

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

Vol. 42 — No. 9

NOVEMBER 1997

50¢

## Workers run over by semi-autonomy



by B. Ann Lastelle

When Human Resources posts a job opening for one of the production lines in our plant, it describes the position as a "multi-functional member of a semi-autonomous team." How quickly "semi-autonomy" reveals itself as a cover for despotism and wage slavery when capital's interests are challenged!

Workers in one department, hearing persistent rumors that their eight-hour shifts were to be converted to 12 hours, asked each other: What can we do? One person thought they could make a petition and, while working on the line, scribbled a draft on a piece of paper. It read something like this:

"Members of this team are concerned about rumors that we will be going to twelve-hour shifts after the first of the year. Such a work schedule would be detrimental to our health, to educational efforts, and to social and family relationships. We request a meeting of all three shifts together with the level of management that is making, or has made, this decision so that our voices may be heard."

The writer showed the draft to three other workers on the line, who were so excited by it that, without waiting for it to be discussed or even rewritten, signed it and raced off to solicit other signatures. "This is our lives," they said. The petition passed quickly, and with a majority signing, through the second and third shifts.

There were problems on first shift. First no one wanted to take responsibility for circulating the petition. Then, before most first shift workers had had a chance to read it, it was delivered to the office. Management reacted in each shift's kickoff meeting with lies and threats.

The supervisors claimed that the petition said that workers refused to work twelve-hour shifts. The people who signed it didn't care about the company or about their jobs. (Never mind that the company recently had been sold and was being dismantled even as they spoke.) Workers should be grateful that this department had so much work that they needed to go to twelve-hour shifts; other lines were closing down. If they didn't want to

(Continued on page 3)

## Black World

### Denby, Marx, and emancipation



by Lou Turner

For anyone to be as single-mindedly absorbed in the consequences of one philosophic-historical principle as Charles Denby was for most of his life in Marx's statement in *Capital* that "Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded" undoubtedly means that you have something in your head that is so absolutely different than what Marxists have traditionally taken Marx's statement to mean, namely, "Black and white unite and fight."

Marx's statement was not only fundamental to Denby's thinking about race and class struggles in America, it was essential to his critical evaluation of the Left, Black and white. For instance, when he reviewed a book on the history of the UAW written by a socialist and former member of the UAW, Frank Marquart, he complained that the author left out the indispensable contribution Black workers made to the formation of the UAW and the CIO in general. "I think that as a Norman Thomas socialist," observed Denby, "he [Marquart] accepted the position that there is no Black question outside of the class question. What that does is blind you to the fact that Blacks have many problems whites don't have, in and out of the shops, and that Blacks are necessarily forced to fight on both race and class lines."

The current revisionist writing of Black and working class history by left scholars like Robin Kelley, in which the role of the Communist Party is privileged as the leading progressive force of modern race and class struggles in the U.S., appears today as sheer fiction when measured against Denby's experience with the CP in the plant. Despite the Communists' claims of being anti-racist on social issues outside the plant, for instance, when it came to chastising other whites for

(Continued on page 8)

## Globalized capital in crisis

by Andrew Kliman

The financial crisis spreading throughout Southeast Asia sent shock waves throughout the world last month. Mounting fear among investors caused stock prices to plummet by 10.4% in Hong Kong on Oct. 23, which in turn sparked large declines in stock markets throughout the world. The Dow Jones index fell by 13% before rebounding partially.

It is too soon to predict the effect of the stock market plunge on the real economy in the U.S. and globally. Nevertheless, the plunge has created space for a sober assessment of its current condition.

Nothing seems able to pull capitalism out of its 24-year-long slump. Worldwide growth of GNP (Gross National Product) per capita, which averaged 2.8% between 1965 and 1973, has since fallen continually to 1.3% between 1973 and 1980, 1.2% in the 1980s, and 0.5% between 1990 and 1995.

When production grows only modestly, it is now typically "jobless growth" since technological revolutions are steadily lowering labor requirements. Western Europe's unemployment rate, which averaged 2.7% in the decade preceding 1973, has therefore risen steadily, averaging 9.6% in the first half of the 1990s. That rates in the U.S. and Britain are somewhat lower is due largely to policies that encourage jobless workers to drop out of the labor force rather than seek work.

What keeps the world economy afloat for now is an ever-growing mountain of debt. The ratio of U.S. government debt to GDP (Gross Domestic Product) jumped by 57% between 1980 and 1994. The other technologically advanced nations have, on average, experienced the same surge in debt/GDP ratios. Personal income is rivaled by personal debt—today's personal debt is nine-tenths of after-tax income, compared to two-thirds in 1980—as working people struggle to maintain their standards of living in the face of declining real wages.

### DEFLATION: THE NEW THREAT

In the absence of a new boom, the current rate of spending is unsustainable. Personal bankruptcies in the U.S. are spiraling upward; defaults on credit card borrowing alone will total nearly \$10 billion this year,



Protest in Thailand against austerity.

up from about \$3 billion in 1994. The plunge in stock prices has only increased the threat of bankruptcies.

Coupled with the looming prospect of deflation — a general fall in prices — this upsurge in indebtedness threatens to turn the next recession into a depression. By lowering incomes, profits, and tax revenues, deflation raises the real burden of debt that borrowers must repay — if they still can. Technological advances, worldwide stagnation and falling wages, and fierce competition are already causing wholesale prices to fall in the U.S., Germany, Japan, and elsewhere.

With the U.S. inflation rate now dropping even as the economy grows, a downturn in the economy could well pull retail prices down. The prospect of rising wages in the wake of victories by UPS workers and by transit workers in the California Bay Area could also lead the Federal Reserve to counter with deflationary policies.

Imperialist power relations, especially the sharply falling export prices and onerous debt repayment burdens that Third World countries face, ensure that their masses are the ones to suffer the most from the global slump. Thus, from 1985 to 1995, their GNP per capita fell by an average of 1.1% per year in Black Africa, and 0.3% in the Middle East and North Africa, while rising a paltry 0.3% in Latin America. Likewise, per capita food production has stagnated in Latin America and the

(Continued on page 10)

## Million Black women unite in Philly

Los Angeles—A large group of us flew down on Friday night, arriving in Philadelphia early Saturday morning. The Million Woman March was supposed to begin at nine o'clock. It was raining; wet and misty. There were puddles of water, and it was cold. But not one moment did I think of not being there. We could hear the drummers drumming from afar.

That is how the march began with sisters from all over the country. We met people from Virginia, Atlantic City, Chicago, Michigan, St. Louis, you name it. A group of sisters came from Cleveland. I heard someone joking about the Black men going to Washington D.C. where the mayor is a crack-head, and the women went to Philadelphia where the liberty bell has cracks. We said—why not Philadelphia, the freedom bell is going to ring here, and it is also where we fought for the freedom of Mumia Abu Jamal. It was also the city where the MOVE organization was bombed.

This march was put together with the initiative of two women, Phile Chionesu and Asia Coney from Philadelphia. By not having any one person be the leader, this was truly a grass-roots movement. It was predominantly African-American, but there was enough representation from many others as well.

Most of the time everyone thinks we have got to have Madison Avenue involved, Wall Street involved, that we must have this big ad campaign. And here we put together a million-plus women without the use of Wall Street, without Madison Avenue. That's what we call "on the drum"; it just went underground. It reminded me of what my learnings about slavery were, and what we were doing in the days of slavery to outwit the master. We would sing songs, swing low... with the chariot going home and that was to tell about the underground railroad which the masters didn't know. All the prognosticators were saying, oh no, we'll be lucky if 20,000 people to show up. They don't know how tough our drum is. We had 12 points on the platform issues. Among them

were to get support for Congresswoman Maxine Waters to bring about a probe into the CIA's relationship to the influx of drugs into the African-American community; the development of Black independent schools; helping Black women leave the penal system.

One of my favorites was the development of health facilities that offer preventive and therapeutic treatment, and a major emphasis on alternative and traditional medicine. Some other points were: reclaiming elders rights; the development of our neighborhoods, combatting homelessness; the development of programs for our youth; the development of Black women who are or wish to become professionals, entrepreneurs, and/or politicians.

One of the themes on the certificate of participation is that of empowering women into the next millennium. We want men to know, Black men especially, that we're not maids. A lot of Black men say, "I want someone to wait on me hand and foot. I'm the king of the castle." Well, for a long time we the sisters have borne the brunt of it. Now, it is our time. Now is the time and the time is now. It is our time, any way you say it.

(For more on Million Woman March, see pages 2 and 6.)  
—Molly Bell

### ON THE INSIDE

#### THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

- Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya: Two Russian Revolutions & Permanent Revolution ...Page 4
- Lenin, Hegel & Western Marxism .....Page 5
- Black Radicalism and the Russian Revolution .....Page 10, 11

Editorial • Papon trial digs up France's fascist past .....page 10

# Feminism and the Million Woman March

by Terry Moon

No one should confuse the Oct. 25 Million Woman March (MWM) — a gathering in Philadelphia of between 400,000 and 1.5 million mostly African-American women — with Louis Farrakhan's Million Man March (MMM) of October 1995. For this was no

## Woman as Reason

day of atonement. Rather, African-American women showed the world that they are the indispensable dimension to the movement for freedom in the U.S.

Like every other recent gathering of Black women in this country — from the 1990 conference on Malcolm X in New York, where over 300 women jammed the "Black Women and Black Liberation" workshop, to the 2,000 women who poured into the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for the conference on "Black Women in the Academy: Defending Our Name," in January 1994 — African-American women have taken every opportunity to meet together in numbers that have stunned the organizers of the event.

### BLACK WOMEN AS REASON

It was not only the political demands and rejection of male chauvinism that marked the MWM as totally different from the MMM. It was also its method of organizing, with no national associations, big shots or media darlings involved. Whether you credit the massive turnout to the Philadelphia community activists Phile Chionesu and Asia Coney, who decided that they would organize this march from the bottom up, not the top down; or to the passion that Black women have to come together for "Peace, Freedom, and Justice!" as one banner put it; what was new was the grassroots nature of the march. Women of every class brought everyone from their babies to their sisters and aunts to their grandmothers — mostly through word of mouth.

The Reason of Black women is seen in:

- The broad range of official demands, including: helping Black women "leaving the penal system"; "the development of health facilities that can offer prevention and therapeutic treatment"; "the examination of human rights violations of Africans in the Americas"; as well as finding ways to end homelessness, promote interaction with youth, stop the gentrification of Black neighborhoods and fight for "elders rights." Even these demands didn't satisfy many women, some of whom said they wanted more on what can be done to change poverty and the punitive welfare system.

- Their reason for gathering which had little to do with planned speeches and more to do with the demonstration of mass Black sisterhood and demands for change. Listen to the voices: A single mother of

## End domestic violence

Memphis, Tenn.—The Women's Action Coalition (WAC) held its third annual Coffin Action Oct. 19-24, to raise awareness about domestic violence. During peak traffic, we gathered at the corner of Poplar and Highland wearing black clothing and veils. With two people carrying the six-foot coffin we built and the rest holding signs, we walked around the intersection, then propped the coffin against a pole and gathered around it.

This was a silent vigil. We were mourning the lives of women lost to domestic violence. People sometimes hear about battered women, but they usually don't know about the large number of women who die because of domestic violence. Our signs read: "Break the Silence! End the Violence!", "One out of every three women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime," and "60% of women are beaten when pregnant."

A lot of working women drove by, honked and gave us a thumbs-up. A lot of men didn't. From the men we got menacing glares as they pounded their fist in their hand. One guy yelled, "I only beat my woman when she deserves it." And when, exactly, would that be? There is no justification for domestic violence. A couple was stopped in front of my sister. The girl in the passenger seat was reading her sign when the driver shot his arm out and knocked her back into her seat so that he could flip my sister off. My sister is 15.

One day an African-American woman pulled into the parking lot and told us her story. She had to leave her abusive husband and take her six children with her when she had nothing. We in WAC are tired of this and are doing all we can to help turn things around.

This year we will be taking the Coffin Action onto the University of Memphis campus. We will be "assaulting" people visually with a reality most would prefer to ignore. We hope next year to stand at different intersections, and build a second coffin. WAC is watching. We will take action!

— Angela Li



four came because of "the common ground Black people share in poverty." Johnnie Gettings from Chicago: "I came because I wanted to tune into this. It was a sisterhood thing." Jawir Mumin, Columbus, Ohio: "The new welfare reform does not only affect women on welfare, but it brings to light issues affecting all women." Yolanda Lee, from Columbia, S.C.: "I'm here because I support women's rights." Devona Gonsalves, from Washington, D.C.: "This march is a way to show it's not a negative thing to be a woman and Black."

### CHALLENGE OF BLACK SISTERHOOD

The women's liberationist character of the MWM is clear even from those who avoid the word feminism because it is often seen as "a white woman's thing." Thus march organizer Chionesu, who eschews feminism, said, "Black women have been the epitome of strength in this country," and Coney said, "From this

moment, sister, no longer will you walk by your sister and not acknowledge her existence." Alma Morris, a 74-year-old woman from Memphis, spoke for many when she said: "We're fighters. We don't give up as quick as the menfolk. When we start something, we're going to fight until the end."

The militancy of Black women struck fear into the Nation of

Islam (NOI). At the march Farrakhan's wife Khadijah admonished the Black women — who have always been the backbone of their families and communities — not to "lose sight that we must rise as a family. Men, women and children." Many women were angered by the "protectors" role played by NOI men. Karen Wood, a Black photographer from Atlanta, said, "The women could have handled their own security. I wish the men were more on the perimeters instead of in the nucleus."

The MWM has thrown down the gauntlet of Black feminism not only to groups like NOW but to the Women's Liberation Movement, the Black movement, and the Left — to all movements for freedom. The question now is, Where do we go from here? The MWM established the fact that has always been present, although unacknowledged: the power of Black sisterhood. How will that manifest itself in the future?

Will the predominantly white organized feminist movement at long last learn from the Reason of Black women in motion for freedom? Will the Black male Left at long last shed its male chauvinism and accept Black women as the vanguard freedom fighters they have always been? Will the Left move beyond its traditional opportunism to at long last hear the language of freedom coming from below, from the masses of Black women? Will the organizers of the MWM divest themselves of the vestiges of narrow nationalism — which has historically been used to undermine the legitimacy of women's independent movements — that would doom the continued growth of the movement?

While time will help answer these questions, now what is clear is that the participants of the march know themselves as social individuals, as what Marx called people who have been "individualized through the process of history." As such revolutionized individuals, their impact on the future can be profound.

How to contact	
NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES	
<b>CHICAGO</b>	<b>NEW YORK</b>
59 E. Van Buren, Room 707 Chicago, IL 60605 Phone 312 663 0839 Fax 312 663 9069 Email nandl@jgc.apc.org	P.O. Box 196 Grand Central Station New York, NY 10163 212 663 3631
<b>DETROIT</b>	<b>OAKLAND</b>
P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227	P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448
<b>LOS ANGELES</b>	<b>MEMPHIS</b>
P.O. Box 29194 Los Angeles, CA 90029 213 960 5607	1725B Madison Ave. #59 Memphis, TN 38104
<b>FLINT, MI</b>	<b>INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS</b>
(North of Sunset, side door)	P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502
<b>ENGLAND</b>	
BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX	

# Promise Keepers

When up to 600,000 men came to Washington, D.C., for the Stand in the Gap demonstration Oct. 5, Bill McCartney, founder of the Promise Keepers, repeated endlessly that there was "no agenda."

