reason for his death. Local police are treating it as a homicide. Mrs. Stinson said authorities told her Simeon's body was taken to the intersection and that he was already dead when run over.

Even in death Simeon Stinson was a passionate, committed union man. His fellow workers stood in line at the plant one day recently to shake the hands of his two brothers who were visiting the plant. "They wanted to shake the hands of the brothers of the man who had done so much for them," declared his mother.

—Joseph Delaney, NMLS Notes

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

sued General Cedras to make the deal. Then he argued to President Clinton that the terms should be accepted, even though they left General Cedras in Haiti, because they would get U.S. troops on the ground without a fight—and once 15,000 Americans were there, they would call the tune." (NYT, 9-23-94)

Expressing a bizarre amalgam of "humanitarianism" and imperialism in the face of the apparent disarray in Clinton's foreign policy, Jesse Jackson, another drum beater for U.S. invasion, took the lead in articulating the Clinton doctrine: "Our humanitarian purpose is tempered with the cold steel of vital interest."

With Black leadership shouldering the "White Man's Burden," New York Times columnist Bob Herbert contorts the "benign imperialism" argument even further: "The long and loathsome role the United States played in the exploitation of the Haitian people is a point that should be considered by those who persist in asking what interest we have in standing up for democracy there." (NYT, 9-18-94) However, it is the "long and loathsome role" that the U.S. plays today that must be exposed and opposed, whether that be the CIA's role in the 1991 coup that ousted President Aristide, or the various political leaders in the U.S., white and Black, who have ties to the ruling class in Haiti, such as Commerce Secretary Ron Brown who was for years on a \$250,000 retainer from the hated Duvalier regime. As Jean-Patrick St. George, the leader of a youth organization in Port-au-Prince, asserted in regard to Clinton's bungling Haiti policy, "The terrifying thing is, this is how the Americans are going to straighten out our affairs."

While the multi-ethnic composition of the occupation forces in Haiti gives African-American leaders the illusion that U.S. imperialism is somehow more "benign" because of the presence of Black troops and officers, it doesn't exhaust their ideological ground. Frantz Fanon had argued that there is a more fundamental, and in this case, self-contradictory dialectic at work: "Racism stares one in the face for it so happens that it belongs in a characteristic whole: that of the shameless exploitation of one group of men by another which has reached a higher

stage of technical development. This is why military and economic oppression generally precedes, makes possible, and legitimizes racism. The habit of considering racism as a mental quirk, as a psychological flaw must be abandoned." (Toward the African Revolution, pp. 37-38)

Today, the high tech stage of economic and military development has rationalized a new form of appearance of racism which allows the state to coopt African-American leadership to its imperialist campaigns against Black people abroad, even as it carries out its authoritarian repression of Black people at home. The color line along which the Black middle class and its leadership had previously sought common cause with the lower classes at home, at the same time as it articulated a Black anti-imperialism in solidarity with the Third World abroad, has become an insurmountable class divide.

This divide marks off those who have achieved a certain technological facility relative to capitalist accumulation versus those who have not, whether they be the "wretched of the earth" in the underdeveloped Third World or the so-called "underclass" here at home. More than at any other time, the technological imperative of capitalist accumulation has become the historical determinant of social assimilation and bourgeois moral right of the Black middle class.

Gone is the Black moral outrage at the military interventionism of a racist country like the U.S. America's Black elite instead find a so-called humanitarian good in the very same interventionism it had formerly castigated as the moral equivalent of evil. "Black" as an historical identification no longer exercises the same socializing force it formerly had among people of African descent, so fragmented is Black identity under the impact of the present high tech imperative and the ideological retrogression of our age.

While Blacks coopted in this way act in ways that are in sharp contradiction with Black social existence, the racist, Fanon reminds us, in a culture which is racist, appears quite "normal," having "achieved a perfect harmony of economic relations and ideology." (p. 40) If so principled a freedom fighter as Douglass could succumb to the order-mongering designs of U.S. imperialism at the end of the last century, how much more fatal will be the outcome of today's alliance of Black politics and U.S. imperialism at the end of a century that opened with W.E.B. DuBois's prescient forecast—"The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line."

Under the whip of occupation—Who will listen to Haitian masses?

(Continued from page 1)

makes it impossible to foretell in advance the ultimate outcome of the present crisis. Despite the U.S.'s intentions, their subjectivity contains the potential for shaping the course of things to come.

THE VOICES FROM BELOW

As a coalition of five Haitian mass organizations opposed to U.S. intervention stated this summer, what distinguishes today's situation from the U.S. military invasion of Haiti in 1915 is "the emergence of the people of Haiti onto the political scene. The process of popular mobilization which precipitated the departure of Jean-Claude Duvalier meant that the popular sectors, historically marginalized, would henceforth understand their power as autonomous political subjects, actors in the life and development of the nation."

