

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Workers fed up with long hours



by B. Ann Lastelle

The company I work for has been gobbled up by a much larger international conglomerate. This "partnership" allegedly will offer the company "the additional resources necessary to stay competitive in an industry that is consolidating rapidly." What it will mean for the workers is unclear, but I distinctly heard the representative of the new owners say that we may have to work harder, work longer hours and push out more units. We've had enough of that already.

Workers in our manufacturing unit had been told in late November that we would be working six-day weeks through January and February, but management began taking our Saturdays in December. The first was voluntary; the second, mandatory. Second shift workers opposed a plan allowing us to work most of the mandatory overtime during the week rather than coming in on Saturday. Our supervisor said she had no problem with it and would present it to the manufacturing unit manager.

We learned at the kickoff meeting the next day that the manager had rejected our proposal. Not only that. He had changed our starting time on Friday so that some of the hours we had offered to work as overtime were now regular time. It was a slap in the face, and everyone felt it. Ten people (out of 19) stated that they would not be coming in on Saturday. Under individual pressure from the unit manager the following day, however, six of those people did agree to come in, and the company was able to run the lines as scheduled.

Our rather manipulative supervisor, in the meantime, had held a second shift team meeting, which she began

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Black World

Satanic reverses of Louis Farrakhan



by Lou Turner

There is a deafening silence in Black America over the post-Million Man March, 20-nation, Africa-Middle East tour that Louis Farrakhan took in January and February. The obvious reason for the silence is that those broad sectors of Black America who were energized by the Million Man March don't want to have its meaning reversed by the world thug tour that Farrakhan just completed.

While Black leaders usually "break every which way" when asked by the white press to respond to the reactionary verses of Farrakhan's brand of fundamentalism, they have for the most part condemned the trip (Carl Rowan and Randall Robinson), or cautiously distanced themselves from it (Jesse Jackson and Kweisi Mfume). What makes the fallout more conspicuous is that, despite the popular wisdom that the Million Man March would bring Farrakhan mainstream acceptance, at Farrakhan's Savior's Day rally in Chicago on Feb. 25 the only leader he could get to be on the stage with him was his ideological sycophant and organizational go'fer, Ben Chavis.

FARRAKHAN'S GHOSTS

What these Black leaders recognize is that in the bizarre political of American race relations, the white media and logic establishment are playing out the cynical game with Farrakhan that cannot but stoke the embers of racism in the white American mind, and position African Americans in the defensive posture of having to defend Farrakhan when "they" go after him. Farrakhan relishes in admitting as much. And therein lies the tale of his Satanic (re)verses.

Following a strange bout with depression after the Million Man March, for which he retreated to his desert estate in Arizona to meditate, Farrakhan now has all the symptoms of a martyr's complex. (Something like Pat Buchanan's "they're out to get me" paranoia which is a sick reversal of his "out to get them" nativist politics of exclusion.)

In Farrakhan's case, it's the reversal of history. He shamelessly identifies the controversy over his counter-revolutionary world thug fest with the government per-

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North and South, women fight Right's assault on poor, feminism

by Terry Moon

The U.S. Women's Liberation Movement has been a continuous force for freedom since the mid-1960s, but never has it faced such a brutal backlash bent on its destruction. That Patrick Buchanan—a racist, anti-Semitic, sexist, homophobic, anti-abortion fanatic who would prosecute a rape victim if she dared abort—won the New Hampshire Republican primary in February, underscores just how deadly serious that attack is. Yet the Women's Liberation Movement did not wait for that development before fighting back.

The opening salvo was Feminist Expo '96, a conference of over 3,200 women representing 300 organizations and individuals, that met Feb. 2-4 in Washington, D.C. Eleanor Smeal, the president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, put it bluntly to the conference: "Never before has the women's movement been so under attack, and never before has there been such a need for all segments of the women's movement to come together." No one could deny the excitement of the event—especially the overwhelming presence of young women. Fully 35% were high school and college age.

While a number of the 48 workshops had breaking into electoral politics as the subject, many of the young women wanted to go further. A University of Chicago student told *News & Letters* that though the conference expressed an urgency to confront the right wing, "It wasn't urgent enough....We're sick of working within the constraints of what exists."

Also clear from the workshops on affirmative action, poverty, ending violence against women, and welfare, as well as the significant representation of women of color



Welfare rights protests, like this one in Philadelphia, oppose Republican and Clinton's attempts to drive women and children into the night.

on panels, was the acknowledged imperative of the women's movement to make its outreach to African-American women less of a gesture and more of a reality.

In an effort to do just that, conference participants did not separate women's rights from Black rights in organizing "Freedom Summer '96," an effort to double voter registration among 19- to 24-year-olds. And a spontaneous demonstration erupted the second morning of the conference when over 500 marched for affirmative action and against the assault on the safety net for the poor.

While deep divisions remain, an indication of how serious (Continued on page 10)

Tour to free Mumia, all political prisoners

Chicago—At a moment when the American political process is dominated by rhetoric about "illegal" immigration, "lenient" prison sentences, and "a crisis in personal responsibility" as the reason for the malaise in the Black community, a very different voice was heard in the Chicago area the last week of February when Ramona Africa and Leonard Weinglass held an intensive lecture tour in defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal and other political prisoners. Their tour emphasized that the ongoing national and international campaign to demand a new trial for Mumia, who was falsely accused in the 1981 murder of a Philadelphia police officer, is an integral part of resisting the increasingly reactionary nature of American politics.

Ramona Africa is the sole adult survivor of the Philadelphia Police Department's firebombing of the Black organization MOVE's headquarters in 1985 and has helped spearhead the campaign to free Mumia. Leonard Weinglass is Mumia's attorney who has long campaigned against the death penalty.

In a series of talks held at the Center for Inner City Studies, Northwestern University, Loyola University, and De Paul University, they laid out factors that led to Mumia's incarceration on death row: being too poor to afford an attorney, he was provided with a court-appointed lawyer who openly admitted to being incapable of handling the case; the presiding judge provided the lawyer with only \$450 in fees for an investigator, a pathology report, and a forensics expert, knowing full well none could be hired at such ridiculously low rates; and the prosecutor withheld such vital information as the fact that the bullet which killed the police officer could not have been fired from the gun Mumia had in his possession.

By the time they finished detailing Mumia's case, it was clear that far from being an isolated case, his case encapsulates the fate of thousands of other African-American prisoners throughout this country.

As Ramona Africa put it in her talk at Northwestern University, "One of the most dangerous things is to be in a dangerous position and not know it. Anyone here can be picked up just like Mumia was. Anyone here can

suffer the injustices of American 'justice,' just as Mumia did. This is how they treat people who stand up against the system. We do this not just for Mumia, but for ourselves. It's part of our effort to challenge an unfair system."

Weinglass noted that of the 3,000 men and women now on death row in America, many were convicted on flimsy evidence in state courts, where defendants have little or no decent legal representation and face judges elected or chosen through the support of the Fraternal Order of Police and pro-death penalty groups.

"Forty percent of all death penalties imposed at the state level are overturned in federal courts because of blatant constitutional irregularities," he said. "Yet Congress has passed legislation that will virtually eliminate the federal appeals process for death penalty cases." This will give a green light to the ongoing efforts to impose an American-style totalitarianism upon us all.

As Ramona Africa noted several times during the tour, the authorities are hoping that as Mumia's appeals process drags out, his case will gradually lose attention and cease to be a focal point of opposition to the criminal (in)justice system. That is why, she emphasized, that the time is now to become involved in the effort to stop Mumia's execution and free all other political prisoners.

At one point during the appeals process, Judge Sabo—who presided over Mumia's case and who has sent more prisoners to death row than any other judge in the country—said to Weinglass that "justice is just an emotional issue." The inhumanity reflected in that statement is symptomatic of what the rulers are now promoting—and why they must be forcefully combated.

—Peter Wermuth

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'Silver Rights' history ongoing today

by Laurie Green

*"Sometimes you feel like forgetting it all, flying away and never coming back. Then you don't have nowhere to fly to—so much fighting on."—Mae Bertha Carter, Silver Rights**

Silver Rights is the riveting story of Mae Bertha Carter's struggle, along with her husband Matthew and their children, to integrate the public schools in Drew, Miss., beginning in 1965. Its power is not just in its look back into history, but in the way it captures the ongoing

Woman as Reason

nature of that history. It is of no minor significance, therefore, that author Connie Curry begins by informing us in her Preface that this story "continues long after the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 and the Meredith March on the roads of Mississippi in 1966—the two events traditionally recognized by civil rights chroniclers as the end of the freedom movement" (xxii).

The book reaches right up to today, and we can be sure that neither Mae Bertha Carter nor Connie Curry would end the story there. They instead demand that our attention again be turned to the ongoing struggles in Sunflower County, in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. When I interviewed Mae Bertha Carter in early February during her book tour with Curry, she was livid about the most recent outrages and anxious to get home to the increasingly militant meetings of Drew parents—mostly Black, but including some white parents as well.

Drew's schools (the schools whites attended, that is) were among the best in Mississippi in 1965; they are now at the bottom. Although nearly all the white parents withdrew their children from the schools in 1970, the first year of full integration, roughly 30% of the poorest white families now send their children to Drew schools. Yet the school board continues to be controlled by appointed officials who send their own children to the all-white "academy."

Back in 1965 the Carter family, then sharecroppers,

Tribute to Black 'HERstory'

Chicago—"Honoring HERstory II, A Poetic Tribute to African-American Women," was a creative celebration of Black History Month sponsored by the National Organization for Women (NOW). It was attended by over 50 Black women, young and old, and less than a dozen Black men and white women combined. All the poets and speakers were Black.

Eleven women and four men—one who was introduced as a Born-Again-Christian!!!—recited 23 poems, mostly their original work, while a few performed poems by Nikki Giovanni, Maya Angelou, Paul Laurence Dunbar and Langston Hughes.

Billie Woodard, president of the Chicago NOW chapter, introduced the program by saying few people on earth have inspired us towards freedom as Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman and others in between including Pauli Murray, who was active in the Civil Rights Movement and became a co-founder of NOW. She added that that inspiration is found not only in the past, but in the present in women community organizers as well as in established organizations of Black women.

The poems performed by women took into account multiple dimensions of human life, oppression and liberation. Notions of reclaiming history were contrasted to white historians who "told our story," unable to see the "strange fruit hanging in the tree," or the "genius of the underground railroad," or the birth of jazz coming from the creativity of "the movement of feet towards freedom," as Lynn Brewer Robinson said in her poem "Our Story."

In a poem called "Hands," Angela Shannon powerfully described how even when Black women are reduced to an instrument of labor, their humanness proceeds, even though they struggle to feel it: "When they told us we could have each other, I didn't know what to do...I'd lost my hands to scrubbing, ironing...just tools for cleaning...But I'll stretch them out...and I've loved you longer than I've had wooden hands."

Tributes were paid to mothers. The following lines of "African Mother" were written and performed by Tamika Coley, a high school senior enrolled in the YWCA Young Parents Program: "There is no brother, sister or other to take the place of our African mother....To stand tall and proud...to guide us through the years when no one else is around."

Jewel Howard got the only standing ovation after reciting her poem "NOW is the Time." It was a tribute to Pauli Murray. Her poem injected and defined the necessity of feminist perspectives in past and present history—NOW has always been the time. She used both the terms "Jim Crow" and "Jane Crow" in describing how Black women have been kept from full participation in life. She concluded: "In fighting against Jane Crow, Pauli Murray founded NOW."

Another poem that moved women to tears was "Herstories," written by Toni Bond, director of the Chicago Abortion Fund. She told the stories of rape, domestic violence, illegal abortion, forced sterilization and incest that take the person, the beauty "I know she used to be," away. But all sense of self was not lost as seen in her story of genital mutilation: "I have a friend...She misses home, but not the tradition and culture."

The evening ended with Billie emphasizing the urgency of voting in the upcoming elections. She said, "Sixty percent didn't vote in 1994, and so we got this contract out on us." It was a great evening. —Sonia Bergonzi

made history when seven of Mae Bertha and Matthew's 13 children became the only students in Drew—and in Sunflower County—who dared to attend the previously all-white schools after the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Drew, like scores of other localities in Mississippi, sent out a "Freedom of Choice" letter, sure that Black parents would be too intimidated to choose the "white" schools.

Mae Bertha, convinced that she would endure anything to win her children a better education, was out of town when the Freedom of Choice letter arrived. She returned to discover that all seven of her school-age chil-



Mae Bertha Carter and Connie Curry

dren had decided to choose the "white" schools. As Ruth, the eldest Carter to attend Drew High School (her older five siblings graduated from segregated schools), tells Curry:

"So we really jumped at the chance to integrate the school because at least we could get away from the cotton fields, and because we thought it would...make the world a better place. We knew it was the right thing to do" (p. 110).

The story of the next five years, until their lawsuit forced the town to genuinely integrate by ordering all parents to send their children to the same schools, is one of tremendous determination. The Carters were evicted from the Pemble plantation and each child, the sole African-American student in the class, endured name-calling, spitballs and isolation. "They were trying to get you out of the school, so you couldn't let them defeat you," recalls Larry, the oldest son to enter Drew High.

Curry's work tells us much about history as ongoing. Instead of conveying this determination as a spontaneous product of the 1960s freedom movement, she devotes two chapters to the story of Mae Bertha's mother, Luvenia Noland Slaughter, who "didn't hesitate" to assert that her daughter's courage came directly from her.

Curry also portrays Mae Bertha's involvement in the NAACP beginning in 1955, as well as her enthusiastic participation in mass meetings in nearby Cleveland during the early 1960s. Just as Rosa Parks was an activist in the NAACP long before she was "too tired" to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery in 1955, so Mae Bertha Carter had ten years of activism with the NAACP while waiting for the right moment to really bring about a change.

Indeed, Curry's own history is important in documenting the early Civil Rights Movement. An American Friends Service Committee field representative in the South in the 1960s, when she assisted families like the Carters, Curry had worked with the U.S. National Student Association and was the only white asked to join the executive committee of SNCC at its first meeting.

Curry's point here is crucial as well. Histories of the Civil Rights Movement rarely show the new chapters opened after the 1964 Civil Rights and 1965 Voting Rights Acts, when local Mississippians, so many of them women, fought to ensure that the gains of the movement would become reality. The Carters went on to battle over federal poverty programs such as Headstart, where both Mae Bertha and Matthew got jobs, and welfare rights. These struggles continue today. This book, therefore, is not one of nostalgia, but written for the ongoing history of the 1990s.

* Silver Rights by Constance Curry (Algonquin, 1995)

IN CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY, YESTERDAY AND TODAY ...

When [Clara] Zetkin proposed to the 1910 Second International Women's Conference that an International Women's Day [IWD] be adopted, it was an act of solidarity with organizing struggles of the American garment workers who had erupted in the 'Uprising of the 20,000' the year before. Six days after the first IWD was celebrated in March 1911, the infamous sweatshop Triangle [Shirtwaist] Fire took the lives of 146 workers, most of whom were young women, and Rose Schneiderman organized no less than 120,000 workers in the funeral march—not just to mourn but to declare solidarity with all unorganized women workers."