No major media questioned this lie, leaving it to others to expose the emerging neo-fascism. Clinton felt called to praise this reactionary crusade in his radio address that weekend talking of the "sincerity" of PK men "willing to reassume their responsibilities to their families...and, therefore, to our future."

Along with a few women's and gay groups, Patricia Ireland, President of the National Organization for Women, has stood as the visible and vocal opposition to the Promise Keepers — and has been vilified by the press for doing so. Where McCartney denies their sexism, his spokesman, Tony Evans, says openly: If "your wife" won't give the man back "his role...I'm not suggesting you ask for your role back, I'm urging you take it back...there can be no compromise here. If you're going to lead, you must lead."

The "no agenda" Promise Keepers get funding from an array of reactionaries including James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, and Pat Robertson, head of the Christian Coalition — advocates of theocratic rule who have taken over the Republican Party in state after state. They are a part of the growing grassroots power of the Christian Coalition, which may end up nominating the next Republican presidential candidate.

The Promise Keepers appeal to the middle-class heterosexual male and his fear of foreign competition, downsizing, "family breakdown," and losing his privileged place in white patriarchal America — a place undermined by Black, women's, and gay liberation movements. The breach through which they try to slither is the backlash against the women's liberation movement.

It was Farrakhan's Million Man March that led McCartney to try to integrate the Promise Keepers. Farrakhan showed that excluding women was kosher, even to the Left. Now McCartney thinks he can use the Black Christian tradition for his own reactionary ends. Yet, despite pictures of sobbing Black and white men embracing, Promise Keeper rallies are overwhelmingly white, enticing African Americans only by waiving the \$60 fee and handing out free tickets in Black churches.

The Promise Keepers appeal to a future where the ideology of the superiority of white fundamentalist Christian heterosexual men rules not only their families but the world. Capitalism is reinforced. All who deviate are cast out. McCartney's "vision" is no different from that of John Trochman, founder of the Militia of Montana, who rails that "free white Christian men" have lost control of the nation. No one should dismiss the Promise Keepers or the Washington march as a one-time thing. If the veneer of U.S. prosperity were to shatter, tendencies like these can get mass followings. — T.M

## Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

A coalition of women's groups, including the National Organization for Women and the Ms. Foundation for Women, have attacked the Nike Corporation as hypocritical for promoting its new commercials praising female athletes, while its mainly female overseas employees work in sweatshop conditions. In an October letter to Nike chairman Philip Knight—signed also by Alice Walker, Rep. Maxine Waters, the Black Women's Agenda and the Coalition of Labor Union Women—the coalition stated: "While the women who wear Nike shoes in the U.S. are encouraged to perform their best, the Indonesian, Vietnamese and Chinese women making the shoes often suffer from inadequate wages, corporal punishment, forced overtime and/or sexual harassment." In Vietnam, bosses were charged with physically abusing workers. The coalition demanded independent factory inspections and higher wages.

\*\*\*

Women who fought against colonial rule in Southern Africa, yet are now being ignored by their post-independence governments, held a convention in Johannesburg, South Africa earlier this year to demand their rights. Many of the estimated 200,000 women ex-freedom fighters in Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola and South Africa are either dead, or mired in poverty, disease and illiteracy. Those who ended up as farmers face millions of acres of productive land turned into killing fields by land mines left behind. Only a handful of these women hold high positions in the government, army or private sector of the countries they fought to free. One South African woman who fought in the struggle to end apartheid charged men freedom fighters with a "patronizing attitude toward their female colleagues that pervaded all liberation movements."

\*\*\*

Residents of Kanirash village in Bukan, Iran physically stopped government mercenaries recently as they were stoning Zoleykhah Kadkhoda for her involvement in a voluntary sexual relationship. As news of the barbaric attack spread, people throughout the Bukar region were outraged and forced village representatives and the religious magistrate who decreed her stoning death in the name of Islam to back down and promise her amnesty if she survived. The Committee for Humanitarian Assistance to Iranian Refugees and the International Federation of Iranian Refugees and Immigrant Councils are calling for an end to stoning and execution.

— Information from Women Living under Muslim Law



## Union campaign at American Catfish

**Itta Bena, Miss.**—Since September we have been working on a drive to unionize the American Catfish plant here. This plant is one of the last three catfish plants in the Mississippi Delta that is not unionized. Ten years ago no plants were union, but today there is only American Catfish, Hartman's and South Fresh still to go. American Catfish has been very difficult. We've had two elections there already and lost both of them, but now we are on our way to a third one.

American Cat is owned by a white farmer who has no respect for the people he employs. The plant has grown to about 200 workers, nearly all of them Black, and they are making him rich. It is like the way Delta Pride Catfish was before we had the union—harassment, disrespect from supervisors, injuries on the job, preventing workers from going to the doctor when they get hurt, and firing workers if they take time off to take children to the doctor.

When we came back to organize again in September, a lot of workers were glad to see us. The plant is remodeled but there are still a lot of injuries. The main reason people are signing up in the union is harassment from supervisors. In one way, it's different from the old days; now more than half the supervisors are Black. But the harassment is still there. Another reason people are joining is that there is no security about anything. The company gives workers an increase, then takes it back. They give workers incentive pay, then it's gone.

We've been forever struggling in the South, fighting to gain recognition in these unorganized plants. But it's very difficult when people are oppressed for years with the concept that white people are superior and in order to

survive you must do or take whatever is necessary. I don't know what the outcome of this election will be. The in-plant workers' committee is getting itself together, especially on the kill line. But we won't know if the third election is the one that works until the votes are counted.

—S. Hamer

## Delray Farms picket line

**Chicago**—Delray Farms has a chain of over 16 grocery stores, and they're constantly building in the community. The chain started a couple of years ago. They started building many stores at the same time. They just built them, threw the signs up and stocked the stores.

UFCW went into battle with Delray because the food prices are so low there that you know Delray is not making much profit on that. They make their profit by keeping the union out. We're doing an informational picket line urging customers to shop at union stores. The workers at Delray don't get insurance, raises, vacation time, holiday pay or medical benefits. All they get is an hourly wage that is lower than at unionized stores.

Delray is selling bad food, like old meat that is re-packaged and re-dated. On the picket line, I've heard a lot of complaints from customers about the meat. We've gotten a good response from the community. Before we started picketing here, the parking lot used to be so full, you couldn't find a parking spot. Now, the parking lot is mostly empty.

The workers want the union, but we don't use the workers on the picket line because they might lose their jobs. The owners are really hostile to the union and said they're going to hold out as long as it takes. One of the main owners of the chain is the owner of the Miller Brewing Company, Reyes. His brewing company is unionized, but his partners at Delray don't want the union. Reyes is a friend of Clinton's and has a lot of clout.

This battle could go on for a long time, and it could get really ugly. This is really an attempt to break the union. If Delray is allowed to win, it could lead to union-busting at other stores. The owners refuse to talk with us. So, we're just keeping at it. Delray will have to give in sooner or later.

— Ronald Jackson, UFCW

## Capitalism's killer beef

**Memphis, Tenn.**—The August recall of 25 million pounds of ground beef after 17 people in Colorado got sick from eating beef contaminated with E. coli bacteria, was an inevitable result of the modern factory farming system, which is shaped by capitalism's drive to produce more and more. Each year in the U.S., thousands of people are killed and millions sickened by bacteria in meat, seafood, eggs, fruit and vegetables.

Science is used as a battering ram against natural limits on the growth rate of animals and plants, with complete disregard for the consequences.

Turned into machines for producing meat, milk and eggs, factory-farm animals are crowded together in horrendous conditions, drugged, genetically engineered, and fed sawdust, manure (spreading E. coli) and animal parts (a possible source of mad cow disease).

**The crowded conditions are ideal for breeding diseases: 60% of chicken at supermarkets has salmonella bacteria; 30% of pork products carry toxoplasmosis. To keep the animals alive and producing, they are treated with antibiotics and pesticides. Humans eat the toxic residue, while drug-resistant bacteria breed in the animals. Almost half the antibiotics sold in the U.S. go to poultry, cattle, pigs and fish.**

Opposition is growing among people living near these facilities. In 1995 the Campaign for Family Farms and Environment was launched, bringing together farm, animal welfare and environmental groups. African-American residents in North Carolina and Mississippi are raising questions about why so many factory hog farms are sited near Blacks.

**The farmworkers suffer too: 58% of workers in factory hog farms have chronic bronchitis. The rate of injury and illness in poultry processing is almost twice that of dangerous jobs like construction and coal mining, while the pay averages \$5 to \$6 an hour.**

Where livestock are transformed into machines of production, their function as metabolizers of crop waste and food scraps into fertilizer is also transformed into its opposite. Crops are fertilized with chemicals, and animal waste becomes a pollutant, linked to "blue baby" syndrome and other ills.

North Carolina has had six major spills from giant "waste lagoons" (hog cesspools), totaling 35 million gallons, killing millions of fish and making people sick. Chicken manure in Maryland has spurred the growth of *pfisteria piscicida*, a microbe whose toxic emissions cause human brain damage. Three rivers flowing into Chesapeake Bay have been closed.

These destructive effects on human health and the environment call for the restoration of the metabolism between humanity and nature "as a regulating law of social production, and under a form appropriate to the full development of the human race," as Marx put it in *Capital*. Factory farms must be curbed, but let's not stop there. What is needed is a radical reorganization of society that makes production subordinate to ecological health and human development.

—Franklin Dmitryev

## 'Women in the Mines'

*Women in the Mines*, by Marat Moore, Twayne Publishers, New York, 1996

The powerful voices of the 24 women included in this oral history speak with a passion that reflects not only the life-and-death dangers involved in the industry but also the many layers of opposition and struggle they endured and surmounted in an environment of hostility, harassment and discrimination encountered in their work relations, communities and families.

The author, an underground miner herself and a former associate editor of the *United Mine Workers Journal*, presents this compilation of in-person interviews with an introduction briefly tracing the sketchy history of women miners from the 13th century through the last century, when laws and other actions precluded women from mine labor. In the U.S. in the early 1970s, the Civil Rights Movement and subsequent affirmative action measures created legal leverages for women to pry open the doors to mine employment and relatively high-wage jobs.

Divided into two major parts, from 1913 to 1973 and from that point to the present, the interviews begin with a woman who, as a child, survived the 1913 Ludlow, Colo., massacre of striking miners and their families. Others include women who worked on outside tipples and coal preparation facilities during World War II, when traditional restrictions and taboos were loosened due to the shortage of men who had gone to war. What comes through in the voices of these women is the incredible strength and determination they displayed in maintaining their families.

The larger part deals with the period from the first woman miner was hired in December 1973. As the number of women miners grew and their problems escalated, they established their own autonomous organization in 1977, the Coal Employment Project, dedicated to helping women cope with the myriad legal, employment and societal pressures they were encountering.

Among the many obstacles women miners had to overcome were the perceptions that women were "bad luck" in the mines, that women miners were only look-

Then and Now—

THE COAL MINERS'  
GENERAL STRIKE OF 1949-50  
AND THE BIRTH OF  
MARXIST-HUMANISM IN  
THE U.S.

by Andy Phillips and  
Raya Dunayevskaya



FREE!

with a 2-year subscription to *News & Letters*

\$10 (regularly \$13, postage included)

See page 7 to order.

ing for a man to take care of them, that they could not perform the heavy labor, that mine work degraded women, that men would be distracted by their presence, that men would sexually assault them underground, and that women would take jobs away from men who were family breadwinners.

The union response to women miners in the beginning was at best lukewarm, and at times the unions cooperated with mine management in removing women from underground work. Reactions of male officers varied from refusing to even consider their grievances to orchestrating their "settlement" with management. This changed for the better with the 1982 election of Rich Trumka as president of the UMWA, who had the overwhelming support of women miners who by then numbered in the thousands.

**Most of the women, many of whom were single mothers, went into the mines for economic reasons. Almost all spoke of the huge differences in mine pay of \$100 or more a day compared with the \$30 or less a day available to women elsewhere that enabled them to dramatically improve their living standards.**

The voices include every coal region in the U.S., and represent Black, white, hispanic and Indian women who are immigrants, daughters of immigrants and native born. One significant voice here is that of a woman who had been active during the historic 1985-86 coal miners' strike in Britain that was crushed by the reactionary Thatcherite-Tory government. This interview, like most of the others, reveals the grim life-and-death struggle waged relentlessly between capital and labor at the workplace in open class warfare.

All of the Black women miners underscore the special burdens they were forced to bear, since they had to battle racial discrimination as well as all of the other pressures of being a woman miner.

Women miners demonstrated that they could do any job in the mine—from the least to the most skilled positions. They were also numbered among the most militant and principled rank-and-file miners.

As the fortunes of coal declined in the 1980s, the number of women miners dwindled because they were among the most recently hired and were the first to be laid off under the union contract seniority provisions. Nevertheless, these women have written a powerful chapter in American labor history with a proud legacy for all future mine workers.

One thing is certain: no reader of this book can ever possibly refer to women as "the weaker sex."

—Andy Phillips

## Firings at Sealy Mattress

**Memphis, Tenn.**—One of the main problems we have been having at Sealy Mattress is the new plant superintendent, Michael Nerne. He's been trying to circumvent the contract. He was the plant manager at Serta Mattress and they went out of business in Memphis. Then he came over to Sealy.

He has hired some of the people who used to work at Serta. He's starting them at \$8 or \$9/hour instead of going through the progression period of the contract, under which it takes 60 working days to work up from \$5.50 to that rate. That violates the contract. He has also brought over someone who used to be a supervisor at Serta, and made a supervisor position for him over existing. There had never been a supervisor in that position in the history of Sealy Mattress.

This supervisor hasn't been there three weeks, and he's started to terminate probationary employees in his department, and in turn call in people that worked at Serta. In the last three weeks, five or six people have been terminated. In their probationary period of 45 working days, employees can be terminated and it's not subject to grievance and arbitration. We in the union have some aces in the hole to play on this one.

Anybody who works for a corporation would be stupid not to have a union. The corporation's bottom line is profit. They don't care anything about the people that work for them. They're in business to make money.

Sealy spent \$300,000 on a new quilting machine that takes three people to run. But when negotiations start, they're going to say they have no money. That's ridiculous. Sealy is a very profitable company. The CEO makes millions of dollars.

Since our contract is up in April, we're thinking they're trying to get the Serta people and the people who are here already at each other's throats. This tactic is not going to work, because we're not concerned with the people from Serta coming to work here. The only thing we're concerned about is that he's trying to violate the contract, and we're not going to stand for it. Morale in the plant is very low. People are upset about what Nerne is trying to do. They're very much in a fighting mood.