The 1986 revolt against the Duvalier dictatorship wrote a new page in the history of world freedom struggles by centering on the call for a "dechoukaj" (uprooting) of the old. Its prime movers were unemployed youth in massive protest marches, market women who refused to open their stalls, and workers and peasants who hunted down the hated tonton macoutes and other officials of the old regime. New forms of grassroots organization emerged, such as the *ti kominite legliz*—"base communities" centered on the teaching of liberation theology. As one participant wrote at the time, "People are stressing the surprising effectiveness of mass organizations without General Secretaries, without Central Committees, without hierarchy or visible structure: the political police finds no one to arrest, because they cannot arrest the whole population."*

That the masses continued to suffer much repression by the military regimes which followed Duvalier did not mean their struggle was crushed. Between 1986 and 1991 the peasant movement mushroomed, as seen in the growth of such organizations as the Peasant Movement of Papay: by 1991 it had 35,000 members organized in 2,500 groups, including 300 women's and 250 youth groups. New labor organizations, such as the *Centrale Generale des Travailleurs*, were formed in 1990. And thousands of liberation theology base communities arose, helping to spur such political movements as *Lavalas* (Flood), which ran Aristide as its presidential candidate in 1990.

Aristide's stunning election victory demonstrated the strength of the popular movement in Haiti. This is precisely what Haiti's ruling elite—which is 1% of the population but controls 50% of the national wealth—sought to crush through Cedras' military coup of 1991.

THE U.S. HOSTILITY TOWARD HAITI

The very depth of this mass movement explains the hostile reception to it on the part of the U.S. policymakers. In 1986 Reagan responded to the unexpected departure of Duvalier by propping up the "interim" military government of Gen. Namphy with tens of millions of U.S. dollars. In 1991 Bush responded to the military coup against Aristide (which some suspect the U.S. of engineering) by paying lip service to "democracy" while doing nothing to impede Cedras' effort to dismember the mass movement.

Things at least appeared to be different at first with Clinton, who attacked Bush's policy during the election campaign and promised to reverse his policy of repatriating Haitian refugees. Yet when the number of Haitians seeking to flee the dictatorship was made known to him, Clinton quickly reversed himself. From the very start of his administration he was faced with a dilemma: how to prevent an exodus of Haitian refugees to the U.S. without appearing to totally side with so anti-democratic and repressive a regime as Cedras'.

The administration's response was to plan for an eventual U.S. invasion to displace the Cedras regime. Yet at no time was the U.S. interested in allowing Aristide to return to power on the basis of the mandate received by him in the 1990 elections. From the summer of 1993 to the last-minute deal arranged last month between Cedras and Carter-Nunn-Powell, the U.S. insisted on a host of restrictions on Aristide's power to eventually govern Haiti.

This explains why so many of the mass organizations inside Haiti have opposed any form of U.S. military intervention. On July 14 a statement signed by leading mass organizations, such as the Program for Alternative Justice and the Help Service for Development and Popular Development, stated "The whole policy of the international community under the leadership of the U.S. consists in breaking the symbolic figure which Aristide represents and pushing to transfer his legitimacy to the key leaders of the enemy camp. It appears as though they are taking into account the claims of the Aristide government, but in practice, they are actually achieving a completely different goal.

"U.S. intervention is a way to definitely block the emergence of the people onto the political scene of their country. The only intervention capable of restoring the democratic process in Haiti is massive and democratic popular intervention. Any solution which does not give first place to that primary truth is doomed to total failure and will only add irreparable disasters to the already intolerable suffering of a martyred population."

And as another statement signed by a group representing over 1,000 priests and nuns linked to the liberation theology movement said, "Don't be fooled. This intervention will be made against the Haitian people, because it follows from the same logic as the coup d'etat [of

Cedras], simply put, to legitimize its principal gain under an international cover: the total erasure of the Haitian people from the political scene of their country."

THE CUBAN CONNECTION

The effort to erase the initiative and creativity of the masses underlines U.S. policy, not alone on Haiti, but in the Caribbean as a whole—as can be seen from the conflict between the U.S. and Cuba over immigration.

This conflict arose last August when Castro suddenly decided to allow Cubans to take to the seas for the U.S. Clinton responded by slapping new sanctions on Castro and reversing the longstanding policy of allowing virtually unlimited Cuban immigration into the U.S. The conflict was later resolved when Castro agreed to halt the refugee exodus in exchange for a U.S. promise to take in 20,000 legal Cuban immigrants a year.

It has virtually already been forgotten, however, that this refugee crisis was a product of a mass revolt. It occurred on Aug. 5, when thousands of protestors marched through Havana chanting "Liberty, Democracy, Enough!" in the largest display of popular discontent in the history of Castro's dictatorship. The marchers looted several well-stocked shops that sell goods only for U.S. dollars, opposing the two-tier dollar-vs.-peso economy which increasingly defines Cuban state-capitalism.