ROSA LUXEMBURG, WOMEN'S LIBERATION, AND MARX'S PHILOSOPHY OF REVOLUTION

By Raya Dunayevskaya

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Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

A campaign for countrywide support has been launched for 350 predominantly women garment workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh left jobless when the Titas Apparels Factory closed at the end of 1995—three days after the workers went on strike. The company had for months refused to negotiate workers' demands to end 80-hour work weeks, poor air quality and ventilation, crowded work space, and instead hired thugs to intimidate the new union. The National Garment Workers Federation has initiated protests, demonstrations and sit-in strikes calling for reinstatement of the workers, recognition of the union and an end to harassment of union members.

Women's rights and reproductive rights groups are demanding the repeal of the Internet abortion gag rule included in the Telecommunications Act which became law, Feb. 8. The clause prohibits using the Internet to share information on abortion and abortion devices. The Eastern Federal District Court has refused to issue a restraining order to block enforcement of the gag rule.

A coalition of German women activists and politicians is petitioning to nominate the Russian Committee of Soldiers' Mothers for the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize. The committee was founded in 1989 to campaign against war and for human rights within the Russian army, and most recently the mothers marched to Chechnya to demand the return of their sons.

From The Gambia—what women's liberation is

Editor's note: We print below the concluding passage from a full-page article asking "What is Women's Liberation" that appeared in the Gambian paper FOROYAA (Freedom). Although it appeared in an issue dated November 1-8, 1995, it reached us just in time for our International Women's Month issue.

Women's Liberation comes through mental liberation. It comes with enlightenment so that the woman will understand herself and develop a sense of dignity and self-worth. It comes with the understanding of one's society and the world so as to participate in enlightening and working with men and women to eradicate all ideas, political, economic, social and cultural practices which prevent women, in particular, and all human beings in general, from living lives of dignity, liberty and prosperity. The first step towards Women's Liberation is to seek enlightenment and to devote ourselves to transmitting what we know to others who are yet to know.

—Amie Sillah and Fatour Gaye

Laid-off Somerville

workers reject low-wage jobs

Somerville, Tenn—I last reported that Somerville Mills would close its doors on Jan. 30, and move to Mexico. However, the company is still operating its warehouse and as of Feb. 24, only sewing machine operators—bargaining unit members of Local 282, IUE-Furniture Division—have been laid off.

The company wrote that they would start laying off in the warehouse Feb. 21 and close by Mar. 5, but workers there say no one has been let go since early February. Work from Mexico is still being brought in and stocked. We are still waiting on the Labor Board's responses to complaints we filed regarding the company's decision to close, bad-faith bargaining, and attempts to decertify the union.

The sewing machine operators were called by the unemployment office to a meeting on Feb. 14, at the Oak Room at Somerville Bank. We met people there from TRA (Trade Readjustment Allowances), a job placement program designed under federal law for workers whose jobs relocated outside the U.S. TRA retrains and reschools people so they can get "skilled" jobs. City officials in Fayette County and throughout the South call sewing jobs "unskilled" so these companies can make millions of dollars off of us.

At this meeting the supervisor of the Fayette County unemployment office told workers that the plant managers at Allison and Master Apparel, car accessory and clothing manufacturers in Somerville, wanted her to send workers from Somerville Mills to those plants. She told them she would be calling them. And the next day, the calling began.

The unemployment office told workers if they did not take these jobs at Allison and Master Apparel their unemployment would be exhausted. The only jobs the companies had were on sewing machines. We told her we were not interested in doing any more "unskilled" work because it pays minimum wage. We want to do the TRA training programs.

The lady at unemployment told workers to come in and sign a refusal-to-work paper. We immediately contacted our union representatives, who sent out a letter to Governor Sundquist, the unemployment supervisor, our state representative and others to protest this violation of federal law in denying workers unemployment security and TRA benefits because they would not take these "unskilled" jobs. We have scheduled a meeting to discuss the next steps we will be taking with our local union representatives.

—Laid off Black worker

Ontario general strikes fight Right

Kingston, Ontario—Opposition to the Conservatives has come quickly and mounted steadily in Ontario since June 1995, when they swept out of office the social democratic New Democratic Party. Calling for a Common Sense Revolution, the Ontario Conservatives promised a massive tax cut for the middle class, a 20% cut to welfare payments, the cutting of jobs in the civil service and the privatization of government services.

Once elected, the government's major weapon in the assault on the deficit—in reality an assault on the poor, people of colour, women's groups and the labour movement—became Bill 26, the Savings and Restructuring Act to give the Conservatives the power to close hospitals, dissolve municipalities, inspect private medical records and regulate where doctors can practice, change environmental standards for mining operations and roll back pay equity agreements. Public outrage forced the Conservatives to hold public hearings on the bill.

In the end less than 10% of the roughly 360 proposed changes were debated before the bill was passed on Jan. 29, 1996. Predictably, the Conservatives have already backed away from their promise of a major tax cut, while the 13,000 jobs slated to be cut from the Ontario civil service may be as high as 27,000.

The one-day general strike held in London, Ont., on Dec. 11 showed the potential for united action, as 40,000 of the city's 60,000 workers risked employer retaliation by walking off the job in an illegal work stoppage called by the Ontario Federation of Labour. It remains to be seen if this was, as Sam Gindin, Assistant to the President of the Canadian Auto Workers put it, "the beginning of a new politics," but it is certainly true that organized labour and allied movements of people of colour, women, gays and lesbians, students and the disabled are mobilizing in a manner not seen in Ontario for many years.

Deep scars remain from the New Democratic Party's years in office. The New Democrats took upon themselves the task of deficit reduction. The party's vehicle was the Social Contract, which involved job losses, the abrogation of collective bargaining rights and the forcing of public sector workers to take unpaid days off work. While the big private sector unions, notably the Steelworkers, remained loyal to their traditional ally, many public sector unions roundly condemned the actions of Bob Rae's government and remain embittered about what they consider an unprincipled betrayal.

There are signs, however, that the rift between the public and private sector unions is beginning to heal in the face of the Conservatives' brutal assault. If that unity can grow and encompass allies in the women's, anti-racism, and gay and lesbian movements, and if rank-and-file militants can push the union leadership to more radical action, Ontario's Conservatives may discover that winning the provincial election was a minor skirmish in a much more meaningful battle. —Peter Campbell

We're all temporary labor

Chicago—Over the last several years, Toys-R-Us has been trying to cut back the hours of full-timers to the barest minimum. They have gotten rid of half the full-timers. Now when Christmas came, they told us the "good news": they would guarantee us at least 38 hours a week. This is after not getting the usual overtime in Christmas season that makes or breaks your whole year. After this "good news" though, the boss turns around and says we'll have to be more "flexible" in return.

We heard that the real reason they have to give us 38 hours is because of a lawsuit pending against Toys-R-Us. So what they are doing now is, they'll give workers such a flexible schedule it's almost impossible to work. Also, workers who every year got at least a progressive raise this year are suddenly they have not "met their expectation on work" so they must be re-evaluated in 60 days. Meanwhile, you have to sell your soul—every week you get an evaluation. It reminds me of being in school. Even if you keep the job, the heavy hand of the boss is on you, always reminding you there's 100 people ready to take your job in a minute.

They couldn't bump us to part time right off and had to have this two-year plan and even that wasn't enough, because they have to justify themselves to their own rules, to the game they set in motion and to what minuscule rights we still have. The most boss-oriented employee in the store, the most reactionary worker, all of a sudden used the "u" word as what we need—a union.

I feel that we are living under that General Law of Capital Accumulation that Marx wrote of in *Capital*: "Modern industry's whole form of motion therefore depends on the constant transformation of a part of the working population into unemployed or semi-employed 'hands.'" Where workers before could live and die in one company, today we're all temporary labor, all falling into that army of reserve labor.

It is really strange to hear some left intellectuals totally dismissing workers as any kind of force for movement in this country. If the situation is as bad as it is, where is the voice of theory? This situation is as bad as a breeding ground for revolution. Not only is it not that, the challenge is not coming from the Left but from the Right, which raises the nationalist banner, or the "white working-class" banner, and has attracted some following. We as a working class do need some kind of answer. If it is not revolution, then it will be fascism. That to me is the General Law of Capitalist Accumulation—either total freedom or tyranny. Where is the responsibility of left thinkers?

—David L. Anderson

Toronto—Another city-wide strike closed the big industrial city of Hamilton on Feb. 23 and 24. Called by the Ontario Federation of Labour, this was one of the largest demonstrations in Canadian history. On Friday, 25,000 strikers closed down industrial plants and government offices, and the downtown core of the city was sealed off. The following day 120,000 marchers converged on Hamilton's Convention Centre, where the Tory Premier and the party faithful gathered.

A week before the great Hamilton strike, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union voted to turn down the Tory government's contract offer. On Monday, 25,000 OPSEU picketers were on the streets. Then on Feb. 27, 50,000 Ontario public servants joined an unprecedented strike action that has closed government offices across the province.

A facet of the Canadian events (and those in France last December) that has been obscured is the role of the "universal class" in Hegel's terms, in other words, public sector workers. Theoretically and practically the left treats these workers as though they have already been privatized. But public sector workers form a huge barrier to capital's rush to lower the social wage and crush the poor, the disabled, children and other dependents of the state. —David MacGregor

Wildcat at Dodge Truck

Detroit—A wildcat strike by over 1,800 workers erupted at Chrysler's Warren truck assembly plant toward the end of the day shift on Saturday, Feb. 17, when the company fired the local union's president and committeeman for "illegally" stopping production.

The two fired union officials, Randall Pearson, UAW Local 140 president, and Herman Ector, committeeman, claimed that the walkout occurred because production was unsafe at the plant which produces Chrysler's popular Dakota and Ram Charger trucks. Picket lines kept the plant closed through Monday with the workers demanding the return of their fired officials before they would go back to work.

International UAW officers, condemning the strike as unauthorized, ordered the strikers back to work, and the company declared that it would not enter into any talks with the union about the firings until the workers went back to their jobs. The strike ended on Tuesday morning and Chrysler management said it would consider the discharges.

Local union President Pearson is also a member of the UAW's Chrysler national negotiating team, and a Chrysler retiree said this action by the company could very well have been an effort to try to get rid of Pearson since UAW contracts end this fall and Chrysler is being targeted for strike action. Chrysler is currently the most profitable of the U.S. auto companies, has billions of dollars in reserve funds and would therefore have the most to lose if it failed to negotiate a favorable contract with the UAW, which would in turn be used as the pattern for negotiations with GM and Ford.

The Warren plant, which daily produces more than 500 each of the highly profitable Dakota and Ram Charger trucks, reportedly lost more than \$7 million in profits from the lost production of 1,800 trucks during the three-day strike. —Retiree

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

by saying she knew we were angry; she was angry, too. She very quickly, however, got around to reminding us of the plant rules, including attendance. She said that we had signed a contract with the company when we were hired. She must have meant the sheets on the front of our copies of the plant rules and the attendance policy that stated "I have read and understood..." which we signed and turned in to Human Resources.

All I could think about was the way Karl Marx in *Capital* discussed the "contract" between the buyer of labor-power, the capitalist, and its seller, the worker. The laborer approaches the capitalist as an isolated person who makes an individual agreement to put her capacity to labor at the capitalist's disposal for a certain amount in wages. It is an exchange between equals: "They contract as free agents...and they exchange equivalent for equivalent."

As soon as a worker enters the process of production, however, all equality disappears. "(T)he co-operation of wage-laborers is entirely brought about by the capital that employs them... Hence the connection existing between their various labors appears to them, ideally, in the shape of a preconceived plan of the capitalist, and practically in the shape of the authority of the same capitalist, in the shape of the powerful will of another, who subjects their activity to his aims."

The other thing that disappears once a worker enters the process of production is her isolation. Cooperation creates "a new power, namely, the collective power of the masses," which benefits the capitalist as long as he has control over it, but which also can be the basis for workers' resistance. Our rebellion was small and short-lived, but I was glad to find three other people who were willing to risk discipline and stay home on that Saturday.

Local 282 back at Hood

Jackson, Miss.—Tonight, Feb. 26, was a great night for workers at Hood Furniture. More than seven years ago we voted to be represented by Furniture Workers Local 282, a division of IUE. We voted for Local 282 because it is an organization that fights for its members and supports them, and because we learned to trust and believe in its president, Willie Rudd, an independent Black man. The company refused to negotiate with Local 282. They abused, mistreated and lied to us.

In 1993, the IUE International in Washington, D.C. sold us into another local (Local 797) behind our backs. But we never gave up. Tonight we voted 49-0 to return to Local 282, and we have a chance to rebuild our union.

On Feb. 22, at 6 a.m., Willie Rudd, Local 282 president, had arrived at the plant to distribute leaflets inviting workers to participate in this vote ending Local 797 representation at the plant, and transferring representation to Local 282. Several of us got to work about 45 minutes before the shift started, and Rudd was in the parking lot. A new guard from Days Security told Rudd to get off company property, that they had orders to keep him out of the plant.

But the guards weren't going to stop us. Several of us who have supported Local 282 from the beginning took the leaflets from Willie Rudd as he was being forced off the property. We passed them out to everyone coming in to work. They couldn't say anything to us. When the shift was going to start, we stopped and went in to work, so we couldn't be accused of doing anything on company time. By keeping Rudd off the property, after they have allowed Local 797 representatives in the plant many times, they made a mistake. Rudd told us later, "the company should have ignored me. Instead they made a hero of me."

We never wanted anything to do with Local 797 and the slave contract they signed with Hood. The reason the International agreed to let us go back to 282 is that we stuck together and refused to accept 797, because it is a company union. We wore 282 T-shirts; we had our own union in ourselves.

Local 797 gave up when they saw what happened last fall when they tried to take dues from the checks of the workers they got to sign their cards. There was such an outcry that they stopped after two checks. They knew they wouldn't ever get dues income.

The law says that Hood has to recognize Local 282 as the union representative for the contract now. We all hate this contract. What we have in the plant now is a rule of terror called the "point system." Everyday they use the system to terrorize workers; if you get too many points, they get rid of you. And there is nothing fair or right about how you get points. The contract is everything for the company, and nothing for us. But the contract runs out on Aug. 4, 1996, and we need to sign up as many workers into the union as possible before that.

We will negotiate a new contract right here in Jackson, not in Washington, D.C., like they did with the 797 contract. We have a right to be treated like human beings, not like monkeys or dogs. We showed that we can hold out for years, and we are not going to stop now. —Two Hood Furniture workers

Workload real SEIU story

Chicago—I don't know who is worse, SEIU Local 25 Vice Presidents Dwyer and Waldo, just fired by the international union, or President Gene Moats and Secretary-Treasurer Richard Malkowski, who they charged with nepotism and corruption. All I know I know is in 1992 I went to Waldo because I had too much work to do, and he said I should feel lucky there were still two women working for the amount I had. I hadn't been back to a union meeting since then—until Feb. 12. I didn't want to hear about Moats and Malkowski I didn't.

There was basically a riot of Polish people! There were a thousand people there, but the capacity of the meeting room is 50 to 100. The police came and told people to leave quietly or be arrested.

In the meeting there was one Polish woman who was crying. She had been working for 26 years when her boss fired her. The union found her another job across the street from her old one, but she didn't want it. She would have to start all over again without any seniority and she would have been the first to get laid off.

They will fire you if they want. If we get three letters in one year, we're out—no ifs, ands or buts. The union won't help you.