—Sealy worker

## Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

ork, there were plenty of people out there who did. The or swings both ways.

Workers were shocked into silence by the distortions. | they had done was request a meeting! Were there two tions going around? "We didn't do anything wrong, | we?" asked one of the youngest workers later. No, y didn't do anything wrong. They frightened management because, instead of going into the office one by one complain privately, they said "we."

Workers enter the process of production as isolated individuals, brought together and united into a single ductive body by the capitalist who purchases their or power. Their cooperation can accomplish things it no individual laborer, working alone, ever could. rl Marx called this "the creation of a new productive ver, which is intrinsically a collective one" ooperation," *Capital*, Volume One).

That new power benefits the capitalist—as long as he ; control over it. When the veneer of "multi-function- individuals working in "semi-autonomous" "teams" ins to wear thin, and the collective power of the work- begins to assert itself on its own behalf, it must be led and suppressed. The true nature of our relation- p to capital thus is laid bare.

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

# THE TWO RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS, and once again, on the Theory of Permanent Revolution

## Editor's Note

In observance of the 80th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Nov. 7, 1917—and its “dress rehearsal,” the 1905 Russian Revolution—we reprint excerpts of Raya Dunayevskaya's Political-Philosophic Letter, “The Two Russian Revolutions, and Once Again, On The Theory of Permanent Revolution.” The letter was written Oct. 1, 1979, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Leon Trotsky's birth, and published with minor changes as an Afterword in 1982 in Dunayevskaya's book, **Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution**, which also delves into the 1905 Revolution and attitudes of revolutionaries toward it. The author's footnotes from the book are excerpted here—except for bracketed material taken from the letter itself—and their placements changed on account of excerpting. The full letter can be found in **The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection**, pp. 6037-6049.

The [Russian] Revolutions of 1905 and 1917 have forever enshrined Trotsky's great historical role. The same two Revolutions, however, tell a very contradictory story about the theory with which Trotsky's name will likewise always be connected as he is the creator of the 20th century version of the theory of the Permanent Revolution. The expression, “contradictory story,” is not a reference to the critiques of that theory, mine included.<sup>1</sup> ...

Recently, in restudying the 1905-07 Revolution as turning point in Rosa Luxemburg's life, the 1907 London Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party became crucial, not just in regard to her views, but to those of Lenin and Trotsky—and, for that matter, all other tendencies in Russia, as it was that united Congress of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks that, for once, all tendencies attended. [Leon Trotsky was there as an independent.]

...Let's begin at the beginning, with Trotsky's participation in the 1907 Congress which revolved around the 1905 Revolution.

Let's remember that this [Congress] occurs after Trotsky had reached the highest point of activity with the General Strike led by the St. Petersburg Soviet, which he headed. Not only was that a highpoint of revolution. It became the highest point of Trotsky's theoretical development, as he drew from it what later became known as the theory of Permanent Revolution. Absolutely no one, including Lenin and Luxemburg, matched the leap in cognition which proclaimed that backward Russia, involved in a bourgeois revolution, could be the one not only to have the revolution before the advanced countries, but in Absolutist Russia—to reach for socialism “in an unbroken chain.” That expression, “unbroken chain,” which referred concretely to the 1905 Russian Revolution—and not just the concept of permanent revolution which Marx had developed in his 1850 Address to the Communist League<sup>2</sup>—was the issue in dispute.

It is Trotsky's original projection, which was later to become known as the theory of Permanent Revolution but which was not on the agenda of that 1907 Congress because Lenin's proposal to discuss “The Present Moment of Revolution” was defeated by the Mensheviks—with Trotsky's help. Here is what Trotsky said in that dispute:

What I want is that the Congress, from beginning to end, be political, that it be a gathering of revolutionary representatives of the Party, and not a club, be it of doubtful or even non-doubtful Marxists, bent on general discussions. I need political directives, and not your general philosophical deliberations about the character of the present moment of our revolution... Give us a formula for action! That's what I need.<sup>3</sup>

When the Congress got down to discussing the one “general,” i.e., theoretical, question—the relationship of Social-Democracy (as Marxism was then called) to bourgeois parties... Trotsky did not present a resolution different from the one the Bolsheviks presented, though he tried to amend that one. Indeed, he reproduced his speech in the 1922 edition of 1905 precisely to show that he opposed the Mensheviks and voted with the Bolsheviks.<sup>4</sup> Yet in the years immediately following the

1. See chap. 4, “Leon Trotsky as Theoretician,” and chap. 5, “The Thought of Mao Tse-tung,” of my **Philosophy and Revolution**. See also my essay, “Post-Mao China: What Now?” in **New Essays** (Detroit: News & Letters, 1977).

2. [See especially the final paragraph of the Address... “But they themselves must do the utmost for their final victory by clarifying their minds as to what their class interests are, by taking up their position as an independent party as soon as possible and by not allowing themselves to be seduced for a single moment by the hypocritical phrases of the democratic petty bourgeois into refraining from the independent organization of the party of the proletariat. Their battle cry must be: The Revolution in Permanence.”]

3. [From Minutes of the 1907 Fifth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers Party, in **Pyatyi (Londonskii) S'ezd RSDRP, April'mai 1907 goda, Protokoly**, (Moscow: 1963), p. 49. (My translation.)]

Congress he wrote a whole series of articles attacking the Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks. The major one (and the one he was proud enough to reproduce in the 1922 edition of his 1905) was the article that had been published in Luxemburg's paper in 1909. Here is how it concluded:

...while the anti-revolutionary aspects of Menshevism have already become fully apparent, those of Bolshevism are likely to become a serious threat only in the event of victory. (p. 316)

As if that were not a fantastic enough statement to make in 1909 in “predicting” the future revolution, Trotsky in 1922—that is to say, nearly five years after Lenin had led the greatest revolution in history—superficially footnoted the 1909 statement as follows:

Note to the present edition. This threat, as we know, never materialized because, under the leadership of Comrade Lenin, the Bolsheviks changed their policy line on this most important matter (not without inner struggle) in the spring of 1917, that is, before the seizure of power. (Author.) (p. 317 fn.)

\*\*\*

The point is what did happen in those intervening 12 years [between 1905 and 1917]? As we already saw, in 1907 he did not wish to discuss the nature of the present moment of the revolution. In 1909 he published the above cited criticism of Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. In



Russian factory workers gather for a revolutionary political meeting.

1910 he followed it up with the article in **Neue Zeit**, where the first point Trotsky made was: “Theory cannot replace experience.”<sup>5, 6</sup>

As if 1905 meant, not the greatest experience ever—but it for him or the Russian proletariat and peasantry, as well as for the world working class—but only factional disputes between “Economists,” Mensheviks and Bolsheviks; as if Russian Marxism arose merely out of fighting a “primitive ideological viewpoint” (i.e., the Narodniks), Trotsky reached the following conclusion regarding those factional disputes between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks: the differences arise out of “the process of adaptation of Marxist intellectuals to the class struggle, i.e. the political immaturity of the Russian proletariat.” What such argumentation betrays, I would say, is that it isn't only the “nature” of the peasantry about which Leon Trotsky had a low opinion; it is the proletariat which he considered backward—“politically immature.” Trotsky's logic, however, led him to accuse the Bolsheviks, Lenin especially, of “ideological fetishism,” “sectarianism,” and “intellectual individualism.”

...Further to separate both action and organization from theory, not to mention reducing the concept of orga-

4. Leon Trotsky, 1905 (New York: Vintage Books; Penguin Press, 1972). Page citations in the text are to this edition. Trotsky had reproduced one of his speeches at the 1907 Congress, as well as that part of the 1922 Preface to 1905 which is under dispute, in **The Permanent Revolution** (New York: Pioneer Pub., 1931). [See also my analysis of Trotsky on the peasantry in “Leon Trotsky as Man and Theoretician” in **Studies in Comparative Communism**, Spring/Summer 1977.]

5. “Die Entwicklungstendenzen der russischen Sozialdemokratie” **Neue Zeit**, 9 September 1910.

6. [Lenin's article, “The Historical Meaning of the Internal Party Struggle in Russia” was in answer to and critique of this 1910 article...] V. I. Lenin, **Selected Works** (New York: International Publishers, 1943), 3:499-518.

**NEWS & LETTERS**  
 VOL. 42, No. 9 November 1997

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September for \$5.00 a year (bulk order or 5 or more, 15¢ each) by News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone (312) 663-0839. Fax (312) 663-9069. Second Class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Letters, 59 E. Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. Articles may be reprinted verbatim if credited to “News & Letters.”

Raya Dunayevskaya  
 Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987)  
 Charles Denby  
 Editor (1955-1983)

Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, News and Letters Committees. Lou Turner, Managing Editor. Felix Martin, Labor Editor.

News & Letters is printed in a union shop. © GCU 759-C

nization to “apparatus,” he adds that, of course, to achieve unity of disparate tendencies: “what is needed is the re-organization of the party apparatus.”

Those who say that—since that was the period climaxed by the infamous “August Bloc” which Trotsky acknowledged was a “fundamental error,” and since he accepted Lenin's characterization of him as “conciliationist”—Trotsky's joining of the Bolshevik Party, like his revolutionary activities in 1917, “eliminated all differences,” show they understand nothing of either theory or organization. The whole point of Marxist theory, and organization to correspond, is that they are inseparable from the goal—the revolutionary road to a classless society. If one creates a theory of revolution but thinks a “Party” can reach the end of that long trek without that theory, he is, indeed, underestimating what theory is. That is the only reason Trotsky could have written that “theory cannot replace experience.” It is the only reason he could have failed to put his theory on that 1907 Agenda and refused to discuss any theory of the “nature of the present moment or revolution”—and then proceeded to try to unite all tendencies, not by forging a theoretical basis for a revolutionary party, but by proposing the “reorganization of the Party apparatus.”

\*\*\*

The point here is not so much whether Lenin or Trotsky was right in this or that dispute. Rather, the amazing fact is that Trotsky, the creator of the theory of Permanent Revolution, was practicing not just organizational but theoretical conciliationism—and the theoretical conciliationism was not only against “others” but against himself. In a word, not a single serious point Trotsky made in 1905 was either developed or related to anything he did in those 12 long years between 1905 and 1917.

How, then, did the question of his theory mature when, finally, in 1917 a proletarian revolution did, indeed, succeed and was led by Lenin and himself? The November 1917 Revolution remains the highest point of proletarian revolution and is magnificently retold in **The History of the Russian Revolution**.<sup>7</sup> This book is a landmark of historical writing by one who was both a leader of a revolution and an historian of it. All the Appendices in the history of 1917 are expressions of Trotsky's view of his theory of the Permanent Revolution. That is natural enough.

What isn't natural is some rewriting of history in the Appendices, especially as it relates to Lenin and the theoretic division between the two on Lenin's slogan, “the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry,” which is almost always abbreviated by Trotsky as just “bourgeois-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.” To prove how that kept the Bolsheviks from understanding the course of 1917, he shows how hard Lenin had to work “to rearm the Party.”

That, in part, is true but the whole truth is that it was not the theory of Permanent Revolution that “rearmed the Party,” but Lenin's famous April Thesis. To try to claim that the April Thesis somehow implied Lenin's conversion to Trotsky's theory is to skip entirely Lenin's philosophic-dialectic reorganization which, far from bringing him closer to Trotsky, led to the most fundamental dispute between them over Lenin's slogans—“Defeat of your own country is the lesser evil”; “Transform the imperialist war into civil war.” It was not Leon Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution, but the dialectics of revolution that led Lenin both to the April Theses and to the writing of **State and Revolution**, as well as to putting conquest of power on the agenda of the Bolshevik Party. And it was then that Trotsky joined Lenin, not Lenin Trotsky.

\*\*\*

Above all, what stands out is Trotsky's failure to grasp the totally new theoretical point of departure on that question which Lenin introduced in the Theses on the National and Colonial Questions at the Second Congress of the Communist International. Trotsky's reference to that thesis is limited to the context of his fight with Stalin—internationalism vs. nationalism—and not the pivotal point of the revolutionary live force of the peasantry, of the national question, and of the perspective that, since world revolution has not come via Berlin, “then perhaps” it can come via Peking. That new point of departure in theory was not grasped, much less developed, by Trotsky.

His attempt, retrospectively, to credit the 1917 Revolution's success to his theory of Permanent Revolution, was not, of course, at the bottom of the Trotsky-Stalin struggle that ensued after the death of Lenin. No. More objective causes are at the root—the new stage of world capitalism, reflected in Stalin's revisionist capitulation to the capitalistic impulse as he moved in the opposite direction of the workers' demands

(Continued on page 10)

7. See vol. I, appendix 2 to “Rearming of the Party”; vol. 3 appendix 2, “Socialism in a Separate Country?”; and vol. 3 appendix 3, “Historic References on the Theory of ‘Permanent Revolution’” in Leon Trotsky's **The History of the Russian Revolution**.



## Philosophic Dialogue

As a contribution to the recognition of the 80th anniversary of the Russian Revolution we print excerpts from, and the author's response to, three of the many critical reviews of Kevin Anderson's *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism, A Critical Study* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995) 311 pp. To order, see p. 7.

### Paul Le Blanc in *Monthly Review* (October 1996)

...Anderson's book, *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism, A Critical Study*, despite certain limitations, makes a substantial contribution to the scholarship on Marxism, on Lenin, and on the interrelationship of philosophy and revolutionary theory. Specifically, this is the first book-length examination of Lenin's own 1914-15 studies of the early 19th century German philosopher, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Lenin took up these studies at what would seem an odd historical moment: the eruption of the First World War, the collapse of the Socialist International, and the quickening of a revolutionary upsurge that would yield both a new wave of anti-colonial national liberation struggles and the Russian Revolution of 1917...

...An obvious source that Anderson has drawn from is a subterranean current that took such things seriously fifty years ago: the Johnson-Forest tendency, a tiny grouping inside the U.S. Trotskyist movement, viewed harshly by some people as a bizarre little cult wrapped within an only slightly larger sect. At first blush, this seems as strange as Lenin immersing himself in Hegel studies in 1914. Yet the Johnson-Forest tendency distinguished itself not only by a passionate engagement with the ideas of such people as Trotsky, Lenin, Luxemburg and Marx, but also with an incredibly serious concern over the philosophical dimensions of revolutionary Marxism...

"Johnson" was, in fact, C.L.R. James, the great Marxist historian, culture critic, and Pan-Africanist whose contributions have recently excited considerable enthusiasm among substantial sectors of what remains of the left-wing intelligentsia. "Forest" was the formidable Raya Dunayevskaya, who inspired feminist theorist Adrienne Rich to comment recently: "We can be sure that Marxism is no more dead than the women's liberation movement is dead, that the ways of reading Marx that Raya mapped for us are more challenging than ever in our time"...

...Earlier than most on the Left, those who were in or influenced by the Johnson-Forest tendency developed a serious theoretical approach to Black liberation and women's liberation struggles—recognizing their inherent validity, the need for their relative independence, and the revolutionary dynamic in their relationship to the no less important struggles of the working class...