Castro's decision to allow Cubans to take to the seas for the U.S. was part of an effort to deflect attention from this mass revolt. Clinton's bellicose rhetoric against Cuba in the days which followed only played into Castro's hands, insofar as it helped shift attention away from the internal crisis in Cuba to the imperialist ambitions of the U.S.

Whether it concern Haiti or Cuba, the rulers always find common ground when it comes to subsuming the subjectivity of the masses. This must be opposed by rooting ourselves in the desire for freedom being articulated by those opposed to all existing regimes.

THE NADIR OF ANTI-INTERVENTIONISM

Precisely because so many have illusions about the "benign" role of U.S. intervention in Haiti, the present situation calls for a rigorous critique of the very foundations of U.S. policy. Yet nothing would be more illusory than to presume that mere expose of the horrors of U.S. policy will suffice. This should be evident from the right-wing attack on Clinton's invasion of Haiti, which is vent-

ing some of the most open expressions of racism this country has seen in years.

Bob Dole's contention that Haiti "is not worth one American life" is by no means the only or most extreme expression of this reactionary anti-imperialism. Such open expressions of racism reflect the growth in size and power of deeply reactionary forces in the U.S.—as seen in the campaigns being waged by the Christian Right.

The more the nefarious consequences of the U.S. invasion become evident in coming weeks, the more vocal will be those who oppose intervention on the grounds that a small Black island like Haiti "deserves what it gets."

This presents us with a new situation. It signifies that the knee-jerk kind of anti-interventionism which has heretofore predominated in the movement, based on expressing what it is against while leaving mute any expression of what it is for, has become totally nonviable. Put simply, cries of "No U.S. Intervention" based on the standard approach of muting the expression of the kind of new society we are for simply fails to project any principled ground to distinguish ourselves from the anti-interventionist racists on the right.

Throughout the history of Marxist-Humanism opposition to war has always centered on projecting a comprehensive concept and vision of a new society to replace both decadent capitalism and state-capitalism which called itself "Communism." In light of today's situation, there is no room for considering this an "idealist extravagance" or mere "edifying discourse." It is the essential ground needed for the opposition to capitalism-imperialism to even be.

What stands in the way of achieving this is that just when the rulers have adopted the rhetoric of "democratic revolutions" in order to conceal the class nature of their efforts to contain social upheaval, the Left has abandoned the effort to project a truly liberating vision of the future by bowing to the fetish of bourgeois democracy and "civil society"—oblivious of how it is simply taking the rulers' ground.

Such mental straitjackets must be removed if our solidarity with the Haitian masses is to become total—a solidarity that begins right now, by demanding the removal of all obstacles aiming to hem in their self-activity—whether it be the Haitian military or the U.S. troops themselves.

—Sept. 30, 1994

Caribbean peoples' history of exodus



Cuban refugees detained in Panama: "Fidel, Gringos, the rafters are not negotiable!"

The most subjective and objective expression of the catastrophic human condition in the Caribbean is the ongoing desperate, explosive, massive, daily exodus of people from Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. The requirements in time, economically and politically, to qualify for ordinary visiting visas, "immigrant visas" (resident visas) and political asylum never have been so strictly detached from the needs of people facing state repression, poverty, unemployment, low wages, and overwork. To be poor, especially Black, and called "refugee" is to question the very nature of today's society. It is, in Fidel Castro's words, to be an "anti-social element, a lumpen, and a delinquent."

CUBA: The 20,000-visas-a-year agreement that the Cuban and U.S. governments signed to protect each other's shores totally excluded more than 30,000 Cubans who rebelled on Aug. 5, 1994, at the Malecon district in Havana. It was the first such spontaneous, massive revolt in 34 years against growing social injustice and economic and political readjustment policies.

Despite the trade embargo of the U.S., the Cuban government has official political and economic relations with 80 countries. Under pressure from the IMF and the World Bank, the Cuban government has moved toward dollarizing its economy, sought international capital investments, participates in regional trade arrangements, and has liberalized some sectors of state businesses.

The poor, employed, and unemployed—mostly young women and men—took to the streets of Havana. They attacked tourist dollar-only stores, hotels, and other symbols of capitalism. Castro immediately ordered the police and the "Committee for Defence of the Revolution" to repress the rebellion. Then he announced to the world that those who wanted to leave, could do so. Simultaneously he accused the U.S. government of fomenting the situation in Cuba, as if neocolonial underdevelopment was not also a question of Cuba's capitalist development since 1961.