Local 25 isn't really doing its job. They are afraid of BOMA, the Building Owner Managers Association. At the big meeting at the Bismarck Hotel to sell the contract a year and a half ago, there was Moats, Malkowski and Waldo, up there on the stage. Local 25 didn't win because the non-union subcontracting is still going on.

A year and a half later, we just got a cost-of-living raise, 30¢, so now we're getting \$10.85 an hour. Now they got temporary workers in the downtown Loop and they are paying them \$7.50 an hour. They should be union. I know a lady who's been working for four years. She's still getting \$7.50 an hour. Our boss says we can be replaced with \$7.50 an hour workers.

When I started in 1978 there were four women doing the same work as two today. Until the last union contract, the square footage used to be 32,000 square feet maximum that each one of us has to clean every night. Now it's up to 45,000 square feet. So the two of us each have a little over 40,000 square feet! Some have 50,000. We are probably going to be on disability soon!

Moats, who was president of Local 25 in 1974, said things have changed since then because women are making the same wages as the men. But the women are also working harder than most men!

—Women building cleaners

From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya
**MARXIST-HUMANIST
ARCHIVES**

Editor's Note

The lecture tour in Japan by Raya Dunayevskaya during the winter of 1965-66 was arranged by a group of revolutionaries in the Japanese New Left. A mass movement that had arisen quickly in the 1960s, the Japanese New Left was proudly Marxist, opposed to both Communism and imperialism, vigorously active both in workers' struggles and in theoretical exploration. Dunayevskaya participated in many of their demonstrations, meetings and discussions. To conclude her tour, she gave a lecture on Hegel "in and for himself" to a group of activists and writers in Tokyo on Jan. 2, 1966. Because a serious grappling with the dialectic-proper remains crucial for any freedom movement today, we publish that lecture here on its 30th anniversary.

Part I, which appears here, discusses Hegel's *Phenomenology*. Part II, which will appear in April, takes us through his *Science of Logic* and *Philosophy of Mind*. The original typescript can be found in the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism—a Half-Century of Its World Development (#9697)*. * This lecture will be one of the readings for our upcoming classes on "Dialectics of Liberation Today" (See below).

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

The second thing to make clear is that, insofar as I am concerned, this means his major works—*Phenomenology of Mind*, *Science of Logic*, *Philosophy of Mind*. I am not interested in Hegel's reactionary ideas about the state, even in his serious work, *The Philosophy of Right*. Marx said all that needs to be said on that question in his criticism of that work. His analysis that what is a legal essence [in Hegel] is actually a legal superstructure, which reveals the actual state of production and economy, led to Marx's discovery of the materialist foundation of history. After that, everything he criticized or took over from Hegel was as a revolutionary materialist.

I am also disregarding Hegel's politics, which has nothing to do with us and is not what we take from Hegel. I am even disregarding Hegel's lectures on *The Philosophy of History* and *The History of Philosophy* because they were his way of giving examples that his great ideas were not as abstract as they sounded, and I am not interested in how he applied them. I am interested only in the actual logic and movement of those ideas which he set forth not only as a summation of all that went before, but as both the prerequisite for Marxism and something we have not yet exhausted. We first have to work out many of the ideas before we can transcend them.

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807) was a summons to grasp the spirit of the times. It was a demand that the philosophers give ear to the urgency of the times. It was a challenge to all the philosophers who came before him (and the greatest in modern times was Kant) that 25 years had passed since the French Revolution, and philosophy was still using the old categories. He was saying they had to stop using the conclusions of other philosophers, right or wrong, as a pillow for their own intellectual sloth, their own laziness, their own attempt not to meet the challenge of the times. A new thing had happened in the world in a 25-year period, which compelled a new stage of cognition. And a new stage of cognition means both a summation of what has happened up to your time and a recognition of the pull that the future has on you. We want to see how Hegel

* For her report on the trip to Japan, see "The New Left in Japan: Achievements and Goals" by Raya Dunayevskaya in *News & Letters*, February 1966. (#3727). Also see the "Weekly Political Letter" of March 5, 1962, "Japan's New Left of Intellectuals and Workers; Possibilities of New International Relations." (#3029)

Lecture on Hegel in Japan

'A summons to grasp spirit of the times'

answered that summons and what it means for our day. The first total statement he made was in the *Phenomenology of Mind* which was to have been an introduction to the *System*, the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*. It is generally recognized as his greatest work.

I want to make sure we realize that Hegel, despite the abstract language, is actually dealing with 2,500 years of the development of thought, mainly but not completely of Western civilization. But since we cannot go into great detail, I want to make an even worse abstraction, in one sense, and follow what Marx does in Volume Two of *Capital*. Marx says that the only way we will see the law of motion of capitalism is to disregard anything that interferes with just two departments of production—means of production and means of consumption (constant capital and variable capital, and so on). Always it is just two, like two classes.

I want to take the six stages of Hegel's development of Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason, Spirit, Religion and Absolute Knowledge, and divide them into two



"Snake dance" protests in 1960 prevent President Eisenhower's visit to Japan to complete the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty and they announce the birth of the Japanese New Left.

major stages. One will combine Consciousness, Self-Consciousness and Reason, which I consider the development from 500 B.C. (slave society and Aristotle as the ancient world's greatest philosopher) to Reason (which is capitalism, the French Revolution, Lutheranism, and Kant-Hegel). The second department is all the rest, that is, Spirit, the various forms of Alienated Spirit, and why there is still alienation even though you have reached Religion, and Absolute Knowledge. So there are two departments: 1.) Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, Reason and 2.) Spirit, Religion, and Absolute Knowledge.

In the first department what we have all previously emphasized from Marx forward is the section of Lordship and Bondage because we recognize that Hegel is showing that the lord could demand anything and the slave had to follow through, and yet Hegel is insisting that the slave is the one who gets "a mind of his own." That was one of the bases for Marx's great development of proletarian consciousness. Secondly, it was our proof that Hegel really did have in mind reality which included class structure and history, which included labor's condition. However, today that is not the point I want to em-

phasize because I am tracing the dialectic of thought itself.

The importance of that section, great as it is, is that the serf has got a mind of his own, but there are a lot of questions about whether he will get to Reason, whether he will get to Spirit. The main questions are the following: He is showing that if you already become conscious, not only of the world and yourself as opposites, but of yourself as yourself getting Self-Consciousness and going further to try to break down this division between the opposite and you, and if at that point you are so thrilled with the idea you have reached, it could become, in his words, "just a piece of cleverness, and not yet the mastery over reality." You could become just an Alienated Soul.

There are other questions. I want to take up one we confront in *Self-Consciousness—Stoicism*. Hegel shows he is opposed not only to the Alienated Soul who has got this piece of cleverness and is what we could call a "Beatnik" today. He is even opposed to what other philosophers consider a great stage, Stoicism. Everybody thinks you are great if you can withstand all sorts of unpleasant things before you. Hegel says not to forget that Stoicism arose when there was universal slavery. You as an individual recognized this was a horrible society and you couldn't overcome it; you weren't what we would call a mass movement that could overcome it. Being a Stoic was actually a rationalization as when the Greeks developed such stupidities as "a philosopher is free even though he is in chains."

Hegel was showing that everything that appears great is only a further stage of alienation, even when he comes to Reason (and we will get to that later). The important thing, therefore, about not stopping at Lordship and Bondage is that that is only a beginning of getting a mind of your own. Hegel is showing that if you are going to master reality, you have to go a lot further than that. Attempts to master it by a thought such as Stoicism—which can be used as an argument both for somebody trying to be free and for the opposite, rationalizing your existence—show it is absolutely insufficient if you are to become the master of reality.

Even when the move to overcome it is sparked by a real revolution, whether he sees that as Christianity or as the actual French revolution, it is still not the answer. As against using the conclusions of other philosophers as a pillow for intellectual sloth, Hegel shows a new movement of history.

There was an actual revolution. It broke down everything, smashed it to smithereens, and started something new. The people who did this great thing, Robespierre and the other leaders [of the French Revolution], recognized Reason as their deity. Yet what happened? Why did the Terror follow? Why did Napoleon follow? Why didn't we get to the millennium? Hegel sees Reason as a very new high stage, but instead of ending all the alienations, it just brings them to a higher stage. Reason—the movement from 500 B.C. to the French Revolution—ends the first department of the two into which I have divided the six stages of *Phenomenology*. The next stage is Spirit.

Now we come to the second department, the central core. The Alienated Soul has moved to a higher development and is now an Alienated Spirit. The higher development is that man has achieved this revolution but begins to identify himself with it either as faction or as person: Hegel makes a tremendous attack on the State here. He attacked it thoroughly—totally—even any future state that would come between the person and his development.

There is no one on the historic stage today, whether Mao, or Castro, or anyone else, that you cannot find described in the section on the Alienated Spirit. It is about what happens when there is a new revolution and yet a transformation arises in the relationship of reality and thought in such a way that you begin to identify yourself with the state, or with one single faction, and there is as great a Reign of Terror in thought as in actual revolution. The Reign of Terror in thought is against the Other, the new opponents. The new opponents include even religions, which we come to next.

Hegel's criticism of what he called "the discipline of culture" is the foundation for Marx's criticism of the superstructure. Hegel was no proletarian revolutionary,

(Continued on page 10)

At a moment when today's political retrogression looms so large that the very idea of revolution seems unreal, it becomes urgent to turn with new eyes to dialectics. That is because dialectical philosophy—as formulated by Hegel, re-created by Marx, and restated for our day in the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism—not only reveals the limits of today's economic and political phenomena, but also provides the basis for discerning new visions of the future which are inherent in the present. To overcome the crisis in envisioning an alternative to the established social order, we need to critically reassess what dialectics means for today. This class series aims to meet this challenge by exploring several themes spoken to in the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.

Announcing a series of classes starting in March ...

DIALECTICS OF LIBERATION TODAY: HEGEL, MARX AND MARXIST-HUMANISM IN LIGHT OF THE CURRENT CRISIS

CLASS 1 • Today's Changed World and The Need for a Revolutionary New Beginning

CLASS 2 • Forces of Revolt as Reason, Philosophy as Force of Revolt

CLASS 3 • Why Hegel? Why Now?

CLASS 4 • Marx's Philosophy of 'Revolution in Permanence': Its Past, Present and Future

CLASS 5 • Spontaneity, Philosophy, and Organization: The Untrodden Path in Post-Marx Marxism

Admission is free. For a syllabus of suggested readings and information, contact the News and Letters Committee nearest you—see page 11.

Essay Article

by Andrew Kliman

Once insight into the connectedness [of bourgeois relations] has been gained, all theoretical belief in the permanent necessity of existing conditions collapses
—Karl Marx¹

I. Economic crisis and ideology

What motivates this essay are the crises of today. First, the global economic crisis, now in its third decade. Capital accumulation as a percentage of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) has dropped by 25% since 1973 in the developed (OECD) nations, and by one-third in the U.S. since 1978. This crisis has devastated the Third World, brought double-digit unemployment to Europe, and ever-declining living standards, job security, and the wrecking of the social welfare system to working people in the U.S.

Second, the accompanying crisis in thought. So unmanageable is the economic crisis that Keynesianism is nearly defunct. It has become clear that its "pump-priming" policies offer no solution, nor can the Keynesians account for the crisis except through partial and ad hoc explanations. Likewise defunct is their liberal reformism which was predicated on a "rising tide that lifts all boats." So unmanageable is the crisis that the new reigning right-wing ideology itself declares that "government" cannot solve our economic problems—though it would have us believe the economy is in fine shape just as it is, as the Chicago School's Robert Lucas opined upon winning the Nobel Prize in October.

Attention and blame are thus deflected from the capitalist mode of production onto "the Other." The Right "explains" to white and employed working people that their economic troubles are due to Blacks, immigrants, the "underclass." Although you are working hard, you're struggling to get by because "they" are not, and they and the babies they keep having are eating more and more of your tax dollars.

Whether "they" are demonized as morally and culturally deviant, or as too stupid to work and use contraceptives; their very existence is under attack as a needless and wasteful expense. This ideology potentially legitimizes not only such measures as the new disenfranchisement of women and kids to welfare benefits, but the turning of ghettos into reservations (a prospect floated by both Ross Perot and the authors of *The Bell Curve*) and even "ethnic cleansing." Or as Mary put it, "As far as this mode of production is concerned, labour-power is superfluous the moment it is no longer necessary to occupy it for 12 to 15 hours per day."²

Yet no matter how false and intellectually feeble is the Right's "explanation" of people's economic troubles, it does have the advantage of being comprehensive. It will undoubtedly continue to make sense to many people, probably increasingly many, as long as a coherent and comprehensive alternative understanding of the crisis goes unprojected. As noted above, liberalism offers no alternative in this regard; and most of the Left limits itself to decrying and disputing the Right's ideological assault.

Partly this is due to an insufficient recognition on the Left of the power of ideas. Yet it is also due to the Left's own inability to account for the crisis. Left-Keynesian underconsumptionist theory is sharing the fate of mainstream Keynesianism. For a time, many on the Left maintained that rising wages were squeezing profitability. This clearly cannot account for continued crisis at a time of falling real wages.

The only other theory in contention is Marx's law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit. Yet, despite its evident relevance in connecting automation and robotics to mass unemployment and economic crisis, radical economists increasingly reject it because it seems to have been disproved logically. A 1960 theorem of the Leftist economist Nobuo Okishio allegedly shows that Marx's law cannot hold. No matter how empirically relevant the law may seem, this "proof" of its logical impossibility apparently ends all discussion.

To be sure, rejection of Marx's law has always been widespread, even on the Left. Okishio's theorem has made it all but universal.³

II. The Okishio Theorem

Okishio purportedly shows that no matter how mechanized or automated production becomes, profit-maximizing capitalists will never adopt techniques that end up reducing the general profit rate—unless real wages rise. Marx was "simply wrong" to locate declining profitability in mechanization.

This theorem, of course, does not deny that the profit rate can fall. It disputes Marx's explanation of the fall, implying instead that rising real wages are the cause. Likewise, although many theorists have criticized Okishio's theorem, they have not vindicated Marx's law, because they root falling profitability in something other than mechanization itself.

The most influential critique of this sort is that of An-

Marx's law of the falling rate of profit today

war Shaikh and Tekeshi Nakatani. Whereas the Okishio theorem assumes that firms adopt the productive techniques that are most profitable at current prices, Shaikh and Nakatani suggest that cutthroat competition forces them to adopt those techniques that will be most profitable when prices are slashed to undercut competitors. When such "suboptimal" techniques are adopted, the profit rate can fall.

There is undoubtedly merit to this idea. Yet it posits the competitive process, not mechanization, as the cause of declining profitability, in contrast to Marx, who argued that "it is the fall in the profit rate that provokes the competitive struggle between capitals, and not the reverse" (365). Since it reverses the chain of causation,



Young unemployed workers in Marseille, France carry banner that reads "unemployed" in mass demonstration against government economic policy that has led to double-digit unemployment.

the Shaikh-Nakatani critique does not vindicate Marx's law.

The Okishio theorem has thus had a decisive impact in turning radical economists' attention away from capitalist mode of production and towards imputation and competition. Because of such serious implications, and because of the ostensible rigor of Okishio's "proof," the theorem demands a serious examination.