For all of its strengths, however, this work of political philosophy suffers from a disconcerting abstractness. Lenin is treated as a philosopher more than as a practical revolutionary leader, and this introduces odd distortions. Diverse writers who emphasize Lenin's role as such a leader are accused by Anderson of "treating Lenin's theoretical work as being primarily political or organizational in an immediate sense," and as failing to see Lenin "as an original political and social theorist whose ideas affected his political practice"...

The problem manifests itself again in Anderson's mostly excellent discussion of Lenin's 1917 classic *State and Revolution*, in which he effectively defends its libertarian content from trendy bourgeois critics such as A. J. Polan. He demonstrates that for Lenin "the dictatorship of the proletariat" represents a radical workingclass democracy.

...But Anderson is not happy with Lenin's continued adherence to the concept of a revolutionary party, which is characterized as the negative element in "Lenin's paradoxical legacy." So intent is he on separating the bad" Lenin from the good, that Anderson claims "in 1917 the notion of the party almost disappeared from his writings"—which tells us more about the author's unrelenting vision than it does about Lenin in 1917...

One of Anderson's most substantial sources on all of his is a quote from Raya Dunayevskaya: "Unfortunately, the great transformation in Lenin, both on philosophy and on the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, did not extend to Lenin's concept of the party, which, despite all modifications in actual revolutions, remained essentially what it was in 1903." Interesting is Dunayevskaya's assertion, it does not make up for his lack of the careful textual analysis of which Anderson is quite clearly capable, not to mention the absence of any serious historical analysis of the 1917 evolution. Lenin made mistakes, it can be argued, that undermined the radical socialist democracy that was his goal (disastrous mistakes can be found especially in the civil war period of 1919-1921, as he himself pointed out). Nor was Lenin's earlier political thought free of blind spots. Such problems could be fruitfully explored by a critical scholar such as Anderson if he was not diverted from such explorations by taking the easier but less fruitful path of vanguard-bashing...

Paul Le Blanc is the author of *Lenin and the Revolutionary Party*.

### Neil Harding in *Slavic Review* (Spring 1997)

Dispassionate and serious study of Lenin's thought

# Lenin, Hegel and Western Marxism— critical responses

that conforms to the rigor of contemporary scholarship on other major political thinkers is still in its infancy. Prevalent judgments on Lenin are still based more on prejudice and political *parti pris* than they are on normal canons of textual and contextual evidence. A symptom of the primitive state of Lenin studies is the virtual absence of thorough and detailed studies of his major (and allegedly seminal) texts. Kevin Anderson's *Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism* is an attempt to remedy that deficiency as far as Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks* is concerned. Anderson's title might lead one to suppose that the broader issue of the Hegelianization of Marxism in the twentieth century is his major theme, whereas, in fact, the third part of the book (the least satisfactory) is largely concerned with the much narrower issue of how later Marxists received Lenin's *Notebooks* (or explained why they neglected them). Part 1, "Lenin on Hegel and Dialectics," is undoubtedly the most impressive and original part of the book in which the claim that Lenin's whole mind-set was transformed by his reading of Hegel in 1914 is made and sustained...

It is the larger picture that unhappily tends to be set aside. Nowhere do we really get the flavor of Lenin's original. Anderson's careful commentaries and reflections lead us to suppose that what we are dealing with is a finished and continuous original text expressing a considered and distinctive philosophical position, but Lenin's text is not like that at all. The *Philosophical Notebooks* are notoriously difficult to interpret precisely because there is very little of Lenin in them. There are underlinings, extracts in boxes, exclamations, quotations with emphases, brief marginalia, occasional reflections combined with a virtual absence of continuous narrative. These are undigested notebooks of Lenin's reflections on other thinkers—particularly Hegel. For that reason they are the most difficult texts to construe and to integrate into Lenin's *oeuvre*. There is, about this section of Anderson's book, something of the law of diminishing fleas. Anderson is himself too engaged ever to reflect that what he is doing is offering us Anderson (via Raya Dunayevskaya) on Lenin on Hegel (and Anderson's filial piety to Dunayevskaya pervades not merely the acknowledgments but the whole of his book)...

Neil Harding, is the author of *Lenin's Political Thought*

### Michael Löwy in *Radical Philosophy* (May/June 1997)

Thanks to its impressive argumentation and wide scholarship, this book brings to life a new and unexpected Lenin, poles apart from both wooden "Marxism-Leninism" and dismissive Western scholarship. A follower of the Hegelian Marxist Raya Dunayevskaya, Kevin Anderson gives us a sympathetic but critical assessment of Lenin's attempt to assimilate Hegelian dialectics into revolutionary politics.

The starting point for Anderson's argument is Lenin's *Notebooks* on Hegel of 1914-15, a series of abstracts, summaries and comments, mainly on Hegel's *Science of Logic*. In spite of their fragmentary and unfinished nature, these constitute Lenin's philosophical and methodological break with Second International "orthodox" Marxism, and, therefore, with his own earlier views, as codified in his crude and dogmatic polemical piece of 1908, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*...

Curiously enough, Anderson fails to mention a more obvious example of the impact of the Hegel *Notebooks* on Lenin's dialectics of revolution: the "April Theses" of 1917, where, for the first time, he called for the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one. This major turn—a radical break with the Russian Marxist tradition, common to Mensheviks and Bolsheviks—was only possible because of Lenin's emancipation, thanks to Hegel, from the strait-jacket of Plekhanovite Marxism, with its rigid, pre-dialectical notion of "stages" prescribed by the "laws" of historical "evolution"...

The last section of the book deals with Lenin's *Notebooks* and Western Marxism—a category that Anderson does not challenge, even though his data show that the opposition between dialectical and vulgar-materialist Marxism does not coincide with any geographical distinction between "East" and "West."

Lenin's *Notebooks* were published in the USSR in 1929, but Soviet Marxism nearly buried them, canonizing *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* instead. While some Western Marxists, such as Lukacs, Bloch, Goldmann, Lefebvre, Marcuse, and, above all, Dunayevskaya, showed interest in them, others (e.g. Colletti and Althusser) either ignored or misinterpreted them, from a materialist/positivist standpoint, hoping to drive Hegel's shadow "back into the night" (Althusser)...

Of all Western Marxists, only Dunayevskaya made the *Notebooks* central to her overall theoretical project, with an extensive—and increasingly critical—series of writings, the 1950s to the 1980s. Her *Marxism and Freedom* (1958) is the first serious discussion in English of the *Notebooks*, and the first to try to relate them to Lenin's views on imperialism, national liberation, state and revolution. In *Philosophy and Revolution* (1973) the issue is taken up again, but this time emphasizing Lenin's philosophical ambivalence. Finally, in a new preface to this book (her last writing), Dunayevskaya insisted on Lenin's too narrowly materialist reading of Hegel.

Michael Löwy is the author of *Lukacs, from Romanticism to Revolution*.

### Kevin Anderson responds

In a brief response, it is impossible to take up all of the serious issues raised by the reviewers. Paul Le Blanc identifies with some of my discussion of Lenin's 1914-15 Hegel *Notebooks*, and with the argument that it was under the impact of those studies that Lenin developed an original and important body of writings on imperialism, national liberation, the state, and revolution. However, Le Blanc takes issue with my criticism of Lenin for failing to rethink dialectically his concept of the vanguard party to lead after 1914.

I want to clarify the fact that I was not counterposing spontaneous forms of organization from below to the party to lead in the manner of C.L.R. James or even Rosa Luxemburg. Instead, I was hinting at a still deeper problem, what Raya Dunayevskaya in her last years called the need for a concept of the "dialectics of organization and philosophy." To develop such a concept, she argued, we would need to go beyond Lenin's party to lead, to build on Marx's non-vanguardist but philosophically grounded concept of organization in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* and elsewhere, and to place front and center the importance of dialectical philosophy as ground for revolutionary organization. Lenin raised many questions which can help us to get there, but he did not take us there.

I was glad that Neil Harding expressed some appreciation for my analysis of Lenin's 1914-15 Hegel *Notebooks*. Unfortunately, Harding downplays their importance, arguing that they are "undigested notebooks" which do not express a "distinctive philosophical position."

I do not think that Harding's critique holds if one carries out a close reading of Lenin's *Notebooks*. There, Lenin critiques what he called Plekhanov's "vulgar materialism," and he appropriates critically some core Hegelian categories such as self-movement, subjectivity, and the creativity of cognition (see for example Lenin's statement that "cognition not only reflects the world but creates it" — *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 212). Contra Harding, I think it is clear that Lenin was indeed developing a new set of dialectical concepts in 1914-15. These new concepts can be found neither in his pre-1914

writings nor in those of Lenin's contemporaries such as Trotsky, Luxemburg, and Bukharin.

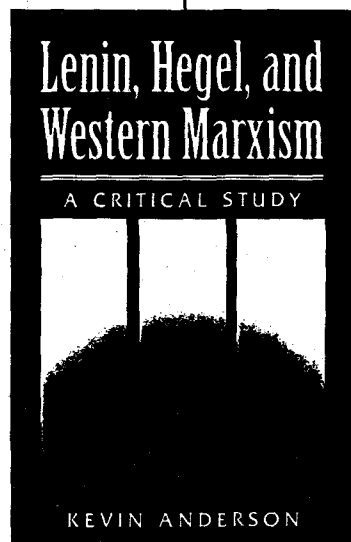
The review by Michael Löwy shows the clearest grasp of the issues I tried to address. I agree with his view that my discussion of the relationship of Lenin's Hegel *Notebooks* to the April Theses, a subject on which Löwy has written, may have been too truncated.

Löwy also comments on my treatment of the discussions of the *Notebooks* by philosophers such as Lukacs, Lefebvre, Althusser, and especially Dunayevskaya, who was the first to have pointed to the sharp divergence between them and Lenin's earlier *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Althusser, and even Lukacs, not to speak of the Stalinist ideologues, labored to deny

this divergence, something which has contributed, far more than is generally realized, to the disorientation of twentieth century Marxism.

Today, as we mark the 80th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, we need, in the teeth of hostile bourgeois critiques, to stress the world-shaking achievements of that Revolution: the uprooting of Tsarism, the establishment of soviet power, the support of national liberation movements from Ireland to India. We also have to face its limitations, especially the establishment of a single party state.

In addition, we need to celebrate the fact that the Russian Revolution's principal leader, Lenin, was the first Marxist after Marx to place the dialectic back where it belonged, at the center of Marxist theory. This included his call in 1922, not long before his death, for us to become "materialist friends of the Hegelian dialectic." That call is still timely today.



## THE GLOBALISM OF FREE MARKET CAPITALISM

When currencies collapse, the IMF usually shows up (not only its experts but also billions of dollars) "to restore the confidence of international investors." This fact encourages these investors to lend their money cheaply, even to countries that "overbuild" and "overspend" not just for productive aims. In other words, every time a country is "saved" so are the big investors—from paying a steep price for their misinvestment. It is a sign of what Alan Greenspan called "irrational exuberance" applied on a global scale. What happens one day when a rescue plan fails?

**Economist  
East Europe**

\*\*\*

The issue that is constantly in my head as I talk to students who are totally brainwashed by free market capitalism is: What is the role of the state in regulating business environmental actions, given the present international context of GATT and NAFTA. Companies' ability to limit state oversight could really forestall many of the limited successes of the modern environmental movement. That is troubling given the condition of that movement, which seems more interested in cooperating with business than preventing degradation.

**Sociologist  
Memphis**

\*\*\*

N&L is very enlightening as to the worldwide economic oppression behind the subtleties of today's scandalous, white-collar corporate activities. Thank you for exposing the false greatness, glamor and glitter, and enlightening the gullible who focus on the fruits of the problems rather than on the root.

**Prisoner  
California**

\*\*\*

It is estimated in Hungary that joining NATO will cost at least two billion dollars (which they obviously don't have). For this money they will have to buy U.S.-made equipment and repay the two billion "loan" at high interest rates. This is how all such countries are tied into their global "free" market. As it is, anything worth owning in Hungary is already in the hands of foreign corporations and a few highflying "businessmen" (read: Hungarian or Chechen or other foreign Mafiosos).

**Disgusted Hungarian  
Canada**

The trench underlying the market system is being readied to swallow up part of the American working class. That minorities go first should not make those of us in the majority feel any better, since there's plenty of room for everyone. We need to unite in a common cause, opposing every oppressive law that drops on our heads. Class consciousness must transcend race and gender or we will all sit in our separate sections of the same hole.

**Student  
Louisiana**

\*\*\*

The new immigration law is the direct consequence of the globalization of the economy which has devastated the Third World countries and forces people to put their hopes in the First World. They have to keep coming, and the U.S. government is trying with these laws to keep them from becoming a force of revolution.

**Ecuadoran  
New York**

\*\*\*

The globalization of capitalism with its mantra of "free trade" is simply a mechanism by which capitalism is intensifying what it has always done—produce at the lowest possible cost and sell at the highest possible profit. What is new today is that the process has gone so far that it is not only goods and services that are being "accessed" worldwide, but living human labor. That is what explains why so many today are being displaced from their homes and thrown into the maelstrom of migration. There are 100 million immigrants today moving back and forth across national borders!

**Marxist-Humanist  
Chicago**

### 'CULTURAL IMPERIALISM'

I heard a radio broadcast recently of Che Guevara's October 1964 address to the UN. He spoke of the racist nature of Western imperialism in the Congo and how Patrice Lumumba's trust in the UN had been betrayed. No less racist is Western imperialism in Latin America. On the same broadcast, CIA accounts obtained through the FOI Act were reported to have described Guevara as "fairly intellectual for a Latino man." Characterizing Third World people as basically inferior justifies their subjugation and a controlled unilateral development through external forces. I think that's why Ba Karang included a discus-

## Readers' Views

sion of cultural imperialism in his essay on "Africa after the fall of Mobutu" in the October issue. That Sankara and Kabila would see women's wear and music as a battleground on which to confront the enemy indicates the enemy has already won the battle.

**David  
Bay Area**

\*\*\*

Ba Karang wrote: "Sankara argued that imperialism no longer needs a huge army or armaments to control a nation: their music and lifestyle can do it better." Having travelled extensively in Latin America and Europe in the last 40 years, I witnessed how the U.S. "culture" destroys the indigenous culture, music and even folk art of various nations and peoples. Young people try to emulate the lifestyle of the "rich and famous"—without the financial means. The all-pervasive beat spread through every medium from Walkmans to radio, videos and TV has succeeded in having tens of millions moving to the same deadening beat worldwide. Hollywood movies are obliterating the national film industries that cannot compete with that reactionary colossus. A move back to classical music, folk music and jazz might be a very good idea.

**Musician  
Canada**

**MILLION  
WOMAN  
MARCH**



The Million Woman March really meant something to me. I wish I had been there. It looked as though the sisters who went said no, we ain't got nothin' to atone for. That was my biggest problem with the Million Man March. Atonement? Come on!