Thus pushed to the seas, the people who decided to

leave were made victims in the immigration deal between the two governments. Those "Balseros" and "Balseras" (boat people) who survived the travesty—by making the crossing—remain, men separated from women and children, trapped in detention centers in the U.S., in former British colonies, in U.S. bases in Guantanamo and Panama as well as in other places. They cannot return to Cuba, but to apply for a visa to enter the U.S., one must apply in Cuba. They will remain prisoners until the U.S. and Cuban governments decide their fate.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Most of the stories of Dominicans taking to the seas only make news when a monumental tragedy happens like the one on Sept. 19 when 13 people drowned. Yet the constant flow of "yolas" (boats) since the early '80s, has become a principal element in modern Dominican working class culture and history. Hundreds of thousands have sold house, land, even family to put to sea from the eastern side of the island, through the vicious Mona Passage toward western Puerto Rico. (Some three years ago passengers of a small helicopter videotaped scenes of people, mostly Dominicans, being eaten alive by sharks. Nothing could be done.) Many are thrown from boats or the boats sink. Many thousands have reached Puerto Rico and even the U.S. Many are imprisoned in detention centers in Puerto Rico, the U.S., and other neighboring nations. They are then repatriated, and because Dominican jails are full, they are released and try it again. However some half dozen Dominicans, detained on Sept. 13 on Anasco Beach by Puerto Rican Maritime Units, rebelled with sticks and machetes as they were taken to the processing center for illegal immigration in Punta Borinquen.

HAITI: As popular demonstrations and brutal police brutal repression continue while the invading U.S. Marines "watch," this is what a Haitian friend told me: "The bourgeoisie is clear that it needs to reorganize itself and needs U.S. assistance to have a new beginning. They and the U.S. fear a popular explosion. Despite all the efforts to control the movement of people, the flow of Haitian refugees will not be stopped because today's social conditions of political repression and starvation recreate it. People will do anything to survive. Perhaps this intervention helps the Left reorganize itself." This desperate situation of the masses of people moves them in all directions. The Dominican racist bourgeois state has further militarized the frontier as ordered by the UN (See also "Dominican Election Fraud," N&L, June 1994).

As many as 50,000 Haitians threw themselves to the seas and like Dominican people, they are not given political asylum status, even now that Cuban refugees are treated no better. They have all protested—Haitians, Dominicans and Cubans. Some committed suicide. In a changed, post-Cold War, capitalist world, the only threat to the existing order is the spontaneous movement of people seeking Bread and Freedom. This movement is not limited to the Caribbean, but it is the history of the Caribbean as a whole.

—Sin Mas

* Quoted in *Haiti-Observateur*, March 7, 1986. See also the analysis of the 1986 revolt in "Can Haiti's revolt be deepened to revolution?" by Kevin A. Barry, *News & Letters*, April 1986.

Youth

150 years after Marx's Humanist Essays

Commodity fetishism unmasked

by Maya Jhansi

I was surprised recently to see in *The Humanist* a very exciting article called "Notes from an Iron Cage: Humanism and the Commodity Fetish" by Lynne Nugent, an undergraduate college student. In it, Nugent takes up the way in which commodity fetishism has become the new religion of our times, and she singles out Karl Marx as the philosopher who has captured this. "Are we really free now?" she begins, "I think not; I think that our souls are claimed by a new religion....Karl Marx, who had an eye for the invisible, wrote in his *Economic Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* about how this new religion was killing people outright or filling their lives with pain, and he denounced it as the fetishism of commodities."

Nugent expresses a deep opposition to consumerist society which, she argues, strips us of our humanity: "Dehumanization, according to Marx, comes from valuing something else over the human person: 'The more man attributes to God, the less he retains in himself. The worker puts his life into the object; then it no longer belongs to him but to the object.'" Marx, she points out, called the "endless broken promises of commodity fetishism" alienation.

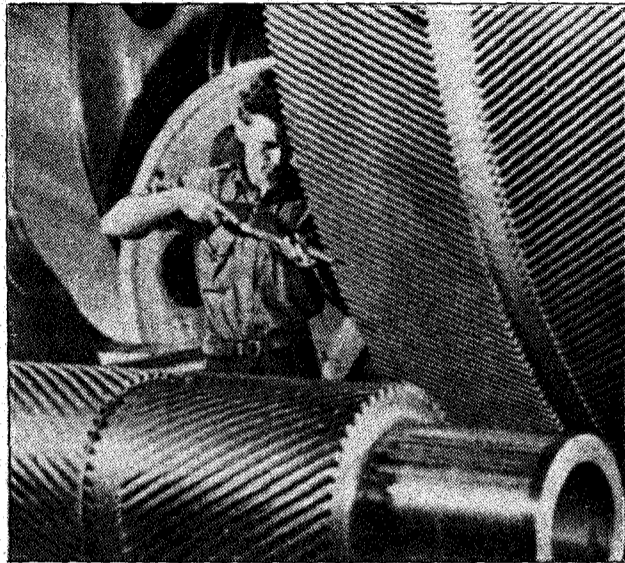
What is most exciting to me is that at a time when Marx is being declared dead, a young woman like Nugent poses Humanism as an alternative to the dehumanization of consumerist society. This shows a unique striving for a vision of the future different from the one blaring out of our TV sets. She calls Humanism "a new place to stand, a point of view that differs from the dominant ideology." Humanism can help us "resist the commodity fetish" because of "its emphasis on reason and compassion."