III. Physical productivity vs. value productivity

Okishio "refutes" Marx only by abandoning his concepts of value and thus profitability. For Marx, the profit rate expresses the degree to which dead labor is augmented by surplus living labor. For Okishio, the equilibrium profit rate reflects the degree of physical productivity (output per unit of labor). Given constant real wages, new techniques adopted by profit-maximizing firms to raise their own profitability are so productive that they

This conflation of value production and use-value production is ubiquitous. Today's ideologists propose reversing capitalism's unending economic slump through high tech and productivity increases. Prior to Okishio, moreover, several other noted thinkers also critiqued Marx's law by arguing that greater productivity translates into greater profitability. And it is precisely because almost all critiques of Okishio's theorem have implicitly accepted its conception of profitability that they have failed to vindicate Marx's law.⁴

Let us examine this conception more closely. Imagine an economy that produces only grain, by using grain as seed, and workers, who are paid in grain. In this simple case, Okishio's profit rate is a physical measure: the ratio of surplus grain (grain output minus grain input) to grain invested. Yet even in a multi-product economy, his profitability measure is essentially a physical one.

What this measure implicitly assumes is that the value of grain is constant, irrespective of any changes over time in the labor-time needed to produce it. Marx argued to the contrary that "the total labour of ... 2 million workers always produces the same magnitude of value" (323), no matter how much grain they produce. Thus, as productivity rises, each bushel of grain contains less labor, hence less value.

Rising productivity will indeed raise the ratio of surplus-grain to grain advanced. Yet the grain output appears only at harvest time, when values are lower, while the capital advanced (seed and wages) was invested at sowing time, when values were higher. The ratio of surplus-value to the sum of value advanced can therefore fall, even with constant real wages.

Even larger is the gap between the value of output and old fixed capital. Last summer, for instance, a 1990 Cray computer, originally worth \$12 million, was offered for resale at \$30,000—one-quarter of 1% of its original price!

Hence, whereas David Ricardo sought to explain declining profitability as being caused by exhaustion of the soil and thus falling agricultural productivity, Marx argued exactly the opposite: "The profit rate does not fall because labour becomes less productive, but rather because it becomes more productive" (347).

Today, only a handful of environmentalists would suborn an external Other, such as the "underclass": "the

scribe to Ricardo's view. Yet Marx's point also answers those who fetishize high tech as a solution to capitalism's economic crisis, and indeed any who lay the blame true barrier to capitalist production is capital itself" (358). As rising productivity leads to the expulsion of "superfluous" workers from production, capital lessens its control over and extraction of the living labor that is the only source, not of material products, but its value and surplus-value.

IV. Development of the law's internal contradictions

In itself, the above is insufficient to defend Marx's theory. Two other important objections have been lodged.

First, although the connection of falling profitability to economic crisis may seem obvious—capitalists curtail their investment—this and similar "obvious" notions have been strongly challenged.⁵ And, as we shall see, Marx's explanation is grounded in capital itself, not capitalists' reactions to the falling profit rate. Second, many theorists attempt to blunt the implications of Marx's law by emphasizing that it refers only to a "tendency" of the profit rate to fall. The same productivity increases that tend to lower the profit rate likewise cheapen the means of production and thereby tend to raise the profit rate.

This is true. Yet for Marx the issue was not which of these tendencies dominates. Rather than peacefully coexisting, they are brought together in their internal contradiction in *Capital* Volume III, Chapter 15, "Development of the Law's Internal Contradictions": "[T]hese two aspects involved in the accumulation process cannot just be considered as existing quietly side by side...at certain points the conflict of contending agencies breaks through in crises. Crises are never more than momentary, violent

solutions for the existing contradictions" (357). Highlighting the process of devaluation discussed above, Raya Dunayevskaya also recognized it as the key link between the tendency of the rate of profit to fall and capitalist crisis: "[t]he constant technological revolutions make the time necessary to reproduce a product tomorrow less than the time it took to produce it today. Hence there comes a time when all commodities...have been 'overpaid.' The crisis...follows."⁶

By reducing values over time, in other words, mechanization itself causes the "overaccumulation" of capital: Today's capital, acquired at higher values, is too large relative to tomorrow's lower-valued output. This immanent devaluation of commodities eventually manifests itself in a lack of new value to acquire inputs and workers, and thus sell—at the old, higher values.

Yet declining values also bring about a contradiction between the old and new values of capital. When mechanization's immanent devaluation of capital is made manifest in reality, the contradiction is "resolved": the means of production become cheapened, which does tend to raise the potential profit rate.

This is in fact why Okishio's profit rate rises, the grain invested at sowing time is, in effect, retroactively revalued to conform to its post-harvest value. He thus treats devaluation as an unalloyed blessing to the capitalists, as if a portion of the existing capital simply and painlessly vanishes. Marx, however, recognizes the forcible and temporal nature of devaluation: already existing capital is eradicated through physical destruction, bankruptcies, capital losses due to falling asset prices, and so on (358, 362ff). All this implies a lower, not higher, rate of return on the original outlay of capital.

For Marx, then, the primary expression of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall is not a long-term unilinear fall in the observed profit rate over time, but recurrent crises, which, through the cheapening of capital, likewise tend to restore the profit rate.

V. Looking backward and forward

It should be noted, however, that whereas in Marx's time "normal" economic crises sufficed to destroy enough capital so that value production could be renewed, by the 1930s and '40s, renewal required not only a decade of depression but the destruction of World War II as well, and then only through expanded state intervention.⁷ Today, it is not clear what, if anything, will bring capitalism out of its two-decade-long slump.

Yet it should by now be clear that crisis and increasing misery will not "automatically" bring about either the collapse of capitalism or a revolutionary upsurge to end it and create a new, human society. What becomes crucial is a recognition that our existing conditions are not a "permanent necessity," but result from the value-form of production—which makes us "useful" only insofar as we serve the "restricted end, the valorization of the existing capital" (359)—and that this restriction of human development is capitalism's immanent barrier.

The absolute opposite to the production of capital for the sake of more capital which Marx projected in *Capital*, Volume III, "the development of human powers as an end in itself" (959), is neither mere rhetoric nor utopian morality, but the concrete, practical alternative to a future of continuing crisis.

1. Letter to Ludwig Kugelmann, July 11, 1868.

2. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Vintage, 1981, p. 372. Subsequent references will be indicated in the text, by page number only.

3. To take just two of many possible examples, John Roemer, a founder of "analytical Marxism," writes that "the key economic models and theories that Marxism champions, such as ... the falling rate of profit, are simply wrong" (Free to Lose, Harvard Univ. Press, 1988, p. 2). M.C. Howard and J.E. King write that "To reassert in the face of this [disproof] the relevance of the falling rate of profit, as analyzed by Marx, has done much damage to the intellectual credentials of Marxian political economy" (*A History of Marxian Economics*, Vol. II, Princeton Univ. Press, 1992, p. xiii).

4. For the very few exceptions, see John Ernst, "Simultaneous Valuation Extirpated," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 14:2, Summer 1982; Andrew Kliman, "A Value-theoretic Critique of the Okishio Theorem"; and Alan Freeman, "Price, Value and Profit." The latter essays appear in Marx and Non-equilibrium Economics, Alan Freeman and Guglielmo Carchedi (eds.), Edward Elgar Pub., 1995.

5. See especially Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy, "Why Does Profitability Matter," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 25:1, March 1993.

6. Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, Univ. of Illinois Press, 1991, p. 43.

7. See Raya Dunayevskaya, *Philosophy and Revolution*, 3d ed., Columbia Univ. Press, 1981, pp. 226-29.

BOSNIA AND MONTGOMERY: PHILOSOPHIC COMPREHENSION AND GLOBAL CONNECTIONS

I saw a connection between the Archives column on the "Montgomery Bus Boycott and the American Roots of Marxism" and Sheila Fuller's Essay on "The philosophic meaning of Bosnia's struggle," which were printed on facing pages in the January-February issue. The Bus Boycott and Bosnia both represented struggles against segregation that cast one group as subhuman. Ethnic/racial apartheid exists on a global scale. Yet the greatest connection between the two events is the similarity of the Left's response. Finding the revolutionary significance in both cases was either reduced to liberalism or denied altogether. The missing philosophic comprehension of what each represents has prevented the kind of solidarity that moves to reach a totally new world. Philosophy, to me, is the means by which revolutionary notions contained within the struggles are realized and can be developed in other struggles.

Sonia Bergonzi
Chicago

I am translating the Essay on Bosnia into Spanish to send to my friends back home because that Essay gave me some insight into why there is "ethnic cleansing" within the same race, why the Other has to be destroyed, why there is so much fear in my country of Indians integrating the cities. The Essay will be of value back home also because we still have some feudalism there in which the master-slave dialectic is relevant and because there is interest among the intellectuals in Hegel.

Ecuadoran
New York

I would like to know more about what you mean by the "philosophic void" within the Left. What is the relationship of this philosophic void to the transformation of some Yugoslav socialist-humanists into fascists?

Philosophy professor
New York

The Essay article and Editorial on Bosnia in the January-February issue of N&L dramatically complemented each other and were very important contributions to the understanding of the essential issues of that tragedy. The Essay in particular provided very profound insights into the true revolutionary nature of the Bosnians' determination to maintain their multiethnic culture. Most powerfully demonstrated was the ability of a comprehensive Marxist-Humanist analysis to both reveal limitations of other views and show the universality of the relationship of Bosnia to other struggles of liberation—including here in the U.S.

Retiree
Detroit

The excerpt from *Marxism and Freedom* on the Montgomery Bus Boycott took up the whole Southern way of life, its identity through culture and the rudderlessness of the intellectuals. Raya Dunayevskaya really took on Faulkner, a literary icon in America. That is most unusual for a leftist intellectual. Reading the piece in N&L you can see that only through Marxist-Humanism was it possible to appreciate the Montgomery Bus Boycott without separating it from its global ramifications.

Hospital worker
Bay Area

For years many on the Left based their solidarity with the Palestinian people solely on the P.L.O.'s opposition to Israel, the external enemy, and not by working out an alternative that challenged "the internal hierarchies of class and sexuality which confront national liberation struggles." Once the P.L.O. was no longer "anti-Israel" many of those Leftists were totally disoriented because the issues could no longer be solely framed in the context of opposing the external enemy. In contrast Marxist-Humanists have always based their solidarity with any national liberation struggle on developing the ideas and goal of freedom that a movement is for.

This I think can also help explain why many of those leftists who claimed to be so supportive of the Palestinian cause in the past, turned out to be shamefully

quiet on the Bosnian struggle for the preservation of a multicultural existence. The idea of the positive liberatory content of the Bosnian struggle against "ethnic cleansing" and for "multiculturalism" was dismissed and not understood.

Iranian revolutionary
Illinois

I was appalled by how the government of Croatia was treating people during my recent visit there. There is not much hope for that government under Tudjman. Fascists have shut down the only school where you could teach two foreign languages. They claim the students are "not learning to love their country." They are attacking the humanities and social sciences.

There is a plan to repatriate 100,000 Bosnian refugees "with assistance" but there are 200,000 Bosnian refugees in Croatia. Bosnian refugee families are being split because some have to stay with their children in Croatia. The Bosnian territories are so devastated that many cannot go back. The whole infrastructure of Bosnia will have to be rebuilt. I think the Dayton agreement is a huge moral compromise but I don't know what else we can do. For all those who died it is a defeat.

Croatian-American solidarity activist
Chicago

I read the last *News & Letters* and the story on the Montgomery Bus Boycott. It brought back a lot of memories.

Back then, the papers and the government were trying to play the patriot thing if you went on these marches. The media showed people getting beat, implying this is not something you want to join. But at that age you are growing mentally, a whole psychological change from being dependent on your parents to being dependent on yourself.

The struggles now are more isolated than they were back then. The struggles are happening coast to coast, but you don't know about them. That's why I had feelings of great appreciation for people who walked the extra mile, wrote letters, stood with us.

Staley worker
Decatur, Ill.

There was something unique happening in Bosnia, something that could not be allowed to take root or flower. That is why the "divide and rule" tactic was used. The rulers didn't want to see multiculturalism succeed. There is real importance in Bosnia for the world.

Dan
Los Angeles

Bosnia relates to us and our work in the U.S. Sheila Fuller's point is that you can posit identity or you can posit difference, both equally abstractly. But she shows the highest point you can get to there is contradiction. She is saying Bosnia is the test for us.

Bosnia raises issues for us here at home. What kind of thinking are we doing in the U.S. as a way out of the contradictions? The situation in Bosnia is being theorized mostly by postmodernists, discussing Hegelian identity and play of differences. What Sheila Fuller does with Hegel's Doctrine of Essence is not a fixed concept. It is an important step in critique of theory and what is happening with Western civilization.

Artist
Los Angeles

INCOME TAX PROTEST

At income tax time I feel compelled to show my outrage that 51% of the federal budget is allotted to past, present and future military spending. We're feeding a murderous arsenal instead of needy bellies. You can withhold, without penalty, the Federal Excise Tax on your phone bill. This is a minuscule act of protest, but I consider it a proclamation against our unhuman, inhuman system. Enclosed is a check for N&L for the approximate amount of my 1995 deduction of Federal Excise Tax.

Sheila Garden
New York

Readers' Views



FRANCE & ONTARIO ON STRIKE

A few comments on Kevin Anderson's article on the French Strikes (January-February N&L). The main theme of the strike was Prime Minister Alain Juppe's plan for reform of the social security system (welfare, unemployment aid, etc.). This plan has been maintained. The employers told Juppe: "Give in on the issue of retirement, but not on social security." On this point, the strike was unsuccessful. Juppe's austerity plan continues to go through, bit by bit. Also, we should remember that everyone knew that the strikes could not go on through Christmas. The family matters! Finally, the CFDT union federation (which opposed the strike) is not pro-Socialist. It is divided between unions close to the Right, with others close to the far Left. *Esprit* is not a leftist journal.

Pierre and Ariane Lantz
Paris

I learned a great deal from your coverage of the recent French events. The mainstream press has obscured the outcome of the strike suggesting that no gains were made by the workers. Your report makes clear how false that is.

Similarly, the right wing media here have vastly underplayed the one-day general strike in London, Ontario on Dec. 11, 1995 called to protest the anti-labor and anti-welfare state policies of Ontario Tory Premier Mike Harris. Big plants were shut down, schools closed and at least 20,000 people marched in sub-zero temperatures. Professors and teachers rubbed shoulders with bus drivers, hospital orderlies and industrial workers. The strike had a huge impact on people in southwestern Ontario, but elsewhere there is incomprehension.

David MacGregor
Toronto, Ontario

The militant resistance to an austerity budget in France was in full view here. Katha Pollit wrote in *The Nation* that the French strike "shows what can happen when people refuse to accept the parameters of the debate as defined for them by the political class." Maybe that's why workers and activists in Atlanta blockaded the French consulate in Atlanta in December in solidarity with French workers.

Journalist
Chicago

The article on the French strikes shows there's a second France from the one that is making a bid for world power. Their nuclear development is extensive. And now you can get six months in jail for mixing languages on the air. It is important to establish revolutionary links with France today.