**Black woman  
Illinois**

\*\*\*

The Left calls protest after protest and, with all the police brutality, can't get 500 people in New York to a "National Day of Protest" on Oct. 22. Yet a community activist in Philadelphia counted on word of mouth and the Internet to bring out between 300,000 and one million

women. Maybe in these "retrogressive times" the mass of working people are ahead of the Left. The liberals protest because they believe the system is capable of change. The Left protests because they think that's all the "backward masses" can understand. Maybe people are beyond that and want something positive they can do. Can it be that while we've been talking about the need to work out a vision of the future, that's what these women are trying to work out and are hungering for?

**John Marcotte  
New York**

\*\*\*

A Black woman writer who went to the March spoke here about the gap she saw "between the leaders and reality." She said a lot of the women there were those "forgotten by the feminist and womanist movements" and that the speakers missed an opportunity to speak to them. At least a million women came without much publicity but nobody seems to care. The newspapers and TV and even C-span gave it very little coverage compared to the attention given the Million Man March or Promise Keepers. There has been no analysis, nobody asking how this happened.

**Women's liberationist  
Memphis**

\*\*\*

I wanted to go to the March but it was too hard with two small children. It's so important for Black women to be united and I would have loved just being there. There were some things in the platform I didn't care for. Promoting Black business women is OK but leaves most of us out. I also don't know what they mean by Black independent schools. I wish they had included demands like child care and a livable wage.

**Welfare mother  
Chicago**

### 'POWER OF NEGATIVITY'

In Part III of your Perspectives Thesis, printed in your Aug.-Sept. issue—the part called "The Power of Negativity: Forces of revolt as reason, philosophy as force of revolt"—I recognized exactly the problem I feel every revolutionary faces (Continued on page 7)

## BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: BETWEEN TWO KINDS OF PARTITION—A CRITIQUE AND OUR RESPONSE

I CANNOT AGREE with the conclusions of the October editorial on "Bosnia: between two kinds of partition." There are two kinds of reasons for my disagreement.

The first I would call practical. As much as I favor the past Bosnian multi-ethnic society and for this reason a rearming of Bosnian Muslims, I would not accept this possibility in order for them to start a new war. Even if the assumption were true that they were "on the verge of inflicting a military defeat on the Serbs when the U.S. forced them to accept a cease-fire," there is no proof that they would be able to do it in a renewed fighting, the less so should they think of defeating not only those of their citizens living in the Republika Srpska, but also the Serbs of the present Republic of Yugoslavia. The editorial does not consider the wider circumstances of such a war, especially the reaction of the Croatian regime and the international setting. There is a real possibility of the Croats joining with the Serbs, with the international community looking at it as an "understandable" reaction against those who started a war.

Without entering speculations on how the powers would react, a break-up of today's Yugoslavia would certainly be the follow-up of a Serbian defeat, with a possibility of Kosovo joining Albania—leading to a new realignment in the Balkans and making it a powder keg for the next decade. This is without taking into consideration a defeat of the Muslims, which cannot be excluded just because we do not wish it to happen.

Even more important is my second argument. I can't believe that Marxist-Humanism would call for a war. A soci-

ety can be remodeled only by a revolution from within itself, i.e., by uprooting the capitalist class system with its own "passions and forces." A "new" society cannot be imposed from outside. Only when the revolution has already broken out could it be helped by outside forces. No "narrow nationalism" can be uprooted by any kind of "military intervention." Should the Serbs in Yugoslavia be defeated by force, their "narrow nationalism" would even be strengthened. I do not know of any example from history which could contradict my belief.

The kind of thinking that emerges in the conclusion of the editorial is not only opposed to the Marxist-Humanist body of ideas, but would enable similar reasoning to take hold in it. Today Bosnia, tomorrow perhaps some Latin American country: for trying to help a "new" (in this case "multiethnic") society to be born we would enter the adventurist way of Che Guevara. This is certainly not the way of Raya Dunayevskaya.

**Stephen Steiger**

\*\*\*

**THE CONCLUSION** of the editorial statement with which Stephen Steiger disagrees is the following: "Such a military defeat of the Serb leadership (in the "Republika Srpska") by the Bosnians could break the shackle of neo-fascist narrow nationalism which has gripped the nation." This position is not a new one on the part of the editorial board of N&L. It has been expressed consistently in our writings and activities in solidarity with Bosnia since 1992 and is documented in the collection we published in 1996: **Bosnia-**

**Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization.'**

In 1992 we opposed the Serbian government-perpetrated genocide in Bosnia and made a distinction between Serbian chauvinistic nationalism and the Bosnian struggle for self-determination to preserve a multiethnic society. In 1993, while opposing U.S. military intervention, we specifically called for lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia to enable it to militarily defeat the Serbian campaign of "ethnic cleansing." This position was further stated in our editorials in July 1994, December 1994, July 1995 and October 1995. In 1995 we defended the Bosnian army as it was on the verge of inflicting a military defeat on the areas "ethnically cleansed" by Serbian nationalist forces, specifically Banja Luka. We wrote that the U.S. government's push to force the treacherous Dayton Accords on the Bosnians was aimed at preventing a defeat of Serbian nationalists as the pathway to reversing "ethnic cleansing" and debunking the nightmare of a "Greater Serbia," which has been the linchpin of war criminals such as Milosevic, Karadzic and Seselj.

The critique of our position in the October editorial ignores the fact that the "Republika Srpska" is a totally non-legitimate entity created out of the Serbian campaign of ethnic cleansing. It is not the same as Serbia. It is no more legitimate than if the white militias in the U.S. declared a state of "White People of Idaho" and murdered or expelled all non-whites as well as whites who disagreed with them.

In this context, to assert: "I can't believe that Marxist-Humanism would

call for a war. A society can be remodeled only by a revolution from within itself..." is an abstraction. In order for there to be a revolution in Serbia against narrow nationalism, there have to exist the conditions for those who have been the victims of this nationalism to reverse its hold. The revolution is not going to be made by those inside "Republika Srpska" who have participated in and benefitted from genocide.

Far from having deviated from the Marxist-Humanist body of ideas, our position on Bosnia is in continuity with Marx's position on the Civil War in the U.S. Faced with the seeming victory of the Southern army and the attitude of U.S. Marxists who refused to take a position on the war because they were opposed to both wage slavery and chattel slavery, Marx wrote that "a single Negro regiment would have a remarkable effect on Southern nerves."

Similarly today we cannot speak of revolution in the abstract but have to single out those forces whose very struggle is revolutionary because it issues a challenge to the stifling reality of ethnic and racial separation. In the same way, if a military defeat of Serb nationalists leads to the break-up of Yugoslavia and the independence of Kosovo, whose population is 90% Albanian and has been oppressed by Serbia, why would Marxist-Humanists oppose that?

Our position as expressed in **Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'** continues to stand today as a principled and revolutionary position in the face of the treacherous betrayal of Bosnia by the majority of the Left.

—The Resident Editorial Board



at this moment. On the one hand, contradictions in capitalist society are growing more and more, and on the other, subjective forces still cannot develop a real alternative for this capitalist society. And this "still cannot" can be divided into: 1) cannot; and 2) do not know how.

**New reader  
Amsterdam**

\*\*\*

The stagnation of revolution today makes one wonder if the future holds a way out, the same old same old, or something much worse. In the struggle to break free from the present where does one turn for inspiration? The myriad memories of past freedom struggles often get muddled in pre-conceptions of their philosophic meaning. Trying to find the meaning of the political-economic "reality" can easily make one want to say to hell with the world and throw the whole thing away. This form of negation addresses the void of vision in today's freedom struggles and calls the bluff on much of the Left's rhetoric. The mantra of "keeping it positive" not only reflects an ideology of positivism but fails to speak to the nihilism so many are threatened by within the movement.

**Joseph Sutler  
California**

**THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT AT WORK**

When I think of the Promise Keepers, and how many people think one demonstration is nothing to get excited about, it makes me think of how the Nazis actually lost quite a bit of their following by 1928 after early spectacular gains. What changed it all was the Great Depression. I'm not saying the Promise Keepers equal the Nazis but that ignoring their danger is a mistake. With groups like this we better keep vigilant.

**History student  
New York**

\*\*\*

I am writing to let other Marxists know the stranglehold the religious Right has

over life and institutions in the South. I recently moved here to attend a small community college. A group of friends and I tried to rent the college to play "Vampire: The Masquerade," a game where players act out a role of vampires. Getting a sponsor wasn't easy since people feared we'd be biting each other, even though physical contact is against the rules. Then we were told the game didn't fit the college's "conservative image." If the religious Right has the power to prevent someone playing a game, think what other elements of life they control in the South.

**John Lapoint  
North Carolina**

\*\*\*

The Promise Keepers ideology is not transparent. That's what makes them so dangerous. They're trying to falsely appropriate concepts that feminists have long called for (like men taking responsibility) against us, while posing a religious, sexist individualism as the solution to the world's problems. They are the prize fighters of capitalism trying to save itself from deep crisis. That's why they have not only gained legitimacy but praise from the rulers, just as the Million Man March did.

**Sonia Bergonzi  
Chicago**

\*\*\*

The latest trial of the British nanny in Boston, accused of killing an infant in her care—whether she is guilty or not and aside from all the other questions involved—has actually resulted in putting the mother of the infant on trial. This woman has been accused of abandonment and asked if she felt guilty about leaving her child to go to work since he is now dead! The move to the right in this country is attacking women from both sides. For affluent, educated women, it is saying "women should stay at home with their children." For poor, uneducated women on welfare, it is saying "go out and get a job and leave your children"—often in unsafe care.

The result is that we now find ourselves revisiting issues which were supposed to be "resolved" with the development of the Women's Liberation Movement—namely that it should be

the woman's choice whether or not to stay home with her children, and that if she does work, it does not automatically lead to the devastation of her child's world.

**Erica Rae  
Chicago**



**NEW OPENINGS FOR LABOR**

Bob McGuire was right in his Lead on "UPS strike awakens passions in continuing army of workers" (October N&L) that business spokesmen prove the UPS strike created new openings for labor. A top executive of FedEx, an anti-union bastion, made a speech after the strike, claiming that no one wins in strikes. Then he promised to raise wages and upgrade some part-time positions to full-time! FedEx has been losing workers at its hub left and right. The management is really running scared now.

**Friend of labor  
Memphis**

\*\*\*

When people go out on strike it's a demand for dignity and respect for people in these workplaces. Until we organize more plants, clean them up, increase benefits, what they are doing on welfare now is just going to make people poorer. Labor unions mean, to me, freedom in the workplace, being able to get a decent job where there is no harassment, get decent benefits that would help you and your family. The capitalists are in control but you can hold them off with a union. Since I met News and Letters Committees, I know it is going to take a lot more than unions to get us on track. We're going to have to take another avenue. I feel that N&LC is it.

**Labor activist  
Mississippi**

**GANDHI AND GANDHIANISM**

Your article on "India 50 Years Later" (Aug.-Sept. N&L) unfairly says that Gandhianism "did not call for the actual tearing down of the structures of oppression in the villages." Gandhianism in power may not have, but Gandhi himself did advocate eliminating those structures.

**Young feminist  
Tennessee**

**N&L IN UKRAINE**

Your paper is important for us. Our state propaganda still creates the image of a "brave, new world" where no one cares about left thought. Your paper that opposes Soviet so-called "communist" state-capitalism as well as capitalism in the Western countries—and that is tolerant to other left, really anti-capitalist organizations—is important in this situation. Thank you for the information you give. We get no information about protests in the U.S. or the situation in the Third World in the Ukrainian mass media, except standard short "news" in which there is no information.

**New correspondent  
Ukraine**

**NEW YORK ELECTION**

The October "Workshop Talks" column on the New York elections hit me. I don't support Sharpton and am not a Republican either. But police brutality was a wake-up call for Blacks that got them to support Sharpton. Police harassment happens to a lot of us. Standing up to the cops really does it. You've got to be submissive, that's what they want from Blacks and Latinos.

**Apartment house doorman  
New York**

**NEWS & LETTERS**

**SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE ONLY \$5 A YEAR!**

**SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS**

**BOOKS**

**BY RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA**

- Marxism and Freedom: From 1776 until today** 1988 edition. New author's introduction..... **\$17.50**
- Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao** 1989 edition. New author's introduction..... **\$14.95**
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich ..... **\$12.95**
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** (1996 edition) **\$15.95**
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** ..... **\$8.50**
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." ..... **\$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover**

**BY CHARLES DENBY**

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

**BY KEVIN ANDERSON**

- Lenin, Hegel, and Western Marxism: A Critical Study** First full-length treatment of Lenin's studies of Hegel. .... **\$15.95**

**PAMPHLETS**

- American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard** Statement of the National Editorial Board. Includes "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa" by Raya Dunayevskaya, and "Black Caucuses in the Unions" by Charles Denby ..... **\$2**
- Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist-Humanism** by Peter Hudis ..... **\$3**
- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'** (Expanded edition) ..... **\$5**
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis** Includes critiques of Ernest Mandel and Tony Cliff ..... **\$2**
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.** by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya ..... **\$2**
- 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments** by Raya Dunayevskaya ..... **\$1.50**
- Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World Since World War II** by Raya Dunayevskaya ..... **\$2**
- Theory and Practice, by Rosa Luxemburg** First English translation ..... **\$2**
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions** by Raya Dunayevskaya ..... **\$1.25**
- Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought** by Lou Turner and John Alan ..... **\$3**
- Working Women for Freedom** by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes ..... **\$2**
- Dois ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya** ..... **\$2**
- News and Letters Committees Constitution** .... **32¢**

**Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog**

A full list of publications (many publications are not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees ..... **55¢ postage**

**ARCHIVES**

- Guides to Collection and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection: Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development** Full description of 15,000-page microfilm collection ..... **\$4.50**
- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection -- Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development** A 15,000-page microfilm collection on 8 reels available from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI 48202 ..... **\$165**

**NEWSPAPER**

- News & Letters subscription** Unique combination of worker and intellectual published 10 times a year (request information about gift subscriptions) ..... **\$5/year**
- Bound Volumes of News & Letters** 1970-77, 1977-84, 1984-87, 1987-94 ..... **\$25 each** N&L is also available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. N&L as well as other Marxist-Humanist literature is available on audio tape.

**Mail Orders To:**

News & Letters, 59 East Van Buren St., Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605, Phone (312) 663-0839

Enclosed find \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the literature checked. Please add \$1.00 for each item for postage. Illinois residents add 7% sales tax.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## Black/Red View

by John Alan

Eighty years ago on Nov. 17, 1917, two young Black socialist intellectuals, A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, converted *The Messenger*, the waiter union's newspaper, into a Black journal of radical ideas. By coincidence this radical conversion of *The Messenger* happened at the time the Russian Revolution exploded in the middle of a worldwide imperialist war, a war which brought Black and white race relations in the U.S. to the point of bloody violence, i.e., "race riots."

The first edition of *The Messenger* went to press before the news of the Russian Revolution had arrived, but its second edition hailed the Russian Revolution as the "greatest achievement of the twentieth century." Of course, that ideal prediction was never actually realized.