Nugent's discussion of Humanism raises a great number of questions that youth today need to deal with. First of all, can the fetishism of commodities be resisted by a Humanism defined through reason and good will alone? This question brings us to a central problematic in the essay: What is commodity fetishism? Is it simply consumerism? Is it the same as alienation?

As Marx said in *Capital*, the divine status of the commodity arises at the very moment of its production from the very form of the commodity itself: "This I call the

Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labor, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities."

As against the way many "Marxists" vulgarized Marx's thought, Marx himself held that fetishism arises before the product is exchanged. Alienation arises not only from the alienation of the product from the producer, but from the very mode of production where human activity itself is alienated.



We cannot separate fetishism from the commodity. To get rid of one, we have to get rid of both. This is what the so-called Communist countries denied—they argued that you could have commodities without fetishism.

Fetishism of commodities describes the perversion of human relations into relations between things. It's not just that human relations seem that way under capitalism. That's the way they really are. Fetishism does not stop where it begins at the point of production. It encompasses the whole of society, all human relations, and pervades the thought of the period.

To challenge the fetishism of commodities then requires that one take responsibility for one's thought, that we become as Nugent put it, critical thinkers—not only so we can resist the consumerist messages we see on TV but also so we can develop a Humanist vision as a viable alternative to this perverted, anti-human society.

Marx's 1844 *Manuscripts*, did not, after all, only articulate the alienation of capitalist society. These *Manuscripts* signaled the birth of a whole new philosophy which Marx himself called a "new Humanism." Thorough-going Naturalism or Humanism, Marx wrote, "distinguishes itself both from Idealism and Materialism, and is at the same time the truth uniting both."

We cannot abolish the fetishism of commodities without abolishing capitalism. That much Marx makes clear. But, to restate what Marx's Humanism means for today in a way that does not have us repeat the errors of the past, we have to be oppressively aware, as Raya Dunayevskaya said, that "To historical materialists, the inseparability of facts and ideas, of action and critique of other philosophic interpretations of the world, of philosophy and revolution [is] the only way to destroy the false idols that [keep] one imprisoned under capitalism."

Rally blasts ethnic cleansing California-style

Sacramento, Cal.—Amidst messages on T-shirts, banners and signs such as "Deport Pete Wilson" (California governor) and "Say No to 3 Reichs and You're Out," 300 demonstrators from the Bay Area and Los Angeles gathered on the steps of the capitol on Aug. 22 to protest Propositions 187 and 184.

Prop. 187, the infamous Save Our States initiative, proposes legislation that would deny undocumented persons non-emergency medical care and ban their children from public schools. Prop. 184 simply reaffirms the existing Three Strikes law which is retroactive to age 16. Both will appear on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Rally organizer Dorsey Nunn opened up the speak-out by declaring, "There are no illegal human beings." He urged a highly charged crowd to "Say No to turning schoolteachers into INS agents." Nunn, an African-American activist who has referred to himself as a fourth generation ex-con, heads a prisoners' rights organization called Free At Last.

Wilson Riles Jr., former Oakland city councilman of progressive renown, now of American Friends Service Committee, noted the law's racist intent: "They will not be looking for undocumented Canadians."

The youngest speakers evoked the loudest and longest responses. It started with a Black youth from South Central Community Coalition, an organization of Blacks and Latinos. He had been stumbling through his notes when he suddenly confessed, "Aw man, I'm messin' up." He pocketed the notes and began speaking ad lib. Inspired by his recovery and the ovation he received, other members of SCCC followed with ever more enthralling and informative presentations.

One young woman warned of a movement in the state legislature to make Three Strikes retroactive to age 14. Another pointed out that 57% of state taxes go to criminal justice and only 3.7% to education. A Latino youth concluded SCCC's segment by asserting, "We don't want

Law comes down on youth

Chicago—My friends and I were walking out of one of those little grocery stores with a Mexican restaurant inside eating the tortas we bought when four narcos came up. They stopped some white boys, then they let them go and came up to us and said we were "gang loitering" because we were wearing "gang colors." And they locked us up.

On our court date there were a lot of guys there we knew because they had locked up a lot of people from the neighborhood that day. So we were just outside of the court afterwards waiting for everyone to come out because some of them had rides and some didn't. Then the police came and said we were gang loitering again.