Observer
Berkeley

FARRAKHAN'S AGENDA

It was instructive that one of Farrakhan's first acts upon returning from his recent trip to Iraq and Iran was to meet in Chicago with leaders of 300 organizations who helped build the Million Man March. Many of them are upset that Farrakhan walked off with the money raised at the march. And therein lies a tale.

Just as many in the Iranian Left in 1979-80 thought that they could use Khomeini to obtain a mass base, so much of the Left today thinks it can use Farrakhan to obtain a following in the Black community. Yet it is not they who are using Farrakhan, it is Farrakhan who is using them. This is only partly seen in what happened to the money raised at the march. It is most of all seen in how Farrakhan has used the march to present himself as the leading "militant" challenge to white America—though his "militancy" is based on counter-revolutionary, neo-fascist premises.

Peter Wermuth
Chicago

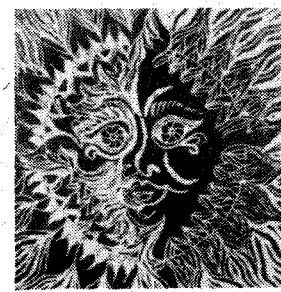
When Farrakhan visited Iran, he called the counter-revolutionary Iranian Islamic Republic—which has murdered hundreds of thousands of youth, women, national minorities and workers—a "model religious democracy." He embraced the Iranian president Hashemi Rafsanjani, a murderous dictator who has demolished any vestige of freedom and democracy which the mass-based 1979 revolution tried to establish. Clearly Farrakhan is made of the same matter that Rafsanjani is made of. Let us not be deceived. It is a counter-revolutionary agenda that directs his misogynist, anti-Semitic, separatist, homophobic, capitalist organizing drive in the U.S.A.

Iranian feminist
Chicago

HUNGARIAN POVERTY LINE

I just heard on the radio that the IMF has a problem in establishing the poverty line here in Hungary (whether it should be the equivalent of \$100 or \$120 per month), whereby they would classify up to 40% of the population as such and not the presently official 10%. In actuality, we could speak of 60% to 70%, if not more, living in actual poverty. It is hard to understand what criteria they are using to measure poverty when most people here live in misery. Schools are closing because they don't have money to pay for heating. Apartment houses are without heat because they can't pay their gas bills. The average minimum wage hovers around 80 U.S. cents per hour. It is paid most of the time under the table as otherwise it would be subject to a 30% income tax. Yet prices are at least equal and sometimes higher than in the U.S. A monthly old age pension is between U.S. \$80 and \$200. A pair of running shoes can get as high as \$140; a pair of regular shoes, \$60-\$300.

Gyorgy
Budapest



'WAITING TO EXHALE'

I couldn't set up a "Waiting to Exhale" movie party with the other Black women I work with because of our conflicting schedules, so I ended up going alone. But not once did I feel alone. The audience was wonderful. I've heard a lot of critique of the movie and share some of it but the criticism that it "lacked realism" is not what concerned me or the other Black women who felt compelled to see the movie. I went to see some image of myself on a big, wide-screen. We are so stereotyped it is as if we don't exist at all. There was a hunger to see what we go through even if it is portrayed in these alienated middle-class women.

I commented to one of my friends that we now need a "Waiting to Exhale" that has to do with Black working women to let people know how we survive. She said, "It would have to show how we really are not surviving." I guess that is really more to the point.

Diane Lee
Chicago

"Waiting to Exhale" did strike a chord with me, a white woman, in showing the contradiction between where one's life actually is, and the hopes and dreams that are "pushed" by society, i.e. getting and/or keeping a man. This contradiction is shown in how disastrous all the relationships with men were. Counterposed to it are moments the women shared with each other, which were warm and supportive. But there is no resolution. Despite the applause and practically a standing ovation at one part, I can't believe that the women in the audience really identified with the characters in the movie. I can only assume that they enjoyed seeing miserable men put in their place by strong women.

Women's liberationist
Oakland, Cal.

POLITICS OF OPPRESSION: U.S. STYLE

The New Hampshire primary results certainly bore out the warning in your January-February Lead on the "ailing state of the union" when it typed that Buchanan could well be the type Daniel Guerin had in mind when he wrote in Fascism and Big Business that "When fascism proclaims itself anti-bourgeois it has no intention of attacking the existing social order" but just wants to inject fresh blood into it.

Alarmed Pennsylvania

"homosexual lifestyles." There was an attempt to force the statewide public TV network to self-censor itself of anything that portrayed the so-called "gay lifestyle" in an acceptable manner. I wrote a letter pointing out that even a tribute to Lenny Bernstein could have been illegal under such a restriction.

Correspondent Oklahoma

Colin Powell was brought out to speak against Pat Buchanan, saying Buchanan was a bigot and not good for the Republican Party. But Powell, just like Buchanan, is opposed to gays in the military. I guess there's a limit to tolerance.

Math professor Milwaukee, Wis.

The last time I watched C-Span, I saw people in Congress piecemealing the funds. To me the Republicans are setting the stage to go in the back door with what they want. Education, for example, isn't getting funded at all. But Clinton is scared to confront them again because this is an election year and he doesn't want it to look like he is shutting down the government.

Woman bus driver Decatur, Ill.

A week after celebrating Dr. M.L. King's birthday in Oklahoma City, the City Council decided that the official Human Rights Commission should be abolished. The pretext for the decision, in a 5 to 3 vote, was that the gay/lesbian rights ordinance recommended by the commission was inconsistent with "moral values" held by some Bible Belt residents.

One Democratic state representative has also introduced a resolution to put the legislature "on record" as opposed to

With the government we see in there now, they're talking about cutting Medicare. Are old people supposed to just die? The government can do better, especially for old people and people like us who take care of them. A lot of us are home care workers because we like the job. We don't want to see people deprived of home care and going into nursing homes where they won't be taken care of at all.

Home care workers Chicago

What Pat Buchanan offers is a quick fix. The working class is impatient and does need an answer, but the quick fix is a dead end. Without a total vision, workers will still jump for something.

David L. Anderson Chicago



LABOR'S STRUGGLES TODAY

The January-February issue of N&L shows that the conditions of prison and the conditions of work are not that far apart. A worker writes that "My neighbor's son says that he is not allowed to talk to any fellow employees while he's eating lunch."

Black worker Los Angeles

Where have you been? We missed you at Sinai Kosher. We have the foreman in the packaging department under control, thanks to News & Letters. He spends most of the time in the office. We need to see more things about what's going on here in that paper.

Sinai Kosher workers Chicago

I stumbled across your journal in a left-wing bookshop in London and found it a refreshing change to read about class struggle and radicalism in the U.S. One gets the impression from the British media that class struggle is not something that afflicts the U.S.

Socialist England

Reports of what the Staley workers are going through following the defeat of their struggle give a true picture of what it means to lose a war—a class war. The workers are now prisoners of war in that plant, and the hell of production that they knew only too well before, and tried to remedy is clearly much worse now. You can bet it will become increasingly unbearable both in and out of the plant.

Ex-miner Detroit

YOUNG IDEAS

There are so many ideas presented in N&L, not just theory and not just labor and liberation struggles, but all of it presented in unity. It has made me see the need for a solid philosophical basis as well as action. My brother, who is alienated more every day from this unjust system, has not yet discovered the power of collective action and becomes increasingly despairing of change.

Student Urbana

My only complaint about N&L is that it does not come out often enough and is too short. I like the articles that relate what Marx was writing about with what is happening today. The theoretical articles by Raya Dunayevskaya are just as important as the current events. I don't consider myself a Marxist-Humanist, though I draw my ideas extensively from Marx, Lenin and many other New Left figures like Marcuse, Althusser, etc.

I find the global New Left movement of 1968 inspiring ideologically and action-wise. It fused radical politics into culture and practice, which I think is the key for any successful revolution. As a 17-year-old high school senior, I firmly believe that in the next few years we will see a resurging student revolutionary movement. I plan on taking part in it.

High school revolutionary Pennsylvania

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Black/Red View

by John Alan

If the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary were only carnivals, we could dismiss them as third rate dramatics, but we have learned bitterly from history that third rate right-wing "political drama" can be an entr'acte (opening act) to a more repressive or even a fascistic society, if not strongly opposed from the beginning by racial minorities and the working class.

Those right-wing politicians didn't shoot-up a beer hall in Iowa or in New Hampshire to gain national attention, as Hitler's party did to get elected. There was no reason for them to do that, because they had television to send out their ideological message to the white middle class on such issues as balancing the national budget, a tough on crime policy, the moral absolute of family values and giving the states the authority over welfare. Each one of these issues is super-charged with a race and class bias, the most volatile issues in American politics. For instance, giving states the authority over welfare is a return to one of the most grievous and bitter struggles that African Americans engaged in to maintain their freedom in this country.

John Hope Franklin, the well known Black historian, observed in his book *Race and History* that: "The most powerful direct force in the maintenance of the two

Black World

(continued from page 1)

secution of Marcus Garvey whose 1921 trip to the Caribbean genuinely did stir up Black revolutionary sentiment against U.S. and European imperialism both in the region and in the U.S.

When it comes to being a willing tool of authoritarian governments abroad in their shadow boxing with U.S. imperialism, Farrakhan can find examples much closer to home in the history of the Nation of Islam. For just as right-wing congressmen and Justice Dept. officials have raised the issue of Farrakhan being an agent of Libya's Muammar Qaddafi because of reports that Qaddafi held out before a bedazzled Farrakhan the winning lottery ticket of \$1 billion, so Farrakhan's mentor Elijah Muhammad did time for sedition during World War II because of his sympathies for imperial Japan.

However, the real ghost that haunts Louis Farrakhan is that of Malcolm X. Malcolm's 1964 trip to Africa and the Middle East, following his break with Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam, not only brought him into contact with a different, multicultural face of Islam, but more importantly, moved Malcolm toward a socialist perspective in response to the African revolutions. Farrakhan's Africa/Middle East tour is the absolute reversal of Malcolm's famous hajj.

COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY CATECHISM

It is precisely this reversal of revolution into counter-revolution in African and African-American history that Farrakhan, not so ironically, chose to carry out over Black History Month. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein, originally a puppet propped up by U.S. imperialism in its maneuvering against Iran, is embraced by Farrakhan as a defender of his people against the West, when in fact Saddam has killed more Muslims than any other ruler.

And in Iran, Farrakhan again becomes a willing tool of the most reprehensible reversal of revolution into counter-revolution when he helps the fundamentalist regime that usurped the 1979 Iranian Revolution to celebrate the 17th anniversary of the revolution, as if Khomeini and the mullahs, and not the revolutionary Iranian masses, had actually overthrown the U.S.-backed Shah.

Against the Black non-Muslim liberation struggle in the south of the Sudan, Farrakhan aligns himself with the Muslim military rulers of the north. Where world attention had been focused through the hard work of human rights activists on the human rights atrocities carried out by this most reactionary of fundamentalist regimes against Muslims and non-Muslims alike, especially women, Farrakhan executes another one of his counter-revolutionary reverses. The blood of bleeding Africa cannot be so easily washed off the hands of these devout despots.

Finally, in the company of the Nigerian military dictatorship whose repressive boot is firmly planted on the neck of the Nigerian masses, and whose execution of Ogoni environmentalist and writer Ken Saro-Wiwa outraged the world, Farrakhan panders to raw authoritarian power with an appeal to give the country's military thugs 3 more years to lay the ground for "democracy."

And yet, as evidence that neither resistance to the military regime of Gen. Sani Abacha, nor the spirit of the Million Man March can be so easily subsumed, the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights and the Campaign for Democracy in Nigeria issued statements condemning Farrakhan for acting as an agent of the military government. "They said his support of the military government contradicted the principles of the Million Man March, which would not have been allowed by the military government in Nigeria," reports Mississippi's *Jackson Advocate* (2/15-21/96).

While Farrakhan's Satanic reverses should come as no surprise, still there is a kind of ideological V-chip in the thinking of some on the Left which screens out the persistent refusal of the Black masses to place the destiny of their self-determination in the hands of Louis Farrakhan. Unfortunately, this V-chip may yet become an element in the game of race-baiting that Farrakhan and the white establishment are preparing to play with the American mind.

Stench of racism in Republican primaries

worlds of race has been the state and its subdivisions" which gives the white community the right of guardianship over a segregated American society.

Dr. Franklin was following the historic conflict between state rights and the federal government as revealed in racial violence and Black resistance. Today, it doesn't take a great historian to see that the conservatives' plan to return the control of welfare to the states is a direct move to bring the poor Black communities under the hegemonic discipline of local white economic and political interests.

Recently, the Congress of National Black Churches caught the full implication of state control of welfare by announcing its opposition with the simple statement that Blacks "trust the federal government more than they trust the states." In its own way the Congress of National Black Churches rejects any attempt to return to old practices when Black security and life were placed in the arbitrary hands of the white exploiters of Black labor and the corrupt abuse of state racist politicians. This was a horrible historic experience for African-American people; it made racism the law of this nation and it took more than eighty years of struggle to overcome it legally, extending from the post-Reconstruction period to the Civil Rights Movement.

Of course, today's so-called social conservatives can't create a racially divided, unequal society on the non-existing material conditions of the 19th century or, for that matter, even on the economic conditions of fifty years ago. But, racist ideologies and practices do linger beyond their original social beginnings by finding new roots in existing material conditions. Thus, the decline of the industrial might of the inner cities has created its opposite,

a permanent army of unemployed Black workers along with a corresponding welfare bureaucracy. This has shifted the focus of American racism from how to exploit Black labor to preventing the African-American community from revolting by a stricter control over the welfare it gets and building larger prisons to incarcerate new generations of unemployable Black youth. Here we have the two cardinal political aims of "social conservatism," disguised as "welfare reform and tough on crime."

Last month Pat Buchanan, Bob Dole and Lamar Alexander really asked their 98% white voters in Iowa and New Hampshire to endorse one of their respective new national racist policies. Pat Buchanan's got the endorsement. Buchanan, the voice of the conservative Christian Coalition campaign, focused on insecurities of the white middle class, their fear of losing their jobs to non-white immigrants and their perception that African Americans are given special advantages. He demeaned African Americans, smeared the character of a lesbian by name and said he does not like Jews, and yet he won the New Hampshire primary.

We may not know exactly what the political events in Iowa and New Hampshire portend for African Americans. But definitely, a new kind of social relationship between Black and white is being formed. The exact nature of any kind of new relationship has to be defined and articulated by African Americans. This must be done now!

To Ken,¹

I
You were right,
Mister B is dead.²
he didn't die in Lagos
but in a Port Harcourt jail

The author is dead
So what is learnt
my deconstruction friends?
and in this case his corporeality
suggested a possible reality.
Now we are left
with that sickening feeling of contamination
Oil for life.

In Ogoniland, where the oil is red with blood,
the poet who spoke
of the rights of nations
inside nations inside nations,
is annihilated.