When today one has a chance to look back at the now long defunct *Messenger*, it is natural to ask what does it mean today. First, the coterie of young Black intellectuals, George Schuyler, Chandler Owen, Ernest Rice McKinney, Lovett Fort-Whiteman, Abram L. Harris, Hubert Harrison, Claude McKay and William Pickens, that Randolph brought together to write for *The Messenger* didn't propose to fix up capitalism but proposed the creation of a new society without racism and human exploitation.

Second, they recognized that there were two poles of thought in the Black community, one for change and the other for the status quo. Thus, in the first edition of *The Messenger*, Randolph wrote that the main aim of *The*



This cartoon, called "The Mob Victim", appeared in the July 1919, *Messenger*, the year race riots swept the U.S.

*Messenger* "...is to appeal to reason, to lift our pens above the cringing demagoguery of the time, and above the cheap peanut politics of the old reactionary Negro leaders. Patriotism has no appeal to us; justice has. Party has no weight with us; principle has."

Within the context of 1917, Randolph was declaring war on DuBois and all the other members of the "talented tenth" leadership who were supporting the U.S. intervention in an imperialist war. Under the banner of "saving democracy" white racists were burning and lynching scores of African Americans. The U.S. army hanged 14 Black soldiers in Houston, Texas for defending themselves against mob violence. This blazing contradiction aroused Black masses to take defensive action.

*The Messenger* was certain that once the African-American masses were urbanized workers and integrated into the labor union movement, they would become the most potent force in transforming American capitalistic society. However, contrary to this perception, Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) proved to be the preferred organization of the urbanized Black workers.

Claude McKay, the Black novelist, thought that Garvey was a charlatan, but nevertheless thought that the astonishing success of the UNIA was due to the fact that "Negroes from all parts of the world, oppressed by the capitalists, despised and denied a fighting chance under the present economic system by white workingmen, have hailed it as a star of hope, the ultimate solu-

tion of their history-old trouble.... Although an international Socialist, I am supporting the movement, for I believe that for subject peoples, at least, Nationalism is the open door to communism. Further more, I will try to bring this great army of awakened over to the finer system of socialism."

The above quote came from an article McKay wrote for the English *Workers' Dreadnought*, Jan 31, 1920. It is relevant for us today because it is dialectical whether or not McKay intended it to be. What McKay said is that in 1920 when thousands upon thousands of African-American workers left the South and went North to labor in factories and industrial plants, they didn't escape from racism and exploitation but instead a newer "concrete totality" of racism was imposed on them and they were "in need of a new beginning." As McKay indicated, the "new beginning" is not a nationalist ideological projection of Black capitalism as an alternative to white capitalism.

Marxist-Humanism has always opposed A. Philip Randolph's and Ernest Rice McKinney's theoretical subordination of the African-American struggle for freedom within labor struggles, as if African Americans had to wait for labor to act. Both Randolph and McKinney held fast to that theory. Yet, as Charles Denby wrote in his autobiography, the practice of that theory meant that during the days of the Trade Union Leadership Council, Randolph "told us plainly that this was not going to be an organization to take up grievances of Black workers on the shop level."

In spite of that Randolph and the Blacks around him made a sharp historical break with the past in 1917. They were dedicated radical intellectuals who engaged in many sharp battles of ideas. The editorials of *The Messenger* critiqued racism, sexism, colonialism and the exploitation of labor.

## 'Shake up the cops'

**Chicago**—With the 24th District police station right here it's supposed to be one of the safest neighborhoods in Chicago. But you have to basically walk with your child around here because the gangs have gotten so out of hand. The police wanted this to happen. They like that.

They see the activity and do nothing. Then they have it on television that the police are cleaning this area. They are picking up nice good kids and giving them beatings. Nobody deserves to be treated like that.

I've seen them hit kids, push their heads against cars, make them open up their pants. They have no right to put their hands on them. It's a terrible situation. They even beat on the girls. This one little girl was only about 14 years old. She was pregnant. The police hit her in the back with a billy club!

The picture they paint is that it's the mothers. But they can't say we're not doing our job. I know for a fact that the mothers around here look out for their kids. If their kids miss curfew, we're out there asking, "Have you seen my kid"? Or we tell the kids, if something happens to you, you can come to my house—ring my doorbell, I'm there. We stick together when it comes to our kids. And they don't show that. They just show it like we're not doing anything but drinking and drugging. Then they tell us: "Get on CAPS" (Chicago Alternative Police Strategy). I don't believe in that. The police are the cause of a lot of the things happening.

All of this is happening because they want it to happen. A lot of people believe that they want to drive Blacks out of this area and then the Latinos.

A shake up needs to be done at the 24th District. It will take awareness, marching, putting out a warning about police brutality. That would startle them. A lot of moms and even some men in the neighborhood would like to do something.

—Angry mother in the 24th District

## Beating of immigrant worker prompts boycott

**New York**—A boycott of Panarella's Restaurant on Columbus Avenue has been going on since Sept. 1, when the owners beat up a Mexican worker, Cesar Diaz, breaking his nose. The police have refused to take action.

Vociferous picket lines by immigrants' rights groups, other restaurant workers and Mexican youth have closed down the restaurant from time to time since then. A picket on Oct. 15 caused so much noise that almost no one went in the restaurant. The workers inside waved their support. Then we marched to a Community Board meeting, where both sides were duly heard, and nothing was done.

The restaurant's owner denounced the boycott as the work of the Zapatistas! He said the fact that Diaz had worked at Panarella's for 10 years showed that he was really happy there. Diaz says he just needed the job. Two other Mexican workers have quit over the beating.

"I wasn't even late that day, as they are saying now," said Cesar Diaz about the attack on him, "but the boss' wife said I didn't speak to her respectfully. Suddenly, the boss, his cousin and a friend were beating me. One of the other workers called the police, who got an ambulance. I didn't want to go to the hospital until I talked to the police, but the policeman didn't want to listen, and told me to clean my face before I spoke to him. The next day I went to the police station to get their report of what happened; they told me I couldn't get it, but they gave the boss' report—they said I tripped and fell down outside of the restaurant!"

Panarella's also breaks the labor laws all the time. It always pays the workers late and often pays less than it owes them, sometimes paying with bad checks. Most of the workers are Mexican, as they are in many restaurants in New York now. The bosses call them racist names, such as "Indians from the jungle." —Picketers

## Black World

(Continued from page 1)

holding racist views about social intermingling between Blacks and whites, Denby found that the CP's support for the no-strike pledge during World War II, due to Russia being an ally of the U.S., meant that the Party opposed the kind of strikes in which Denby and other Black workers participated against racial discrimination in the workplace.

Black worker militants like George Harding, chief shop steward of the janitors department in Denby's shop, fought the union and the CP to get Black workers upgraded, to, in other words, move them "from brooms to better jobs." One of his critics, the Black socialist scholar Manning Marable, recognized correctly that this kind of Black proletarian radicalism was illustrative of the fact that "Denby's political consciousness was formed in the very heart of the production process, as he became more aware of the structural inequities between black and white labor." Marable goes so far as to compare Denby's opposition to the CP to Ralph Ellison's protagonist in *Invisible Man*, contending that both "realized that the overt biracialism and comradeship of the party masked many basic structural flaws in the organization's approach towards black people."

Nonetheless, Marable contradicts himself when he criticizes the second part of *Indignant Heart*, published in 1978, because Denby dared to exercise that very same political consciousness and assume a critical, proletarian attitude toward events like the 1972 Gary, Indiana Black leadership summit. Marable considered the summit a watershed event in Black radicalism, Denby, who participated in the summit as a member of the trade union delegation from Detroit, considered it a stillbirth. History has upheld Denby's view. One German reviewer of *Indignant Heart*, Richard Herding, describes the critical working class political consciousness Denby represents which so eluded Marable as "the breath of scepticism, mistrust, and sheer exhaustion of a rank-and-flier at the union meeting, who has to get out

## Denby and Marx

the daily auto production next morning."

This critical proletarian attitude was not alone directed at Black politics but at the positions taken by labor towards race matters. Denby wrote often in the 1960s that the ongoing and deepening Civil Rights Movement was more responsible for making changes in the upgrading and hiring of Black workers in the auto industry than the union with all of its high-sounding resolutions about civil rights. He also took the position that jobs alone wouldn't guarantee Black progress. The fact that today unemployed African Americans on welfare are forced to accept slave-wage subsistence jobs, while conservative politicians attempt to undo Black civil rights protections such as affirmative action, bears out his position. To a white skilled worker who argued for less emphasis on Black civil rights and more concentration on jobs, Denby responded with a call for a "total philosophy" that did not separate civil rights from labor, both as principle and as movement.

As the social and political content of the African-American struggles of the 1960s deepened, Denby's call for labor and civil rights unity became a call for the movement to work out a total philosophy of liberation. "Filling jails is not the goal," he wrote. "What is needed now is a philosophy of freedom, a total view, to give all of these actions some meaningful direction." This total view that Denby found in Marx's statement about the emancipation of Black and white labor didn't mean "you had to hug a white worker, or be a brother to a worker before you could emancipate yourself." It meant instead that "the freedom of Black workers was crucial to everything."

Next month, in the final article in this series on the Marxist-Humanist dimension of Charles Denby's life and thought, we will see what the incompleteness of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and the challenges in the last decade of Denby's life, especially the retrogressionism of the Reagan years, meant for projecting the need for a total philosophy of freedom.

1. A TITLE OR PUBLICATION: NEWS & LETTERS 2. PUBLICATION NO. 3854-20 3. DATE OF FILING: Oct. 1, 1997 4. ISSUE FREQUENCY: Monthly except bi-monthly January-February, August-September. 5. NO. OF ISSUES PUBLISHED ANNUALLY: 10. 6. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$5.00 7. LOCATION OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605 8. LOCATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS OR GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHERS: 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605 9. NAMES AND COMPLETE ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHER: Olga Domanski and Peter Werzuth (Co-National Organizers), 59 E. Van Buren, Rm. 707, Chicago, IL 60605. MANAGING EDITOR: Lou Turner, Managing Editor, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605. 10. OWNER: News & Letters, an Illinois Not-For-Profit Corporation, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605 11. KNOWN BONDHOLDERS, MORTGAGEES AND OTHER SECURITY HOLDERS OWNING OR HOLDING ONE PERCENT OF MORE OF TOTAL AMOUNT OF BONDS, MORTGAGES OR OTHER SECURITIES: None 12. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Mo.	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. TOTAL NO. COPIES PRINTED:	6500	6500
B. PAID CIRCULATION		
1. Sales through dealers and carriers street vendors and counter sales	2977	3074
2. Mail Subscriptions	3125	3073
C. TOTAL PAID CIRCULATION:	6102	6147
D. FREE DISTRIBUTION by mail, carrier or other means samples, complimentary and other free copies	98	53
E. FREE DISTRIBUTION outside the mail (Carriers or other Means)	0	0
F. TOTAL FREE DISTRIBUTION	135	69
G. TOTAL DISTRIBUTION	6200	6200
H. COPIES NOT DISTRIBUTED:		
1. Office use, left over, unaccounted spoiled after printing	300	300
2. Returns from news agents	None	None
G. TOTAL	6500	6500
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	98%	99%

16. This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the Nov. 1997 issue of this publication. 17. I certify that the information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions 12. Lou Turner, Circulation Manager, per Olga Domanski, Business Manager, Oct. 1, 1997.



## Editorial

# The Papon trial and French fascism

After 16 years of legal delays orchestrated from high places to prevent just such an occurrence, the Nazi collaborator Maurice Papon finally went on trial in a Bordeaux courtroom on Oct. 8.

Bordeaux was the city where Papon perpetrated his crimes against humanity during the years 1942-44. As a high official of the pro-Nazi Vichy government, he ordered the deportation of over 1,500 Jewish children, women, and men. He sent them to Drancy, a concentration camp outside Paris, from which they went to their deaths at Auschwitz.

These long-suppressed facts about Papon, who later claimed to have been working for the anti-Nazi Resistance, became public only in 1981 when incriminating documents were discovered by researchers. After the war, Papon served in a number of high positions in conservative governments, including in Algeria as a high colonial official, and then in Paris as police chief and later as the nation's budget minister.

During the Occupation, Bordeaux was notorious for the enthusiasm with which its local officials carried out Nazi orders, often going beyond those orders as well. Papon was a central figure in the Bordeaux government, but he was also an impersonal and flexible bureaucrat who would serve whoever was in power.

High former police and government officials have testified as character witnesses for Papon, resulting in a decision by the judge in the case to take the shocking step of releasing him from prison for the duration of the trial, ostensibly for health reasons. In France, such pre-trial release in a serious case is extremely rare, and unprecedented in one involving the murder of 1,500 people.

The Papon trial has once again pointed to the extent of collaboration in World War II France, undermining the myth, carefully preserved for many years by the Right and parts of the Left, that collaborators were a tiny minority, and that the Resistance was widely supported from the beginning.

The trial has also raised questions about the degree of

cover-up in postwar France by the Gaullists, who relied on many former Vichy officials like Papon to create their own state apparatus. They needed these ex-Vichy functionaries as a counter-weight to the Left, especially the Communists, who dominated many sectors of the Resistance and who might otherwise have exercised power in many regions.

Additionally, the trial has brought new attention to another sinister period in French history, the repression of opposition during the 1954-62 Algerian War, something in which it has long been known that Papon played a key part. As the Algerian War drew to a close, the Gaullist state, desperate to avoid handing over their former colony to the liberation fighters, lashed out violently at its domestic opponents.

In her memoirs, one of those opponents, the feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir, singled out Papon's role as Paris police chief in October 1961, when up to 300 Algerians were murdered after attempting to march in Paris against the war:

"The police waited for the Algerians to come up out of the metro stations, made them stand still with their hands above their heads, then hit them with truncheons.... Corpses were found hanging in the Bois de Boulogne, and others, disfigured and mutilated, in the Seine... Ten thousand Algerians had been herded into the Vel' d'Hiv' [stadium], like the Jews in Drancy once before. Again I loathed it all — this country, myself, the whole world" (*Force of Circumstance*, p. 599).

Four months later, in February 1962, Papon went too far even for De Gaulle. His men killed five white French citizens at a Communist-led antiwar demonstration. This time, reported de Beauvoir, the French working class began to awaken to the very real fascism in French colors which De Gaulle and Papon were creating. 700,000 workers marched at the funeral of the five protesters while a general strike shut down Paris. After the workers spoke, even Papon had to rein in his dogs.

However, while the five killed in February 1962 became prominent martyrs for the Left, little was done

to raise the issue of the 300 Algerians murdered by Papon's men in October 1961. Today, in the wake of the Papon trial, the recently elected Socialist Party-led government has finally agreed to open its archives regarding October 1961.

It is not only the Right, however, whose history is being questioned today. The Socialist Party is still smarting from the revelation three years ago that its most important postwar leader, Francois Mitterrand, was a far rightist in the 1930s, and then worked as a Vichy official until he quit to join the Resistance in 1943.

The Communist Party also has many questions to answer, whether concerning its non-resistance in 1940-41 during the Hitler-Stalin Pact, its apparent execution in the maquis of Pietro Tresso and several other Trotskyists who tried to join the Resistance, or the curious history of its longtime top leader Georges Marchais, who never took part in the Resistance, but did join a volunteer brigade of French workers in German factories.