I couldn't believe it. How are we going to gang loiter in front of the police station? We would be fools to do that. So I showed them my bond paper with my court date and said, "I just came from court in here!" They said, "We don't care," and locked us up again.

They arrested us right there in front of Eleventh and State, the main police headquarters. All they did was put us in the cars, drive into the alley and take us in through the back to the lockup.

For the original charge I had to go to "gang school" at the police station at Belmont and Western. They said if you want to get out of the gang, they got people who could help you and stuff like that. They talked about finishing school, going to college and getting jobs.

But everybody says when you go to stuff like that you try not to even think about what they're saying. You just want to get it over with. It's like they just want you to act a certain way. They want you to be what they want you be: some white boys.

They think we are all criminals, that all we do is just stand on the corner, gang bang and sell drugs. There's a little bit of everything in every race. You can't say all Latinos and Blacks are gang bangers. They just live in the ghetto.

Even so I know two girls who went to college and a lot of people who have jobs, and they still get harassed by the police. Like me, I work. I always say, "Why are you harassing me?" They say, "The point is you still hang out." I say, "What, I can't be out on the street with my friends?" They know I work, I've been working since I was 17. The cops called up the factory where I work to verify that I really work there.

—Twenty-year-old Latino

Youth in Revolt

by Marna Leber

The student government at Berlin, Germany's, Free University urged foreign students to arm themselves with non-lethal weapons, like tear gas, to respond to the escalating racist attacks against them. The announcement came after a Kurdish woman student was violently attacked at a subway station, as onlookers did not help her. A student government member said that racism at the university was rampant in classrooms as well. She said, "We really don't want an escalation of violence... (but this is our way of saying) this is enough."

An American Indian student is on a hunger strike at the University of Oklahoma to protest the university's official response to an incident where a group of fraternity members destroyed a tepee set up on the campus for Indian Heritage Week and harassed and assaulted the students inside. Stephen A. Selkirk is conducting a "spiritual fast" because the administration did not agree that the incident was racially motivated.

Three Strikes. We don't want SOS. We want freedom!"

Ingrid Turner, a Black student at UC Santa Cruz, drew cheers when she said, "We do have a problem with immigrants in this country—the immigrants who came here 500 years ago and took everything." Earlier this year she and 54 classmates were arrested and jailed for demonstrating near a prison against student fee increases which went to prison reconstruction projects. Mindful of such experiences she told listeners that when working politely through the proper channels fails, "it's time to get rude." In closing Turner lauded her fellow youth and scanning the crowd she said, "South Central, you were a bomb."

—David M.

Congress bashes gays

Chicago—The U.S. Senate and House is considering cutting off funding to school districts that "teach" homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle. These measures are connected to the Elementary and Secondary Act which provides federal funding to 90% of the country's school districts. As the House and Senate haggle over the language of the final version of this act, now is the time to make our voices heard.

This is a clear indicator of the retrogression we are facing in today's screwed-up world. This is not Oregon, or Colorado—this is the U.S. government prohibiting schools from distributing educational materials, providing counselling and even giving students referrals to gay and lesbian support services.

Things don't look good right now for gay and lesbian youth. The last thing they need is more fear and alienation, especially when suicide is the number one cause of death for gay teen-agers. They need a new way of seeing themselves. They need new human relations, and a new society.

—Tom Williamson

Race and class in Wedowee

Wedowee, Ala.—I flew to Texas from Chicago to be part of a reporting team at the 37th annual convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Dallas Aug. 16-19. Over 300 youth were in attendance, including two youth from Wedowee, Ala., the site of attacks by the racist principal of the local high school, Huland Humphries, and a flashpoint of youth and worker resistance.

Revonda Bowen was not only a victim of racist abuse by Humphries, being called a "mistake" for having a white father and Black mother, but she also was a fighter. She knew it was not okay for Humphries to make racist comments despite the fact that he had done so for nearly 26 years as the Randolph County High School (RCHS) principal.

In Revonda's own words, "I've always been known to stand up for my rights. I've learned people go to jail for standing up for their rights. By standing up we allow others behind us to stand up for their rights. We can't take nothing for granted, you have to stand up for everything you believe in."

Ms. Bowen's defiance of Humphries allowed students and Blacks to stand up to the racist town administration which included Humphries, the town sheriff, the bank president and the majority of the local school board. Her defiance gives the Black and white workers in Wedowee not only space to live and work together, as they have done for years despite the media's sensationalism of racial tension, but space to fight together.

Chris Brown, the white boyfriend of Ms. Bowen, was firmly in support of Revonda and in an informal discussion agreed it was a mistake for SCLC to decide not to march in Wedowee on Aug. 20, considering the Klan would be marching nearby that same day.

When I arrived in Wedowee itself, the story became clearer. Humphries, who had grown up in town, had many people covering for him, including some students and whites who were part of the patronage system in town who were not otherwise outwardly racist.