The economics were simple to see
like any of those schemes thought up by Mr B.
The General made his millions simply
by lowering the price on Ogoni life
Oil for money

Those who speak of Africa—
World Bank, Royal Shell, and Military Rule
—keep me wondering:

What place for the Ogoni
in this Africa which killed its sun?³

II
Called an irritant by the state
They drowned the playwright in industrial waste,
Well, there's money in that
for those that think like millionaires⁴
in this time of ethnic cleansing and chemical
affairs

III
Surrounded by men from the military tribe
and with a quiet nod from the corporate scribe
the man is hung.
From here we heard only the sound
of putrid diplomacy
and the rotten english⁵ of international law
(The old boxer forgot his/story)⁶

In front of large crowds
your oratory on survival was thought too heretical
and your declarations to the youth too political
The simple truth, that life is dear
reminded the General of his worst fear
that people hate him for good reason
The ever cheapening price of the person
for oil: the real treason

IV
On the world-market
those who line their pockets with shell-money
drink Perrier not Ogoni water
delta'd with oil

—F. Shelley (November 15, 1995)

1. Kenule Saro-Wiwa [1941-1995], along with eight other activists, was murdered by the Nigerian state on November 10, 1995. They were involved in a campaign against the destruction of the Niger Delta which is an area rich with oil. Saro-Wiwa was an internationally renowned writer and journalist. In 1991 Saro-Wiwa decided to abandon "everything" and devote himself to the Ogoni struggle and became a leader of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni people (MOSOP). Shell Oil, which is implicated in his murder, has now pulled out of the Ogoni region, but only after wrecking its eco-system.

2. Mr B is Dead is the title of one of a series of children's books based on the television series "Basi and Company," written and produced by Saro-Wiwa.

3. "Africa Kills Her Sun," the title of one of Saro-Wiwa's short stories in *Adaku & Other Stories*.

4. In Saro-Wiwa's Mr B series, Mr B wears a tee-shirt, "To Be a Millionaire, think like a Millionaire."

5. Title of a short story in *Adaku & Other Stories* and the subtitle of *Saza: A Novel in Rotten English*.

6. A reference to Nelson Mandela who endorsed "the quiet diplomacy" approach of John Major toward the Nigerian authorities.

Baton Rouge protest



A mass demonstration of 10,000 marchers protest Gov. Mike Foster's racist affirmative action policies, in Baton Rouge, La.

Shell Oil in Nigeria

Lagos—Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, the biggest oil operator here, said a move to cut staff had caused picketing by some workers at its head office. "What is happening is that a few junior staff are at the gate turning people back from the company premises," said a company spokesman. "It has to do with a voluntary severance programme that the company is trying to implement," the spokesman said. Shell pumps about half Nigeria's nearly two million barrels per day of crude oil.

Witnesses said about 15 workers of Shell stood at the entrance into the company's Freeman House head office in central Lagos and had been turning non-staff members and contractors back from the imposing building.

Staff were told last week that some of them would be laid off and they had not been given any details of the plan. "We are extremely anxious about this move by management," said one of the workers.

Shell has been in trouble in Nigeria since last November's execution of nine minority rights activists. Western pressure groups have urged Shell to leave Nigeria in protest at the hangings but it has rejected such pressure and is also going ahead with a \$4 billion gas project, the largest in Africa.

A London newspaper reported that Shell had been importing arms to Nigeria to equip police guarding its facilities. "People have to understand the Nigerian situation better. Government alone cannot do everything," he added.

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PRISONER, ILLINOIS

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SEE LITERATURE AD ON PAGE 7.

Editorial

No serious observer questions that outright genocide—the attempt to exterminate a whole people as with the Jews and Roma (Gypsies) of Europe during the Holocaust or as with the systematic massacres of Armenians in Turkey during World War I—occurred in Rwanda, Central Africa in the spring of 1994. Many are also pointing to the danger of a new round of genocide this year both in Rwanda and in neighboring Burundi.

During 1994, more than 500,000 people met their death in Rwanda. Members of the minority Tutsi group, many of them children, as well as members of the Hutu majority who were committed to or suspected of being committed to a multiethnic society, were killed by the army, by militia groups and by civilian mobs.

The present Rwandan government, which came to power in a civil war against the perpetrators of genocide, is Tutsi-dominated but to a great extent committed to the creation of a multiethnic society. Despite this, every excuse has been made by the rich Western powers to deny Rwanda economic or military aid. This is in part due to indifference to the lives of African people, and in part because the present Rwandan government is viewed as anti-French, the French having been the region's dominant imperialist power for the past several decades.

It is true that the new Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF)-dominated government has not lived up to the hopes that some had placed in it. Some independent Hutu leaders willing to work with the Tutsi-dominated RPF have been pushed aside. There have also been incidents in which vengeful RPF soldiers have attacked Hutu civilians, although stern measures have been taken against the perpetrators in those incidents. Suspected Hutu war criminals, some of whom may not be guilty, are being held in overcrowded, inhuman conditions.

Yet none of this can justify the fact that leading perpetrators of the genocide live today at complete liberty in Zaire, Kenya and other neighboring countries. In Pol Pot style, the leaders of the genocide totally control the vast refugee camps where over a million Rwandan Hutu are now living, having fled the advances of the RPF in 1994. A vast amount of international aid is being sent to support civilian refugees, while the leaders of the genocide lord it over them. While refusing to permit Hutu civilians to return home, these former members of the government, the army and the militia are also acquiring arms, reportedly with clandestine help from the French and Zairian governments. Among these refugees there is

Rwanda, Burundi and genocide in the 1990s

a nearly complete denial of the 1994 genocide.

After almost two years, only a handful of suspects have been arrested—one country which has been willing to carry out such arrests is Zambia—and are to be tried at a United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in Arusha, Tanzania. Kenya, Zaire and France, however, are refusing to cooperate with the Tribunal, Kenya openly, the other two surreptitiously.

In neighboring Burundi, the situation is reversed. There, members of the Tutsi minority, who had dominated the whole region during the pre-colonial era, still control the army and have also organized a militia-like group. The army and the Tutsi militias have undermined the democratically elected multiethnic government, which has a Hutu president and a Tutsi prime minister. They have begun to "ethnically cleanse" the capital, Bujumbura, driving Hutu civilians out into the countryside. They have also assassinated government leaders, including the president elected in 1993 and several members of parliament. A chauvinist Hutu resistance movement is also gaining headway in the countryside. In 1995 alone, 10,000 people were killed in these conflicts in Burundi, most of them civilians.

Where does the responsibility lie for these horrors? Part of the explanation lies of course in the role of Western imperialism and the capitalist world market. In both Rwanda and Burundi, colonizers, first German and then Belgian, rigidified the pre-colonial system of domination, treating Hutu and Tutsi as separate "ethnic" groups, even going so far as to register their group membership on identity cards. Since independence, France and other powers vying for influence in the region have armed both the old Hutu chauvinist regime in Rwanda and the old Tutsi-dominated one in Burundi. The crisis of the world economy over the past two decades and the demands for austerity by international bankers have also placed tremendous pressure on the population of the two countries, and this in a region where land was already scarcer than anywhere else in Africa.

But that is only part of the story. We need also to face squarely the fact that the genocide in Rwanda and the massacres in Burundi are driven by internal forces as well. These African ruling classes have stopped at nothing to whip up inter-group hatred as a way of staying in power. It is a hallmark of the retrogressive 1990s that such campaigns of chauvinism and ethnic hatred have resulted not only in passive support for oppressive regimes, but in the case of Rwanda, also in the actual par-

ticipation of thousands of civilians in killing their own neighbors, right down to tiny infants.

These horrors are by no means limited to Central Africa. Similar events have been unfolding in Bosnia since 1992. We need to stop ignoring the events in Rwanda and Bosnia and to see them for what they are: harbingers of our own future if we do not think out and act upon a method of resistance to retrogression—including right here at home. That is what we Marxist-Humanists have been trying to work out. We urge our readers to join us in this effort.

VOICES FROM WITHIN THE PRISON WALLS

The cancer of corrections

by Carl Moss

(Continued from last month)

Historically, the problems that Illinois is now facing began with the Thompson administration's "new prison" building craze. The bureaucratic malignancy of the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) became the spawning ground for countless new contracts for goods and services necessary to provide for the needs of the growing prison system. This new growth industry in the state became carcinogenic when organized labor lobby groups persuaded the state's lawmakers to remove "At Hard Labor" from the mittimus papers that accompany a convict from the court. The various businesses that supplied the prisons were realizing undreamed-of profits.

Soon the profit potential inherent in the business of corrections was recognized by organized labor and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), with their own agenda, began to infiltrate the various facilities that IDOC had built. AFSCME now has over 14,000 members and supports a powerful lobby group in the state capital.

Many special service providers sprang up, offering things like institutional food, medical, library, telephone and even recreational services. Contracts were awarded to the lowest bidders and these particular parts of the correctional equation were removed from the immediate concern of IDOC. These special service providers, motivated by the profit visualized and their own greed and avarice, have buried their respective snouts in the well-protected public teat supplied by IDOC. The public does not want to know what happens behind these walls, so the corruption continues with impunity.

Ever since the Cold War ended, the American media have sought ways to increase profits and garner a greater market. To promote sales in the absence of Cold War gloom and doom, the media decision makers created a "fear of crime" hysteria and would select the most heinous crimes for exploitation. The sales of papers and TV market shares reflected the success of the ploy and the concept grew unrestrained. After all, this was not fiction. The crime wave was real, as real as the fertile imaginations of the various media reporters could make it.

Responding to this media charade, the public elected wave after wave of "tough-on-crime" politicians. These lawmakers wrote and passed the laws their constituencies demanded. These new laws caused the malignancy of corrections to feed upon itself and grow even more. Motivated by greed, driven by profit and operating in the open with impunity, the corrections business is secure in the knowledge that the general public just does not want to know what goes on behind the walls of the state's replicating carceral.

The media-generated, election year, anti-crime hype, "truth in sentencing" and three strikes legislation are causing the corrections malignancy to metastasize. It will continue to feed on the tax base until the state's fragile infrastructure is lying in ruin.

Future historians will puzzle at the reasons this great society destroyed itself. The statistics will show that more and more prisons and tougher laws will do nothing to reduce the rate at which crimes are committed. In fact, the crime rate was on the way down when the correction profiteers figured out the potential profit that could be realized. This was about the same time that the Cold War ended and the media did not have any international gloom and doom to try and sell papers with. "Good news" does not sell papers, so the most heinous of crimes were featured in bold headlines. Of interest here is that FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) magazine reported that the coverage of crime rose 250%, even though the actual rate for almost all crime has been on the decline for over ten years now.

The states of Florida and Texas realized the futility of the "lock-em-up and throw away the key" hysteria and passed referendums banning new prison construction. This allowed prison populations to exceed the limits imposed by the Eighth Amendment's cruel and unusual punishment clause and the federal government stepped in to run the prisons. The first thing that the government did was to ban all new arrivals. This backed up the local and county jails and slowed down the judicial process to make Kafka look good. Then they started awarding more and more good time to clean out the prisons as rapidly as possible. At one time they were awarding up to twelve days good time for every day served. This meant that for every year of sentence, an inmate only had to do one month. This was pretty sweet for most inmates but very difficult for the victims, prosecutors and courts that put the bad guys away.

("Cancer of corrections" concludes next month)

'The tragedy of Nikolai Bukharin'

The Tragedy of Bukharin, by Donny Gluckstein (Boulder: Pluto Press, 1994).

With the aim of presenting a revolutionary alternative to Stalinism and market socialism, this book takes up Nikolai Bukharin, one of the most important Bolshevik theoreticians during and after the Russian Revolution. What grips the attention of the author, a follower of Tony Cliff, is that Bukharin's economic theory makes a category of "state capitalism."

Donny Gluckstein sees Bukharin's theory as "an accurate description of the Stalinist system," since he foresaw state and monopoly merging into one entity, even though Bukharin saw state capitalism only as a result of growing concentration and centralization of capitalist monopolies. To the end he insisted that, in Gluckstein's words, "the very fact of the 1917 revolution ruled out state capitalism in the USSR."

The task Gluckstein sets himself is to explain how this analyst of state capitalism ended up as one of the revolutionaries most responsible for the transformation of the Russian workers' state into state capitalism. Turning to Lenin's critique of Bukharin in his Will for being "scholastic" and not understanding the dialectic, Gluckstein points to this philosophic inadequacy as the root of the flaws of Bukharin's theory and practice.

But what does Gluckstein mean by "dialectic?" He means that Bukharin's thinking was one-sided, abstract and deterministic, all of which is true. But he reduces the heart of the dialectic—the relationship between subject and object—to the question of the vanguard party as mediator between the two, as expressed in Lenin's theory of "democratic centralism." This, "the fundamental achievement of Leninism," is the only thing Gluckstein unreservedly praises as "dialectical."

The book's only mention of Hegel is one paragraph that quotes Bukharin describing Hegel's dialectic as thesis-antithesis-synthesis, which is not Hegel's concept. Far from pointing out the error, Gluckstein merely asserts that Marx did "make use" of "thesis, antithesis, synthesis—but applied them far more fluidly than Bukharin." Such a basic lack of comprehension of the dialectic does not stop Gluckstein from adorning his prose with the word "dialectic." But it does keep him from even mentioning Lenin's crucial encounter with the Hegelian dialectic.

Gluckstein's omission is all the more fantastic given that his very first chapter begins with the event that impelled Lenin to the dialectic: the collapse of the Marxist Second International upon the outbreak of World War in 1914. Since this left revolutionaries "politically disarmed," Gluckstein says, the "weapons of Marxism would have to be resharpened," a task "tackled" by Luxemburg, Trotsky, Lenin and Bukharin.

Gluckstein's concept of "resharpening" stops where Bukharin stopped—at economic analysis of the latest stage of capitalism—so he finds Bukharin's Imperialism and World Economy "arguably the most important contribution" and dismisses Lenin's Imperialism as "far less theoretically ambitious" and "of chiefly historical

interest." Totally missing is any awareness of Lenin's search for subjective new beginnings in the dialectic of revolution, from the national liberation movements to worker and peasant soviets. Bukharin's rejection of this non-capitalist revolutionary dimension Lenin called "socialist economism."

Bukharin's economic theory is where the perils of his philosophic deviation from the dialectic appear most sharply. He conceives of the development of state capitalism as the growing organization—and therefore growing rationality—of the economy. Even after the revolution, the subject in his theory is not the workers so much as it is the planned, organized economy, or science, or the technical intelligentsia. Proletarian revolution is necessary to break the final barrier to the organization of the world economy.

As Gluckstein puts it: "It is this economic struggle [competition between autonomous economic units] that imposes an imperative of exploitation upon all the participants. State ownership and planning can also be methods of capitalist exploitation if their context is competition between autonomous national units."

To both Gluckstein and Bukharin, then, capitalist exploitation issues not from the character of the subject-object relationship in the process of production but from competition in the market.

The working class becomes an object in Bukharin's theory. It is "an organized class subject"—the subject is really the State into which even the trade unions must be absorbed. While Gluckstein does criticize Bukharin's tendency to relegate the workers to a passive role, he himself articulates the same reduction of subject to object: "Even after a successful revolution in an industrial country, while workers will rule they will continue as producers, an object of production."

In Marx's theory, the workers even in capitalism—let alone "after a successful revolution"—were subjects in the production process, although capitalism's dialectical inversion makes the object, the machine, dominate the subject. Bukharin's reproduction of that dialectical inversion as theory is exactly how he created the theoretical premises for Stalin's state capitalism. Gluckstein's uncritical acceptance of it reveals that his affinity with Bukharin is deeper than simply the concentration on the state in economic analysis.