All of these skeletons are beginning to come out of the closet in part because of democratic pressures from below, whether from the massive strikes of 1995-96, the stinging defeat of the conservatives in the 1997 elections, the growing anti-racist movement, or the new militancy shown by the gay movement in the wake of police repression.

## Congo-Brazzaville crisis

by Ba Karang

General Denis Sassou Nguesso and his Workers Party have again taken power in Congo-Brazzaville after five months of intensive military offensives against government forces loyal to President Pascal Lissouba. The fighting between the two sides began in June when the government army tried to disarm the military units loyal to Sassou Nguesso in preparation for the July presidential election.

An old ally of the former Soviet Union and a self-proclaimed Marxist, Sassou Nguesso was a typical Stalinist dictator who had ruled the Congo Republic with an iron hand from 1979 until he was defeated in the first general election in 1992 following the pro-democracy movement that brought Lissouba to power.

Toward the end of September, Lissouba toured Central Africa looking for support in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since these are countries looking for world recognition, there was nothing ideological about their decision to support the so-called democratically elected government of Lissouba. It was naive, however, of Lissouba to believe that he would enjoy any military support from these governments.

Lissouba gave refuge to more than 5,000 men of the military forces of the former dictator Mobutu who fled across the Congo River after the fall of Congo-Kinshasa in May, as well as to members of the genocidal Hutu army, Forces Armees Rwandese. He gave refuge, in other words, to the forces who pose a potential threat to the very countries from whom he sought support.

Of the countries in the region who made up the alliance that helped bring down Mobutu, only Angola militarily supported Sassou Nguesso's Workers Party. This was not only because of past ideological relations between the two so-called Marxist states during the Cold War. Angola got involved in this war because of the favorable conditions that its separatist opponent, Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda, and Jonas Savimbi's counter-revolutionary UNITA have enjoyed in Brazzaville since Lissouba's Pan-African Union for Social Democracy came to power.

Pascal Lissouba was an ally of Mobutu and supported him during his war with Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces. One wonders then how it is possible for Kabila's Alliance to support Lissouba. It may be that the intensification of the war in Congo-Brazzaville had brought Congo-Kinshasa under attack by Oct. 9 when 30 Kinshasans were killed, including some of Kabila's own military guard. It has been rumored that the attack was actually launched by Lissouba's forces as a way of involving Kabila on his side.

However, it is no secret that there are military and political forces in Kabila's ruling Alliance who have close relations with Sassou Nguesso's party. Under his leadership Congo-Brazzaville had been the backyard for many of the liberation forces fighting Mobutu. There is no doubt that Kabila will have to settle accounts with the new regime as soon as the situation allows.

Western powers are involved in the Congo-Brazzaville crisis out of pure economic self-interest. Pointe-Noire, in the south, is the headquarters of Western oil interests. Congo-Brazzaville is the fourth largest oil exporter in Africa.

The Oct. 16 UN resolution condemning foreign intervention in the crisis does not seem to be aware of these conflicts of interests. The call by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to send 5,000 peace keeping troops into the crisis under the leadership of Senegal came at a time when the balance of forces was already in favor of Sassou Nguesso.

A new political geography is being drawn in Central Africa. The coordination of military and political activities by more radical forces in the region has been more successful than in West Africa. Though there are many explanations for this, the fact that the forces in Central Africa are veterans of the political scene is of great importance. Their coordinated activities and victories will create a new political forum, however, creating ground from which new radical forces will sooner or later emerge.



Parisians light candles in memory of French Holocaust victims in mid-October in response to Papon trial.

## C.L.R. James and the dialectic

*C.L.R. James: A Critical Introduction*, by Aldon Lynn Nielsen (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1997)

Though a number of book-length studies of C.L.R. James have recently appeared, this is the first to contain an extended discussion of James' studies on dialectics. This is not to say that Nielsen's point of concentration or expertise is dialectics. His primary aim is to present James as social historian and literary critic, especially in light of recent trends in postmodernism.

Nielsen commends such historical works of James as *The Black Jacobins*, while reserving his most fulsome praise for James' literary studies of such figures as Melville, Richard Wright and Wilson Harris. He is especially taken with James' writings on the liberating potential of popular culture, which he contrasts to the "high-brow intellectualism" of other Marxists. He writes, "In the same way that Marx had viewed the modes of industrial production that oppressed workers as simultaneously organizing them for revolution, James viewed the mechanistic constructions that disrupted and commodified aesthetic practices as at the same time repositioning the masses for a new universal" (p. 146).

However, the book has less discussion of James' attitude to actual forces of revolution. James' politics are in fact only selectively presented. While he discusses James' view of the independent character of the Black movement in the U.S. as well as in Africa (developed when he was a co-leader of the Johnson-Forest Tendency with Raya Dunayevskaya in the 1940s), Nielsen skips over the works and passages in which James fell into an uncritical embrace of Third World nationalism after the mid-1950s. There is also little discussion of James' work in the Caribbean; his relation to the revolution in Grenada is not discussed at all.

Yet what is discussed is the work which James considered the pillar of his life's work, but which few have chosen to dwell upon—*Notes on Dialectics* (1948).

Nielsen is much enamored of the *Notes*, for he sees it as anticipating present philosophic concerns. He makes much of James' discussion of Hegel's concept of identity and difference in the second section of the *Science of Logic*, the Doctrine of Essence, where Hegel says every identity contains difference. James' enthusiasm for this section, he says, prefigures today's poststructuralists, who elevate difference over identity. He writes, "James is historically posthumanist already in 1947."

Yet Nielsen only briefly touches on the central concern of James' *Notes*—his effort to relate dialectics to organization. Though he approvingly quotes James' comment that "the coming of age of the proletariat means the abolition of the party," he does not quote his comment, "The Party is the knowing of the proletariat as being. Without the party the proletariat knows nothing."

Nielsen spends several pages attacking Raya Dunayevskaya's critique of James for failing to break down the meaning of Hegel's Absolutes for today's freedom struggles. Dunayevskaya argued that James failed

to develop the philosophy needed for our age by, 1) having little to say about the last section of Hegel's *Logic*, the Doctrine of the Notion, and 2) seeing "nothing of importance" (as James put it in a letter of 1949) in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*. Nielsen dismisses this critique on the grounds that James actually said he found nothing of importance in the *Philosophy of Mind* "for now." James later returned to such issues, Nielsen insists, as seen in his essay "The Gathering Forces" which discusses the master/slave dialectic in Hegel's *Phenomenology*.

There are a number of problems with Nielsen's position. First, if Dunayevskaya in fact distorted James' view by failing to note that he only said he found nothing of importance in Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* "for now," Nielsen would need to show that somewhere in the next 40 years of his life James returned to that crucial work of Hegel. In fact, there is no indication that he ever did. That he can only cite James' later discussion of the master/slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology*—a different work entirely from the *Philosophy of Mind*—only reinforces the cogency of Dunayevskaya's critique.

Second, Dunayevskaya's critique of James for failing to break down Hegel's Absolutes for today's freedom struggles does not rest on a phrase from one letter. It rests on *Notes on Dialectics* itself. As she showed in her letter on this published in the October issue of *News & Letters*, James barely even approached a serious discussion of Hegel's Absolutes in the *Notes*, so taken was he with an earlier section of the *Logic*, the Doctrine of Essence. Nielsen's own preference for this section reinforces Dunayevskaya's point that James and his followers have never known how to relate the Doctrine of the Notion to today's realities.

Since Nielsen is oblivious to this, he can hardly be expected to explain how such philosophic limitations affected James' politics—especially his zig-zags between praising spontaneous revolts at one moment and "the party" at the next. Nor does he show any recognition of what Dunayevskaya achieved when she broke down the significance of Hegel's Absolute in seeing in it "both the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory and the movement from theory that is itself a form of philosophy." In achieving this breakthrough Dunayevskaya worked out the concept of a totally new relation of philosophy to organization which escaped James.

As she wrote in 1983, "What is totally new is that we place philosophy of revolution and not just committee form as ground for organization. In a word, we do not stop, as Rosa Luxemburg did, with full appreciation of the genius of the masses in action. Rather, we deepen that with such a philosophic penetration of that action of the masses that we call their attitude not just force but Reason, and Reason means the totality and new unification with the movement from theory."

While Nielsen's rush to make James *au courant* to post-modernists prevents him from exploring such issues, the fact that his work does discuss his writings on dialectics at least opens the door for further discussion.

— Peter Hudis

# Globalized capital in crisis: from Asia to Wall Street

(Continued from page 1)

Middle East, and has fallen by a shocking 25% in Africa, leading to persistent hunger and starvation. Nearly one-third of the people in the Third World (1.3 billion persons) live on the equivalent of less than a dollar per day. About one-third of workers in the Third World (700 million persons) are either unemployed or counted as "underemployed," in other words, engaged in activities such as scavenging in city dumps or hawking a few food-stuffs or handicrafts.

## SOUTHEAST ASIA'S CRISIS

The main exceptions to this malaise had been the economies of Southeast Asia. With its emergence as a manufacturing exporter, and with the world's fastest growing per capita GNP between 1985 and 1995, Thailand had widely been expected to become the fifth "Asian tiger" economy. Indonesia's and Malaysia's industrialization and fast growth led to widespread perceptions of them, too, as up-and-coming "Asian miracles." Due to their openness to foreign capital and minimal regulation, these countries were regularly touted by neoliberal policymakers and pundits as models for other Third World and Eastern European nations to emulate.

Now the Southeast Asian bubble has burst. On July 2, Thailand surrendered to speculators' attacks on its currency, allowing it to fall in value. A wave of currency depreciations elsewhere in the region followed. The currencies of Thailand and Indonesia have fallen by about 35% against the dollar; those of Malaysia and the Philippines, about 25%. Finance capital has fled the region, partly due to lenders' fears that, by making foreign debt more costly to repay and perhaps lowering export earnings, the depreciations have increased the risk of default.

Three years ago, Latin America experienced a similar flight of capital after Mexico allowed the peso to depreciate. Stability was restored only after the U.S. organized a \$50 billion rescue package so that Mexico could repay its creditors, in return for the imposition on its masses of drastic austerity measures — cuts in social services and tax increases — meant to ensure that debt repayment becomes the country's top priority. After a brief and partial recovery in the early 1990s from a decade of depression, the lot of Mexican workers and peasants has once more worsened significantly.

This time, however, fear among investors has only intensified, although the IMF (International Monetary Fund) has tried to contain the crisis by offering similar packages of aid in return for austerity to Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia. In part, the fear stems from the hesitancy of some Southeast Asian rulers to "restore confidence," that is, to give up hopes of becoming major economic powers and instead to restructure their economies into debt repayment machines.

At the IMF-World Bank meeting in late September, some of them threatened to slow or even reverse the liberalization — deregulation and openness to foreign capital — of their economies. Most extreme has been Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir. Though he had eagerly welcomed foreign capital into his country during its boom phase, he has now blamed his nation's crisis on everyone from currency speculators to Jews, and has tried unsuccessfully to curb currency trading.

The ultimate impact of the crisis on the masses in Southeast Asia is uncertain because the worst is yet to come. In Thailand, for instance, austerity measures are only now beginning to be implemented. Moreover, many loans have still not come due, loans which are in severe danger of default because they must be repaid in foreign currencies which are now more expensive and because they are backed by assets now worth less. Bankruptcies and financial collapse may ultimately lower employment by as much as 8% to 12%.

Angry Thais have started to fight back. On Oct. 17, popular outcry forced the government to rescind a hike in the gasoline tax it had imposed in order to qualify for the \$17.2 billion IMF aid package. Four days later, sev-

eral thousand workers, youth, and businesspeople demonstrated, calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Chavalit.

## GLOBALIZED CAPITAL VS. LIVING LABOR

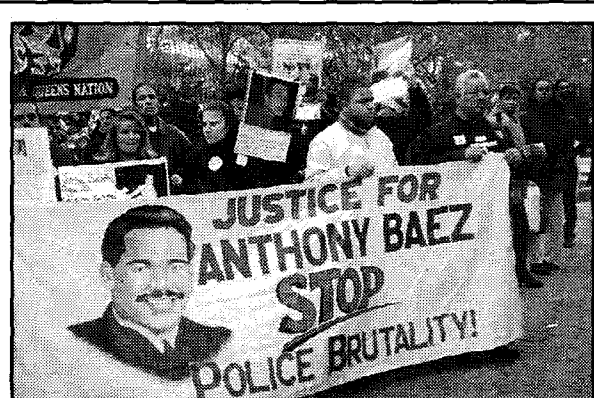
Now that the Southeast Asian "miracle" has soured, at least for the present, the experts who had heralded these countries' liberalization now blame them for the crises they face. Yet the deeper determinants of the crises are the vicissitudes of the capitalist world market in which they are ensnared. Their manufacturing industries boomed because their sweatshops exploited the cheapest labor-power and thus produced at lowest cost. In 1994, however, China decided to challenge them in the "race to the bottom" and undercut them by means of a 35% currency devaluation and other measures that have lowered its export prices by 25%.

At the same time, five years of stagnation in the world's second largest economy, Japan, has caused the yen to depreciate against the dollar. This led the dollar-linked currencies of Southeast Asia to surge in value which made their exports even more expensive.

What had fueled the growth of these economies, however, was not only their feverish exporting; they had become dependent on a massive influx of foreign, especially Japanese, capital. The lion's share of this investment was not direct investment in production and trade, but short-term "hot money" loans, payable in foreign currency. Thus, the Southeast Asian economies achieved their rapid growth by exposing themselves to substantial risks. Crisis awaited them if capital inflow were to cease and if depreciation of their currencies were to raise their real debt burden — risks that have now turned into realities.

A similar fate may be awaiting much of Eastern Europe. Several of its nations depend at least as much on foreign loans, and have currencies at least as overvalued, as did Mexico or Thailand. The deepening crisis has also begun to make financiers wary of investing in the other "emerging markets." Given its 100 million displaced peasants and another 50 million workers who will be downsized from state industries, capital flight or even a slowing of foreign investment into China could create an explosive situation there.

The continuing financial crises have exposed the weaknesses in the capitalist world economy as a whole. Currency crises are made possible by the absence of a stable world money since the U.S. abandoned the Bretton Woods gold exchange standard in 1971. This situation in turn stems from the decline in U.S. economic and political hegemony, and rising inflation, during the Vietnam War, which led to its inability to guarantee the dollar as a "good as gold" money.



## Defend immigrant rights

New York — One year after the historic march on Washington of Latinos from all over the U.S., the same organization, Coordinadora 96, held a "March of All Immigrants" to the United Nations. While the turnout was nowhere near as big as last year's march, with most of the 1,500 marchers coming from the N.Y. area (except for contingents from Chicago and from Ohio), it was a spirited, direct response to the recent wave of anti-immigrant laws. One marcher speculated that Coordinadora 96 did not have the resources this year to build a national march, whereas last year they got resources from the AFL-CIO and the Democrats because it was an election year for Clinton.