Before the incident with Revonda Bowen, Humphries had been cited twice by the Justice Department—for beating up a white mother who came to him complaining about the way her child was being disciplined and for segregating the school buses for a period lasting until 1989. Humphries had also been known to paddle students, including pregnant young women, over his desk. He had kicked white and Black football players off the team for dating people not of their "race." Humphries had also let two young thugs, not students at RCHS, come onto school property and beat up a Black student or dating a white girl.

Humphries was known to expel students permanently from school for various infractions, creating a layer of young workers without high school diplomas, who worked in the town's industries—poultry and textile carpet—for low wages and under poor conditions.

Despite Humphries' brutality and racism, he was hereby the focal point of the racism, because he was principal of the high school and disciplinarian of the one group, the young folks, who were openly unwilling to stand for his racism. Humphries was the plug in the hole of change in Wedowee.

—Robin Kissinger

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The Aug. 21 Mexican election was determined in a most fundamental way by the Jan. 1 Chiapas revolt, despite the official voting results reported by the government. They delivered a majority once more to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and its presidential candidate, Ernesto Zedillo, who won by the slightest majority ever in PRI's 65 years in power—50%. The rightist National Action Party (PAN) came in next at 27%. Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of the Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) came in a dismal third with 17%. Although the government claimed a record turnout, many people said they did not see any difference among the three candidates whose platforms would carry on Salinas' "free market" restructuring of the Mexican economy.

Electoral fraud by the PRI did not become the issue it was in 1988, when central ballot-tabulating computers "suddenly" crashed, and it is widely believed Carlos Salinas stole the election from Cardenas. That blatant manipulation of "democracy" produced such outrage that the PRI was forced to pass some mild electoral reform laws and the country was flooded by tens of thousands

Nigeria crushes strikes

By early September, Nigeria's military leader, Sani Abacha, appeared for the moment to have crushed the mass unrest which began in June when Moshood Abiola, cheated out of his 1993 election victory by Abacha's coup, declared himself to be the true President of Nigeria. Today, Abiola and hundreds of labor, political and intellectual leaders sit in jail, while Abacha has openly assumed what he terms "absolute power."

On Sept. 5, 90,000 oil workers, whose pro-democracy protest strike had paralyzed the economy for two months, returned to work. During August, the oil workers were joined by millions of other strikers, from factory workers to teachers to civil servants. The strikes were strongest in the South, where Abiola's Yoruba ethnic group predominates, and the Southeast, where Igbos predominate, each of these regions also mainly Christian. Supported by the wealthy Hausa-Fulani Muslim elite of Northern Nigeria, the military dictatorship responded to the strikes and demonstrations with force and arrests. Even in the North, however, working people and students came out onto the streets to demand that the military step down.

Today, as the generals seek to use North-South and Muslim-Christian rivalries to stay in power, the country is closer to civil war than at any time since the 1960s, when the Southeast attempted to liberate itself by declaring independence as Biafra. The Biafra War, 1967-70, saw a million deaths, mainly of Igbo civilians, who were either killed directly by the army or allowed to starve. In that conflict, the Yoruba people of the South refused to back Biafra against the northern military. Today both the South and the Southeast, as well as some elements in the North, stand united as never before against the Northern-dominated military who have dominated the country ever since they were groomed for that role by the departing British imperialists. Then, the British feared the more leftist political leaders of the South and Southeast. Today the situation is different, since Abiola is a conservative billionaire businessman.

Mexican election in shadow of Chiapas

of independent poll watchers and international observers. But as one monitor pointed out, the PRI perpetrated fraud during the entire 1994 campaign, and not just on election day, from controlling the main media coverage to intimidating voters with the loss of their jobs.

More importantly, the certainty of massive and widespread protests, as well as armed resistance by the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army), kept the election as "clean" as it was. Significantly, the one major challenge to the election results has been raised by Amado Avendano, the PRD candidate for governor of the state of Chiapas. Avendano, who has been openly sympathetic to the aims of the revolt, has refused to recognize the PRI's victory claim.

An event central to the context of the elections, and beyond, was held two weeks earlier when the Zapatistas con-



Mexican police stopped protesters—including Superbarrio, a well-known masked crusader for the rights of the poor—from marching on the Federal Electoral Institute demanding a fraud-free election.

vened the National Democratic Convention in Chiapas. Speaking to why the Zapatistas called the convention and the role of the EZLN, Subcommander Marcos reportedly stated it was "not to direct the Mexican people, but to support them, and when it is necessary, to act in their favor.... This convention is to give form to the peaceful struggle for democracy and justice."

Over 5,000 people attended the national gathering as individuals and as representatives of peasant groups, Indian communities, independent labor organizations, students, women, community groups, intellectuals and the Mexican Left. The convention was not limited to electoral politics but involved the many crises facing Mexican society, from education and health, the environment and unemployment, to the question of beginning coalitions among the groups present and beyond.