What direction does this book give us today in the quest for liberation, for a revolutionary socialism not hemmed in by capitalism and its ideologies? A tendency that tries to comprehend Stalinism on the basis of the very theory that created Stalinism's theoretical premises cannot show a way out of today's crises.

Instead, it offers the pathetic plaint of post-Marx Marxism, incapable of grasping the role its own aversion to the Absolute has played in the failure of new revolutionary socialist beginnings to arise from the collapse of Communism. The need of the age is the kind of dialectical new beginning that breaks out of the limits of post-Marx Marxism as well as of the retrogressive politics of the 1990s.

—Franklin Dmitryev

North and South, women fight Right's assault on poor, feminism

(Continued from page 1)

ously women view the need to overcome racism in the movement is seen in the popularity of a new book by Midge Wilson and Kathy Russell, *Divided Sisters: Bridging the Gap Between Black Women and White Women*. The authors believe that "Society will transform itself only when women decide together to fight social inequality in all its various forms, whether based on race, gender, or class." Conference participants took a step in that direction and made fighting for affirmative action a priority.

Those attacking affirmative action want to frame it as a white-Black competition and play the race card, yet affirmative action has helped white women the most. Women in California didn't wait for Feminist Expo '96. In March 1995 they began what one National Organization for Women (NOW) leader called "a fight to the death" to defend affirmative action, emphasizing "We're forming coalitions everywhere." In February Katherine Spillar, national coordinator of the Feminist Majority, announced that a coalition including the YWCA, NOW and the NAACP was recruiting college students who would "be all over the state" of California to fight for affirmative action.

RIGHT'S ALL-OUT ATTACK ON WOMEN

It is not only affirmative action and abortion rights that are under attack. In this all-out assault the Right is intent on destroying welfare and health care; demonizing poor women, unwed mothers, African-American women; and denuding women's studies and women's history of its activist revolutionary content.

The Republican candidates are wallowing in vicious gay-bashing. In February, almost all supported a Christian Coalition rally in Iowa whose speakers promised to "send this evil [homosexual] lifestyle back to Satan where it came from." And as Buchanan rants about judges protecting "criminals, atheists, homosexuals, flag burners, illegal aliens—including terrorists—convicts, and pornographers," 16 states are rushing to make laws denying recognition of same-sex marriages.

Even as we go to press, March, which is Women's History Month, and March 8, International Women's Day (IWD), will find women fighting back across the nation. That is true in Chicago where the theme of the IWD march through downtown will be "Women's Future is the World's Future." And at San Jose State University in California students are so concerned with reactionary U.S. politics that the Women's Center is planning a huge IWD event of discussions on issues like welfare, racism, affirmative action and fighting the Right.

The biggest battle is against the anti-democratic hypocrisy and punitive mentality of the Republican's and Clinton's determination to drive women and children on welfare into the night. While Republicans talk endlessly of individual rights and Clinton boasts that "the era of big government is over"; all the forces of federal and state governments are now being unleashed on poor women and children. End-welfare-as-we-know-it-Clinton is likely to accept the nightmare plan that the state governors recently proposed.

Not only would that plan eliminate federal guarantees of assistance to poor children, it would allow states to impose their twisted "morality" on poor women. Clinton has already given the green light to every wild, unproven, poorly researched scheme states have come up with. Wisconsin is ending welfare altogether in three years,

Japan lecture on Hegel

(Continued from page 4)

but he criticized all culture as having first been good for fighting against superstition but now imprisoning us by the sort of thing Marx was to call "the fetishism of commodities."

And I would go so far as to say that the whole three volumes of Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion* is the greatest attack on the so-called "vanguard party" that we have ever seen. He does with the church, although he is a Christian, what we want to do against the Stalinist party. He is saying, "Look at that, Christianity came in because finally we saw that, as against only a few being free who were great enough to be philosophers, Jesus insisted that man as man is free. But this one little church, the Catholic Church, said they were the only interpreters and would not let us have a direct contact with God."

Here he is, he is supposed to be a Christian, a Lutheran—those who were supposed to have corrected the excesses of the Catholic Church—and yet he says Religion is not it, I have to go to Philosophy. It is why he is always accused of being a hidden atheist. And he was. But the point we are stressing is that even though we are in the second department, we saw Spirit was still alienated and under the discipline of culture. Then we saw that Religion has been perverted and that man and not the church must decide what will finally evolve. That is what brings us to the final stage of Absolute Knowledge.

He comes to Absolute Knowledge and says, "Look, this is history. It has moved in these stages as the phenomena of the spirit of man. There is also the science of the spirit, whether in religion or actual science. And they will unite to form Absolute Knowledge." The Absolute Knowledge of history and science uniting as one in Phenomenology becomes the transition point to Science of Logic and to Philosophy of Mind. Everything always ends in some Absolute. It is Absolute Knowledge in Phenomenology, Absolute Idea in Science of Logic, and Absolute Mind in Philosophy of Mind. It is always striving in that direction.

(Concludes next month)

limiting cash benefits to two years, and if women can't find work they will be assigned jobs. In Illinois, the "job training" consists of being handed a photocopy of two-month-old want ads and told to get job interviews.

States can now force young women to live with their parents, demand they marry, name the fathers of their children, dictate how many children they can have and when to go to school. In this "democracy," it is so much a crime to be poor that Long Island is fingerprinting welfare recipients and other states want to do the same.

Perhaps the most telling restriction of all is that a woman's welfare check could be cut off if she can't find or refuses work. Women in the South rightly call this kind of coercion "slave labor." The real welfare goes to corporations as in Mississippi where companies pay welfare mothers forced to take minimum-wage no-benefit jobs \$1 an hour and the state pays the remaining \$3.35.

'I WILL FIGHT FOR PEOPLE'

A Black woman union organizer in Mississippi—a state that grants women one of the lowest welfare pay-



Women, immigrants in Tucson, Ariz. challenge sexist and anti-immigrant retrogression epitomized by Patrick Buchanan.

ments in the country—spoke to *News & Letters* of how that law can be used to break unions as well as a woman's spirit: "It's not just that they are telling you that you have to give up Medicaid and food stamps to take these jobs. They are saying that if you get in a fight with the supervisor and you quit, you will get nothing. If the plant goes out on strike and you don't cross the picket line, you will get nothing. They want you totally in their power."

Thus it is not only young women in the North who refuse to accept the "constraints of what exists" as the student at Feminist Expo '96 put it. Black working women in the South have been casting their own deep challenge to this reactionary society. In Tennessee, Mississippi and Alabama, minimum wage is the norm with \$6.60 an hour considered a "decent wage"—even when the employer is a giant like Tyson's Chicken. In 1990, 21% of all Black families in the South earned less than \$5,000 a year. A Black woman in Mississippi commented, "You can work all month in the catfish plants, make less than \$1,000, and be eligible for welfare." Even in Tunica County, Miss., where gambling and investment has entered, the annual income for African Americans is less than \$6,000 a year per person.

In the face of these hardships, Black women working in poultry, textile, apparel, and catfish processing are changing the face of the South by unionizing their workplaces and raising profound questions. While they may not call themselves feminists or Women's Liberationists, their challenge to existing society is as deep and includes the African-American and labor dimensions.

The struggle to unionize the plants, as well as the experience of being on welfare, has given them a unique view. As one woman said, "The best thing we can do for welfare mothers is to make Mississippi a union state, instead of what they call a 'right-to-work' state."

These Southern women contribute a determination and a Reason that is born of a history of struggle for civil and labor rights. One woman expressed it as "the testing of fire." They reveal not only a desire to fight for freedom, but the knowledge that it can happen—a knowledge that seems missing when a part of the women's movement settles for Bill Clinton instead of George Bush, or is satisfied with abortion being legal even though it keeps getting more and more difficult to get. The catfish worker organizer said it this way: "I will never lie down and take anything anymore. The 1990 strike gave me a feeling in my heart to fight for people as long as I live. No matter what happens, I will always have this."

What she will "always have" is what Karl Marx meant when he said that those fighting for freedom are "individualized through the process of history." It is the knowledge, born through the struggle against "the plantation mentality" of Southern life and labor, that women can change their world, they can become free.

A union steward in a food preparation plant whose mostly Black women workers recently won a year-long strike and who was involved in the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi as a teenager put into words what self-development—when it is a self-development whose aim is freedom—can mean. In discussing what Raya Dunayevskaya had written on the Montgomery Bus Boycott she was struck with the description of how "The

greatest thing... was its own working existence."

She concluded, "When I look at people today who were involved in fighting for freedom, I'm amazed at what is in them, what we are capable of doing. It's something you would never have known—which they never would have known—if they hadn't been involved in the struggle."

DEFENDING REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

When history is shown as such a tangible and concrete movement towards freedom—as these voices reveal—and when the Women's Liberation Movement is turning to fight the gutting of welfare and affirmative action, it's no accident that the Right Wing has widened its attack to include women's studies courses and women's history classes across the country. (See "Silver Rights' history ongoing today," p. 2.)

In an attempt to destroy these studies and to move universities to the Right, college trustees, many appointed by Republican governors, recently formed the National Alumni Forum whose purpose is to hunt out incidents of what they call "political correctness" on campuses and micromanage colleges. Typical is Christian Coalition member Charles H. Cunningham who says, "I'm planning to go course by course in the James Madison [University] manual to see what I don't like and what I think doesn't have a place on our campus."

Women's studies has been under siege for some time from anti-feminists like Christina Hoff Summers who protests that if the history taught is radical, it's not legitimate because it has an agenda; and Karen Lehrman, who whines that women's studies courses are too "touchy-feely" and therefore not scholarly. The only new tactic is that they try to call themselves "feminists." Historian Catharine R. Stimpson described them well in a recent issue of *Dissent* (Winter 1996): "Erupting with exaggerations, making a part of the whole, the whole shebang, the genre distorts and lies without the slightest sigh of shame."

The sweeping scope of the new stage of retrogression that the November 1994 elections brought forth, now being deepened by the all-out race to the reactionary bottom led by Buchanan, who reveals nothing less than a form of counter-revolution moving towards neo-fascism. That reality makes revolution so compelling a drive that new forces for freedom arise. In the attempt to transform the oppressive reality, many are looking to break out of "the constraints of what exists."

To achieve that break, a total philosophy that doesn't disregard this oppressive reality but is determined to transform it is a necessity and part of taking responsibility to create a totally new human world. As the food processing worker in Memphis, Tenn. said: "All the labor and Civil Rights Movements come back to human issues. That's why I want women to get together. I think it's up to us to start something."

Teachers, students walk the line in Oakland strike

Oakland, Cal.—On Feb. 15, several hundred teachers walked out of the Oakland public schools, striking because of overcrowding in classrooms, sub-standard pay and working conditions. Striking teachers and students outside Oakland Technical High School were stopping scab teachers, getting paid double salary, from coming in to the parking lot as the cops let the scabs through.

A young woman student from Skyline High School told me, "We are here to fight for our right to an education. We don't have enough books for our classes or desks for all the students, and I don't remember the last time we had heat in the classrooms!" A student group called the Oakland Student Political Union, formed originally by students at Skyline, has been joined by students from other schools supporting the strike.

Also, high school students from the University of California group Berkeley Students for Affirmative Action have joined striking students, linking the substandard conditions in the Oakland schools to racism and segregation. While protesters chanted, "We're here to fight for youth liberation, stop racism and school segregation," one striking teacher told me, "It's no accident that it's the Oakland schools which are substandard, as Oakland is a mostly Black city. The students are right to say the issues of affirmative action and this strike are joined."

At another school for younger children, one striking teacher held a sign reading, "Money for books, not Buicks." She explained, "The superintendent of schools, who makes three times as much as the highest paid teacher, just got a new Buick, funded by the school district. Her secretary and the secretary of the school board also got new Buicks. We had to raise money for toilet paper last year, and we don't have enough books! This kind of spending at the top is outrageous!"

Many parents have united with teachers to organize "strike schools" in local churches. The strike schools are staffed by teachers and are drawing a lot of support from families who want to honor the picket lines while finding ways to educate and care for their children.

The teachers hope to settle the strike quickly, but rumors are spreading that since the school district is profiting from the strike, they'll try to hold out to make a quick buck. The administrators also hope to turn the citizens against the striking teachers, which is why teachers are urging people to call the school board to let them know we support the striking teachers and students of Oakland.

—Julia Jones

Youth

1871 Paris Commune fires imagination today

by Maya Jhansi

The inventions of the unknown demand new forms.

—Rimbaud, 1871

This March marks the 125th anniversary of the Paris Commune. Until I joined the radical movement, I had never heard of the Paris Commune which, though it was an historical event significant to the world, was still not covered in any of my world history courses.

On March 18, 1871, the working people of Paris armed themselves and struck out against the parliamentary government which had succeeded Napoleon III and which had begun to capitulate to Prussia in order to bridle the revolutionary intensity of the Parisian masses. The Parisian masses, in turn, attacked all the organs of the state—the army, the police, the bureaucrats—and declared themselves the Paris Commune.

The Paris Commune re-organized the whole of society on the ground of freedom, challenging all social relationships including the man/woman relationship. Women's participation in the Commune was central from the very beginning. Education was made open and free for all, and workshops into models for proletarian democracy. Workers took power into their own hands so that foremen and political representatives were elected by them and always subject to recall.

The March 18th manifesto of the Paris Commune is worth quoting at length: "The proletarians of Paris, amidst the failures and treasons of the ruling classes, have understood the hour has struck for them to save the situation by taking into their own hands the direction of public affairs....They have understood that it is their imperious duty and their absolute right to render themselves masters of their own destinies, by seizing upon the governmental power."

MARX AND THE PARIS COMMUNE

The new that erupted in the Paris Commune was captured philosophically by Marx—not after the event, as past history, but while the event was in process. What Marx so brilliantly recognized in the self-emancipation of Paris was that the working class did not just take over the ready-made state machinery, but set about smashing the state. The self-government of the Parisian workers superseded the state form—Marx called this, "the political form at last discovered to work out the economic emancipation of the proletariat."

In the Paris Commune, Marx saw the absolute opposite of capitalism and this gave Marx a new concrete insight into the degenerate nature of capitalist society. This is most explicitly seen in the section that Marx changed after the experience of the Commune, the section on the "Fetishism of Commodities" in Marx's greatest work, *Capital*.

Marx shows that under capitalism commodities assume a mystical character that reduces human relations to "material relations between persons and social relations between things." What the unleashing of human creativity in the Commune revealed to Marx was that the

perversion of human relations under capitalism is not just a matter of appearance, but the way things really are under capitalism. The commodity fetish makes these perverse human relations appear natural and eternal.

By smashing the state-form and ending the hierarchic division of labor, the Parisian workers demonstrated how a totally new form of freely associated labor could release itself from the despotic conditions of the commodity form and reorganize society on human grounds. This new form of human society put into stark relief the truth of capitalism by illuminating, through its own working existence, what Marx in 1844 had called "transcendence as objective movement."

Through the experience of the Commune, what became clear to Marx is the need to position oneself in the future in order to strip away the veil of the fetishism of commodities in the present. The logic of freedom manifested by the Paris Commune was thus captured theoretically by Marx—signalling a new point of departure in thought which escaped the brutal wrath of the trembling state powers.

'YOU CANNOT KILL AN IDEA'

The Commune was brutally brought down during "Bloody Week" in May 1871 when over 25,000 communards were massacred by the reactionary government led by M. Thiers. Though the Commune was defeated, its vision of freedom refused to perish in the flames of the counter-revolution that engulfed Paris.

It lived on both in Marx's philosophy of liberation and

in the minds of generations of revolutionaries that followed—from Lenin whose *State and Revolution* was so influenced by Marx's writings on the Commune, to the dauntless Chinese youth of the Sheng-Wu-lien who challenged Mao by asking why the real communes in China were not built on the model of the Paris Commune. For these Chinese youth, the Paris Commune embodied a vision of the future that allowed them to see through the "Communist" rhetoric of Mao's China just as the Commune had given Marx a glimpse of the future, allowing him to unveil the true character of capitalism.

There has never been a greater need today for a vision of freedom to help us cut through and ultimately transcend the multiple forms of alienation that dominate our world. That is the enduring lesson of the Paris Commune for us today.

Bourgeois historians often overlook the significance of the Paris Commune, generally dismissing it as an "experiment in freedom" doomed to failure because of the "inherent nature" of humanity or some such garbage. It is no wonder that Marx called the Paris Commune "that Sphinx so tantalizing to the bourgeois mind." The bourgeois mind, which sees the perversity of human relations under capitalism as eternal, self-evident truths, cannot comprehend it.

The Paris Commune revealed that freedom is possible by creating something totally new. That's something that the rulers would like us to forget. Remembering it on its 125th anniversary is important for us today not only as a remembrance of the past but as a vision of the future alive in the dialectic of liberation.

Youth in Revolt

by Kevin Michaels

Nicaraguan students conducted a sit-in in front of a Managua police station on Feb. 2. They were protesting the detainment of over 100 of their fellows who were arrested during the occupation several days earlier of a government building which was being used as the headquarters of the Pope's visit to the country. The students' activity is part of a campaign against the government's failure to meet constitutionally mandated levels for higher education funding.

* * *

Six thousand young people marched in the South African town of Potgietersrus on Feb. 6 against an apartheid holdover. They protested a local primary school's maintenance of a whites-only admissions policy.

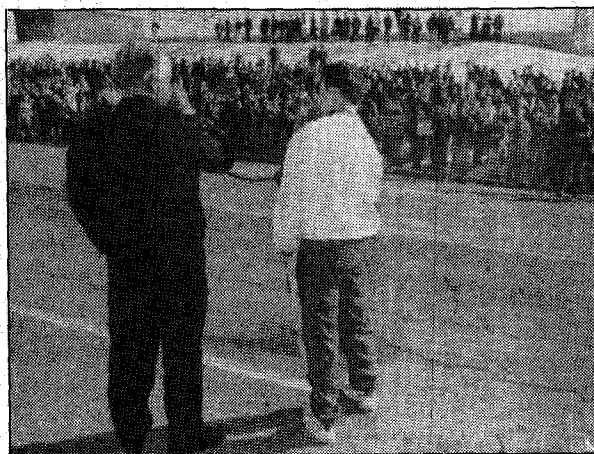
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Columbia University students occupied the Dean's office on Feb. 6 to demand the administration's commitment to the establishment of undergraduate ethnic study programs. The students want an Asian-American program, a Latino studies program and more resources for the Institute for Research in African-American Studies, as well as the broadening of the core curriculum to include multiethnic contributions.

* * *

Yale teaching assistants, fresh from their own struggle with university administration, are honoring the picket lines of striking Yale clerical and technical workers by moving their classes off campus. The 2,600 members of Local 34 walked off their jobs Feb. 8 in the face of serious contract demands, including wage cuts and outsourcing of union jobs to temporary agencies. The TAs who have been unsuccessful in gaining university recognition of their union, the Graduate Employees and Students Organization, are encouraging faculty members to hold classes at alternate locations.

Salt Lake City students protest anti-Gay policy



400 high school students protest East High School ban on clubs for Gay students.

Getting out from under horror of DCFS

Chicago—DCFS (Department of Children and Family Services) sucks because they take people's kids away from them for B.S. lies. First of all, they took me away from my parents for a whole bunch of lies. Second of all, they took my daughter away from me because they said that I neglected her, and that I was an irresponsible parent. I feel that the only reason is because I was under age, was in DCFS custody myself and was a runaway.

When I was nine years old, I remember the day so clearly when the police came and knocked on my mother's door. They handcuffed my mom and dad and were pushing them around like they were some kind of animals. Then they pulled me in one room and pulled my brother in the other, and started asking me all kinds of questions about my mother and father. Was my mother abusing me? Was my father or mother on drugs? And I told them no. But then they kept pressuring me, asking, "Are you lying for them or are you telling the truth?" So finally I told them the truth, because I wanted to help my mother and father get off drugs. But I didn't know that it was going to hurt my brother and me in the process.

So then after that, they started tearing the place up looking for all kinds of drugs. I was just crying, yelling and screaming on the bed. I was hollering at the police, "Why don't you all just stop? Why don't you just leave us alone?" My mother was just drunk out of her mind. She didn't really know what was going on. She kept say-

ing, "Don't take my babies away from me!"

Then they took me and my brother down to the police station and they locked my mother and father up. My auntie came to pick me and my brother up from the police station and that is how we came into DCFS custody. We moved in with her.

At first everything was all right but she started beating on us so I ran away to my grandmother's house. But after that my grandma took really sick, so then I went to live in a foster home. I lived there for a long time and hated it because my foster parent's son and his father raped me. They took turns on me every night. When I told the DCFS worker, she didn't want to believe that I had been raped. She said I just didn't want to be there and that I was making it up. I called my mother and I told her that they were raping me in that home so she told me to run away from there. So I ran as fast as I could go.

A short while after that I went to live with my daddy's brother, but I didn't like it there because his wife hit us for things like eating food that we were not supposed to have. They hit us and they took my money from me.

Then I came to the north side of town, and that's where I saw this boy named Red. I was only 13 and thought that I was in love with him. Two years later I got pregnant with Ebony. She was about three months old when I lost custody of her because I didn't have anyone to help me. I was young and didn't know how to take care of her and didn't know where to go with her.

By this time I was not with Red anymore. I was with Robert, who is father of my second daughter, Crystal. Robert and his grandmother helped me get my baby back. If it was not for them I don't know what I would do. I am happy to have my baby home with me, so every chance I get I try to help people that have a problem with DCFS. DCFS took me out of my mother and father's where I was not being abused, and put me in an environment where I was being abused, just like they did my daughter. Some ways I am glad that I saw what I saw when I was nine years old so that I don't live my life like my mom and dad.

There is one more thing that I would like to say. My case worker helped me out in a lot of ways, and I would just like to thank her for everything that she has done for me and my baby. She and my lawyer were the only people who listened to me in the system.

—P.K.

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Islamic fundamentalism continues to gain in Turkey, up to now the world's most secular predominantly Muslim society. As we go to press, the Refat or Welfare Party, an Islamic fundamentalist group which already controls the country's two largest cities, is poised to form a coalition government with the more secular and conservative Motherland Party. In national elections held last December, the fundamentalists received 21% of the vote, more than any other party. Motherland and another conservative party, True Path, each received around 20%.

Many observers are suggesting that economic discontent among the urban poor has been a key factor fueling the rise of the fundamentalists, who attack the corrupt political establishment and Turkey's ties to the Western powers, and who propose demagogic schemes such as going back to the traditional Islamic prohibition on loaning money at interest. In addition, Refat has won adherents for its strong support of the Chechen cause.

It is also true that a discriminatory voting system, which requires a party to win at least 4% nationwide, denied the leftist and pro-Kurdish Peoples Democratic Par-

Oil blockade in Mexico

A three-week blockade of over 60 oil wells by mostly Indian peasants in the Mexican state of Tabasco ended Feb. 15. The protesters demanded compensation from Pemex, the state-controlled oil industry, for years of pollution that has lethally damaged surrounding farmland and fishing waters.

During the siege, peasants declared Tabasco a "territory of resistance." They blocked roads and sat in around wells. Organizers reported that 5,000 people participated in the civil disobedience. Local authorities called in federal police and soldiers to attack the unarmed protesters.

The siege was called off by the left PRD (Party of Democratic Revolution) which had supported the blockade. The PRD, engaged in negotiations with the ruling PRI (Party of Institutional Revolution) for bourgeois democratic reforms on the national level, fought against fraudulent election results in 1994 for governor of Tabasco.

While the government is trying to quell the revolt in Chiapas state with initial peace accords enlarging Indians' civil rights, the targeting of Pemex brought out other simmering conflicts. Oil was nationalized in Mexico over 50 years ago in an act of defiance against the U.S. Oil, the national "patrimony," was supposed to support social welfare programs—health care, workers' benefits, etc. But oil revenues have been used primarily to maintain the PRI in power. After the disastrous economic collapse of December 1994, oil revenues have been used nearly exclusively to back \$12.5 billion in U.S. loans.

Oil workers have also demonstrated against government plans to go ahead with selling off parts of Pemex secondary operations to foreign investors. While the government claims it needs private investment for Pemex to maintain its current levels of production, it clearly cares nothing about environmental concerns and daily living conditions in the oil fields. Parallel to the struggle of Africans in Nigeria's Ogoniland, a fisherman on the Gulf of Mexico, said, "Pemex doesn't acknowledge how it damages our homes, our lakes, our streams."

Turkish fundamentalists reach for power

ty any representation in parliament despite its having received over 50% of the vote in predominantly Kurdish southeastern Turkey.

But this does not explain why older secular and leftist parties, which are also critical of the pro-Western "free market" economic policies of the recent government, fared so badly. The Democratic Party of the Left polled only 15% and the Peoples Republican Party, the old organization of Ataturk, only 11%.

While the Turkish fundamentalists are more pragmatic than their counterparts in Algeria, the Sudan or Iran, they have waged a cultural war nonetheless. One target is the Alawites, who comprise over 15% of the population, but who are regarded as heretics by the fundamentalists. This is because, among other things, their religious services are attended by men and women together. Another target is Turkey's women, who are being pres-

sured to wear head scarves. Yet another target are secular youth and intellectuals, with fundamentalist mayors threatening to shut down cafes where alcohol is sold. Each of these issues has allowed them to appeal to obscurantist sentiments among a population wracked by economic crisis.

Evidently sensing something to his liking in these developments, on Feb. 18 Louis Farrakhan made a stop in Turkey to have dinner with top fundamentalist leader Neomettin Erbakan. Farrakhan stopped by after first having visited with and praised the slave-trading leaders of the Sudan, the reactionary clerics of Iran (whom he extolled for their "democratic" system) and the genocidal Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

Bosnians resist NATO limits

One of the most revealing moments in the Bosnia tragedy came in February, when the Bosnian government embarrassed NATO and the U.S. by arresting two top Bosnian Serb generals suspected of war crimes. NATO occupation forces, who have refused to arrest even a single war criminal, first tried to get the two generals released. Finally, NATO was shamed into extraditing them to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague after Chief Judge Richard Goldstone publicly asked that they be brought to him for interrogation.

Meanwhile, the Western press is giving considerable attention to the flight of many Serbs from suburbs of Sarajevo now coming under Bosnian government control. The implication is that the reality of a multiethnic Bosnia is becoming a thing of the past. However, the press has not been reporting the considerable number of Serbs who have been moving back to their former homes in Bosnian-controlled areas such as Tuzla, where they are being welcomed back with open arms by the Muslims.

A quieter but no less important struggle for Bosnia's soul was being launched in Sarajevo by forces opposed to any narrow religious or ethnically based nationalism in the territory controlled by the Bosnian government. Sarajevo's leading independent newspaper, *Oslobodjenje*, announced that it was starting a new weekly, *Svijet* (The World).

Oslobodjenje's editor-in-chief, Zlatko Dizdarevic, stated: "We have entered into a period of struggle for power between two projects for the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We will support the line of tolerance and democracy in order to combat the forces of nationalism. The paper will defend the dream of a multiethnic Bosnia which we had at the beginning of the war."

From a Chinese dissident

The world was shocked by the decision of the Beijing regime to convict Wei Jingsheng to another 14 years in prison. The charge against him was that Wei Jingsheng wanted to overthrow the government. Is Wei Jingsheng, an individual who advocates peaceful and gradual evolution to democracy, capable of overthrowing the Chinese government? Or is it just the oversensitiveness of a nervous regime?

Since the beginning of 1993, the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party have been very wary about the situation in the countryside. When Vice Premier Zhu Rongji inspected Guangxi province at the beginning of 1993, he said: "The extortion in some localities is very severe, leaving peasants with no choice but to hang themselves. This time we discovered nine suicide cases. How many cases actually occurred, no one knows." But according to an official survey released at the beginning of 1995, the suicide rate in urban areas is 8.7 cases for every 100,000 residents and in rural areas the figure is 21.4 for every 100,000.

The authorities made special efforts for a news blockade in 1995 so that much of the true situation is unknown to the rest of the world. An uprising of over 100,000 peasants in Fuzhou district of Jiangxi province when the homes of corrupt officials were looted and peasant riots in a small town near Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang province, have all been hidden from the outside world, even from Chinese in other provinces.

The frequent strikes and demonstrations by the 20 million unemployed workers or those who receive no pay from their factories is the most worrisome problem for the Communist authorities.

The incompetence of the regime to control the corruption of officials, to reduce the gap between the rich and poor, and to solve the social problems has made the people increasingly angry. The stagflation which began in 1995 and the decline in living standards have exacerbated their anger.

All of these crises have deepened the discord within the ranks of the Communist party: the dissatisfaction and dissent among cadres at different levels has placed great pressures even on the top echelon. It is the opposition from within the "fortress" itself which alarms the Communist party the most.

Therefore, one important motivation for re-convicting Wei Jingsheng was to intimidate the opposition forces both within and without the Communist party. The prosecutors are perfectly clear that Wei Jingsheng's power to overthrow the government can never be compared with the forces created by the corruption and incompetence of the government which has ruled the country for nearly half a century.

—Liu Binyan

Excerpted from "Who can Overthrow the Chinese Government" in the Jan. 1, 1996 issue of *ChinaFocus*, P.O. Box 209, Princeton, NJ 08542.

Irish truce shattered



Thousands demonstrated in front of Belfast's City Hall, Feb. 16, calling for renewal of the cease-fire in Northern Ireland.

On Feb. 9, an 18-month cease-fire in Ireland was shattered when the Irish Republican Army (IRA) began a series of terrorist bombings in London. That very week, hundreds rallied in Belfast to call for a resumption of the cease-fire.

To be sure, the IRA's elitist and ultra-vanguardist concept of "armed struggle" is a major factor in the breakdown of the cease-fire. Tragically, its militaristic politics have come to replace the original grassroots popular struggles by the oppressed Catholic minority of Northern Ireland, a struggle which began in the late 1960s with a far different conception, the humanism of the American Civil Rights Movement.

But the intransigent, arrogant policies of the British government and the Protestant leaders of Northern Ireland are equally responsible for the carnage in London. For 18 months, they have totally stonewalled the Irish nationalists, refusing even to begin negotiations with the full range of groups representing the Catholic minority, including the IRA. One of the biggest losers today is Gerry Adams, who had apparently tried to steer the IRA away from terrorism, but received no concessions in return.

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 re-creation 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.