In the aftermath of the elections, the PRD's demise indicates not so much a splintering of the Left as it does a rejection of Cardenas who in 1988 received support well beyond the Left. This year his platform included acceptance of NAFTA and of Salinas' capitalist "modernization" programs.

As many people disgustingly pointed out during the campaign, the Salinas era increased the number of Mexican billionaires from 2 to 24. The Zedillo era promises

more of the same, but it comes after the Chiapas revolt which has shaken the PRI and the entire entrenched ruling class to its core by raising the actuality of fundamental change throughout Mexico and sparking the emergence of a new opposition. A variety of commentators have characterized this as the birth and maturing of Mexican "civil society," meaning everything from grassroots organizing to reform of the PRI. However, the new consciousness emerging in Mexico is hardly that limited and is in the process of "hearing itself speak."

Rwandan killers protected

Despite military defeat, exile, and exposure before the whole world as organizers of the genocide of up to one million people—most of them ethnic Tutsis—the generals and political leaders of the former Rwandan regime remain to a large extent in control of the refugee camps in Zaire to which several million Hutu civilians have fled. Not only are they and their henchmen virtually running the camps, but they have usually managed to intimidate or, if necessary, murder those Hutu refugees who express the wish to return to Rwanda to live under the new regime. All of this could not be happening without at least the tacit approval of the Zairian regime and the Western powers.

Rwanda human rights activist Allison De Forges has reported that top Rwandan politicians who were responsible for the genocide, such as former Prime Minister Jean Kambanda, were first sheltered in the French-occupied zone of southwestern Rwanda and then helped to flee to Zaire, where for at least a time they were still being driven around by French military chauffeurs.

Virtually no aid is going in for the survivors of the genocide who are trying to rebuild the country on a multiethnic basis. Almost all of the international aid is going instead to the mainly Hutu refugees across the border in Zaire, among whom are hiding some of the worst perpetrators of genocide. "Must we get cholera to be helped?" asked the new Rwandan Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu, a Hutu who himself narrowly escaped death because he was a known opponent of the ethnic chauvinism of the former regime.

Northern Ireland ceasefire

Oxford, England—Midnight on Aug. 31 marked the "complete cessation of military operations by the Irish Republican Army (IRA)." This lifts the threat of terrorist bombs in shopping centers and railway stations. More important, it offers a long-awaited possibility of progress towards peace and freedom in "the most distressful country" of Northern Ireland.

The situation that exists in Northern Ireland is a tangled knot of oppression and conflict. The British Army has been there for 25 years, confronting the Catholic/Republican minority as an oppressive occupying power. The indigenous Catholic Irish have been treated as an inferior people ever since Ulster was colonized in the 17th century by Protestant settlers from Scotland and England. Discrimination in employment on grounds of religious affiliation is now against the law, but remains widespread in practice. Key working-class residential districts in Belfast and Derry are effectively segregated along ethnic/religious lines; 25 years of "the Troubles" have driven the communities further apart.

The relatively privileged status that male Protestant workers once enjoyed has been undermined by the recession and restructuring of the global capitalist economy. Many of the skilled jobs in heavy industry which were once reserved for them have disappeared. Both communities suffer from high unemployment, although it is worse for Catholics.

On both sides society and politics are heavily male dominated. The macho gun culture of the paramilitaries has made matters worse. The voices of women are seldom heard in public outside the peace movement.

Sectarianism does not go unchallenged. Large numbers of Protestants and Catholics come together in peace rallies as well as working together in trade unions, the environmental movement and other spheres.

The ceasefire represents an important change in the Republican outlook. There is a growing recognition that a united Ireland can never be achieved by force of arms alone. Even if British troops could be driven out (an unlikely prospect), some form of agreement would have to be reached with the one-million-strong Protestant majority community. Without that, there could be bloodshed on the scale of Bosnia. So at last the long war of the IRA is called off, and Sinn Fein seeks a political solution. People in Republican neighbourhoods came out and celebrated the news with street parties.

The ceasefire was prepared for by a partly secret diplomatic process in which John Hume of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the Dublin government and the Clinton administration acted as intermediaries between Sinn Fein and John Major's cabinet. While working people in Northern Ireland want peace and a better life, the international ruling class wants stability for capitalism.

In Britain there is a need to overcome the shameful tradition of anti-Irish racism which lurks in the national culture, to raise awareness of how Ireland's trouble past and present have been shaped by conquest, exploitation and domination by Britain, and to transform that into positive solidarity.

—Richard Bunting

Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that 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.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. We have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead."

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today* (1958); *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (1973); and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982) spell out the philosophic ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection-Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and have donated new supplementary volumes to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, 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 mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.