The demands of the march included amnesty for undocumented immigrants; saving affirmative action programs; no more police brutality; free public education for all children through university; stronger labor laws; raising the minimum wage to the cost of living; and expansion of health services. Signs carried by marchers had messages such as: "Somos un pueblo sin fronteras" (we are a people without borders); "Don't break up our families"; and "Remember, we are the original Americans."

While the march failed to attract for whatever reasons the participation of masses of immigrants, it did show the number of genuine, grass-roots organizations that have grown in the Latino community. Several workers' centers turned out, as did farm-workers' organizations, Salvadoran immigrants' organizations, and a large group from Boricua College. Besides the many Latin American countries represented by groups or individuals, there was a contingent of Polish immigrants with Solidarnosc buttons and a large group from Bangladesh.

—John Marcotte

Moreover, although falling transportation and telecommunications costs have permitted increasing globalization of capitalist competition, the fierceness of this competition — over market shares, but especially over scarce capital — stems from the quarter-century-long slump in the world economy. As Karl Marx pointed out, "it is the fall in the profit rate that provokes the competitive struggle between capitals, and not the reverse" (*Capital*, vol. 3, Vintage, 1981, p. 365).

Hence the source of the global economic crises is not "globalization" per se, as some of its foes in the labor bureaucracy and deep ecology tendencies contend. The crises are crises of capitalism, the imperialist tentacles of which have been multiplied and extended by means of high technology. Both theory and the experience of the state-capitalist countries that called themselves "Communist" show that it is impossible to place capital under either local control or the control of an individual nation-state. Capital's very nature is to self-expand by means of unpaid labor, subordinating everything with which it comes into contact to its inhuman logic.

Those on the left who concur with President Clinton's pronouncement in Sao Paolo last month that "Globalization is irreversible" are, however, equally mistaken. It is true that capital seeks to produce at minimum cost, and is thus attracted to low-wage, repressive countries that give it freedom from workplace safety, child labor, environmental and other regulations. Yet the flight of investment from apartheid South Africa in the wake of the struggle against it in the 1970s and 1980s, and from Mexico in the wake of the Zapatista rebellion since 1994, also demonstrate that capital is repelled by such challenges to its will.

Working people thus face the dilemma of submitting to the bosses' dictates or fighting and risking unemployment. This dilemma is now being played out on a global scale, yet it is as old as capitalism itself. Now, as always, the only way to escape the vortex of the world market is to put an end to the inhuman logic of value production and thereby enable freely associated individuals to bring production under their conscious and planned control.

## From The Archives

(Continued from page 4)

But, of course, Stalin took advantage of the specific dispute over the additions to the 1922 edition of Trotsky's 1905 as he began his usurpation of the mantle of Lenin.

\*\*\*

The nodal points of a serious revolutionary theory are rooted in self-activity of the masses who make the revolution, and the leadership's singling out of those live forces of revolution, not only as Force, but as Reason. And that holds true when facing either a concrete revolution or a counter-revolution. The 1917 Revolution was certainly a spontaneous mass outpouring. Its success can hardly be attributed to a single factor. Lenin's contribution was the greatest, but that doesn't mean that it was spotless — least of all in his concept of the party-to-lead, and especially so in the elitist way it was first spelled out in 1902.† That Trotsky bowed to that in 1917 only further weighed down Trotsky's own great contribution to that revolution.

Whether the theory of Permanent Revolution was confirmed or unconfirmed in 1917 is not proven, as we showed before, by the mere repetition of the theory of 1905-06 in 1922. The real point at issue by the time of the writing of *The History of the Russian Revolution* in the early '30s was whether one has a theory to meet the challenge of the new stage of world capitalism — the Great Depression which brought on state-capitalism as a world phenomenon. Although Trotsky by the mid-1930s had fought the Stalin bureaucracy for a solid decade, had written *The Revolution Betrayed*, he denied the transformation of Russia into a state-capitalist society.<sup>8</sup> And he ended up tailoring Stalinism, calling for the defense of Russia as a "workers' state, though degenerate" at the very time, as we stated earlier, when the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact had given the green light to World War II.

Which is why it becomes imperative to see the two revolutions, not weighed down with factional disputes, much less slanted to theoretical conclusions, but with eyes of today turned to future revolutions.

8. See Part V, Section One ("Russian State Capitalism vs. Workers' Revolt"; "Stalin"; "The Beginning of the End of Russian Totalitarianism") in my *Marxism and Freedom*...pp. 212-257.

† Contrast what Lenin wrote in 1902 to what he wrote once the 1905 Revolution broke out: "The working class is instinctively, spontaneously Social-Democratic, and more than ten years of work put in by Social-Democracy has done a great deal to transform this spontaneity into consciousness." ("Reorganization of the Party," in *Collected Works*, 10:32) See also... Lenin's "Preface to the Collection 12 Years" in which he wrote that "What Is To Be Done? is a summary of Iskra tactics and Iskra organizational policy in 1901 and 1902. Precisely a 'summary,' no more and no less...Nor at the Second Congress did I have any intention of elevating my own formulations, as given in *What Is To Be Done?*, to 'programmatic' level, constituting special principles..." (pp. in *ibid.*, 13:102, 107).

[The transition to a democratically organized workers' party, proclaimed by the Bolsheviks in *Novaya Zhizn* in November 1905, i.e., as soon as the conditions appeared for legal activity — this transition was virtually an irrevocable break with the old circle ways that had outlived their day." (p. in *ibid.*, 13:105)]

Discover the root of today's economic reality in these works by Raya Dunayevskaya

**Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crises:**

"By introducing the laborer into political economy, Marx transformed it from a science which deals with things, such as commodities, money, wages, profits, into one which analyzes relations of men at the point of production" (p. 51).

**Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution:**

"The innermost cause of crises, according to Marx, is that labor power in the process of production, and not in the market, creates a value greater than it itself is. The worker is a producer of overproduction. It cannot be otherwise in a value-producing society where the means of production, being but a moment in the reproduction of labor power, cannot be bigger than the need for labor power. That is the fatal defect of capitalist production. On the one hand, the capitalist must increase his market. On the other hand, it cannot be larger" (p. 43).

Order both from *News & Letters* for only \$15 (includes postage)

Use page 7 order form



# Youth A challenge to Nike's global reach and sweated labor

by Kevin Michaels

Sidewalks in front of stores selling products of the giant athletic goods manufacturer Nike were unusually crowded on Saturday, Oct. 18. The people gathered there, however, were not getting an early start on their holiday shopping. Instead, they were carrying signs and distributing fliers denouncing Nike's oppressive labor practices in the countries in which it produces its shoes and clothing articles, Asian nations like Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam, where labor is cheap and independent trade unions are illegal.

In addition to low wages, these conditions include military-like discipline, sexual harassment of women workers and outrageously long hours.

The Oct. 18 activities were part of a long-running campaign led by a number of human rights and religious organizations which has succeeded in mobilizing a wide variety of participants—from school children, high school and college youth to union activists and retirees.

The campaign has also been successful in attracting the attention of Nike which, like most high-profile corporations, is extremely concerned with its public image. Among Nike's damage-control efforts have been the sponsoring of a tour of production facilities by Civil Rights Movement veteran and former UN ambassador

Andrew Young. The tour's report exonerated the corporation—a paper denounced as a shameless puff-piece by journalist Stephen Glass and scholar Anita Chan. Nike has also moved aggressively to protect its image among college students, hoping to avoid a nightmare of campus pressure to end athletic department endorsement contracts. In May, the head of the University of California at Irvine took such a step and declined to renew its women's basketball team's Nike contract.

The very existence of this campaign in a time when the ideology of the impossibility of an alternative to high-tech, globalized capitalism is of great importance. It shows that many have not bought into the ideas of capital's apologists and are willing to work for something different. But what will be a real achievement is if those who are attracted to the campaign against this corporate villain come to the realization that there is nothing walling off the conditions of labor in the lands in which international capital has recently arrived with conditions in thoroughly industrialized countries. Through such revelations as the El Monte, Cal. forced labor camp and the Kathie Lee Gifford fiasco, the U.S. media has been forced to acknowledge that sweatshops exist here at home. Even the Smithsonian Institute is planning a 1998 exhibition on the past and present history of sweatshops, provided it doesn't repeat its spinelessness in the Enola Gay exhibit affair and cave in to apparel manufacturer opposition.

In a time when we are experiencing a not-inconsiderable amount of labor-related activity—from Jobs With Justice rallies to the anti-Disney and anti-Nike sweatshop campaigns—it behooves us to ask tough questions about what direction this activity will take. Will the

movement be satisfied if corporations take face-saving moves to slightly ameliorate their production conditions, as the Gap did in getting one of their contractors in El Salvador to admit independent monitors to a single plant, or will activists deepen their challenge to attack the system in which the human activity of laboring can appear as a commodity?

The recent economic tremors felt throughout the Asian countries will doubtless make the lives of the workers in the factories tougher than ever. In the past their strikes and organizing efforts have shown that they are willing to take on both the foreign companies and their own governments. The conditions they are to face now will put them on the forefront of the fight against globalized capital. It's incumbent upon activists who are also theoreticians in the long-industrialized countries to be up to the challenge that the activity of those in the factories represents.

Throughout the activity during the upcoming "Season of Conscience" which has been called to draw attention to sweatshop labor during the holiday shopping season, activists should also work to sharpen their critique of the system of which the sweatshops, both at home and abroad, are only one part.

Mark your calendar for the next international day of action against Nike. It's planned for April 1998.

## New York Nike protest

A demonstration by young people against Nike took place here in October. The kids, ages eight to 15, were very spirited. They protested the double exploitation of the workers in the Third World who make the shoes for little money, and of the U.S. teenagers who pay high prices for them. The demonstration, at which they "returned" their old sneakers to Nike, was organized by youth in settlement houses around the city. Nike has been very upset about the publicity. —Greta

## October 22 movement slams police repression

New York—Oct. 22, the National Day of Protest to Stop Police Brutality, Repression & the Criminalization of a Generation, brought out 500 people, mostly Black and Latino youth, to a rally at City Hall Park. Organized by the Oct. 22nd Coalition, similar demonstrations were held around the state and around the country.

Led by mothers of young men killed by the police in the last few years, the speeches were angry and heart-breaking. The mother of Anthony Baez has been fighting for two and a half years to see justice done to her son's killer cop. She said, we have to demand of government officials, all the way to the president, that they clean house. She and other parents who have lost children spoke with such passion, it was clear they no longer feared anything, and were devoting their lives to seeking justice.

Abner Louima, the Haitian immigrant who was brutalized and seriously injured in August by police in Brooklyn, spoke to the rally by telephone. He said, "I'm not with you in the flesh, but I am in spirit. What happened to me could have been prevented if there were more organizations like this coalition. We have to keep fighting until we win this war; this is a war for our lives. We have to keep fighting those who abuse their power, whether they wear blue uniforms or any other uniforms. I want to thank those who prayed for my recovery, and I hope to see you the next time we have a rally."

Many speakers pointed out that the police bring drugs and violence into the communities—"they talk about gangs, but they are the biggest gang."

A Black woman described her successful campaign to get a white cop indicted for sodomizing a series of Black men. She called on white mothers to make sure they are not raising their children to be racists, and warned them that now the police are killing children of color, but soon they may be killing white youth as well.

—News and Letters, N. Y.

Chicago—The Oct. 22 Coalition rally here was a great success. This was evident even before the noontime start, as the Chicago Police Department was forced to announce the suspension of two of its officers who had been involved in the brutal beating of a Black youth, Jeremiah Mearday.

The rally itself was fairly large, with an estimated 500-600 participants representing a broad spectrum of grassroots and civil rights groups. There were moving speeches from the family members of victims of police violence like the mother of Jeremiah Mearday and the widow of Jorge Guillen. There were signs memorializing other victims like Eric Smith, a deaf Black youth who was killed when police mistook his sign language for gang signs, as they claimed!

Perhaps most significant was the very large percentage of the participants who were youth, and overwhelmingly Black and Latino. There were groups from a number of high schools and housing projects in various parts of the city. Many of these youth crossed some real neighborhood and gang boundaries to stand together as this rally, which was really unique in my experience.

—Gerard Emmett

## 'They treat us like dogs'

Memphis, Tenn.—At Hamilton Middle School we have no air conditioning. The kids from Carnes Elementary get to come to our school while their air conditioning is being fixed. But we can't go to theirs after it gets fixed and we can't get ours fixed. They put air conditioners in the computer rooms but not the whole school.

Hamilton Elementary and Hamilton High have air conditioning, but our school doesn't. If it was in Germantown (a mainly affluent, mainly white suburb), it would. But not in our neighborhood, which is considered "bad."

The kids in our school don't get to take our books home at night. The principal, Mr. R. Hawkins, says it's a program. We disagree with his program! We need to take our books home, like every other school kid does. We only have 15 minutes in a class to do all the homework. We couldn't even take a social studies test because we didn't have enough time.

Our teacher told us to go to the school board and complain. We are 11-, 12-, and 13-year-old girls. He said if he went, he would be fired. My mom says they need to go to the board and complain. We don't ever have homework because we can't take our books home. No other schools have this, only the middle school. They treat us like dogs. We still learn, but I think we are behind. When the T-CAP (Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program) tests come, they tell us we have bad grades.

There is only one white child in the whole school. They are doing this because this is a Black school. They think if a white comes to our school, they would get beat up. That's not true. My last year's teacher didn't get us through even half the year's work. How can we compete with the top schools in Tennessee when we can't take our books home to study? I think they don't want us Black children to learn.

—Three Middle School students

## Third World College

Berkeley, Cal.—On the historic steps of Sproul Hall, at University of California, Berkeley, Third World College (TWC) was in session Oct. 13-17. It was actually a daring occupation organized by newly formed Students of Color Solidarity Council (SCSC), after 53 demonstrators were arrested at Boalt Hall (Law School) during a sit-in protesting repeal of affirmative action. Amidst sleeping bags, tables and clotheslines holding up huge paper signs and bedsheet banners, classes were taught by local activists and supportive faculty members of UCB and San Francisco State University.

In one class I attended we discussed the original Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) formed in the late '60s, first at SFSU, then at UCB. The TWLF called for strikes on both campuses in response to a lack of response to their demands for ethnic diversity. The chief demand was for establishment of a TWC with an independent administration. After about three months the strikers settled for an Ethnic Studies Department at UCB and various diversity programs at SFSU.

Our instructor pointed out the many movements and ideas that came out of the old Third World Strike. For instance, two participants went on to organize the effort to save International Hotel, an apartment building in San Francisco that was home to low-income, elderly, Asian immigrants. Others led the Native American occupation of Alcatraz Island. Still others played leading roles in the campaign to obtain redress and reparations for Japanese Americans interned in so-called relocation centers during World War II.

I got the feeling most everyone at Upper Sproul Plaza that week understood all people demanding self-determination need to be bound up in a common struggle. But a common struggle that is to move beyond the common oppressor and avoid the tragic self-effacement of a melting pot must give rise to the self-determination of the very idea of freedom.

—David M.

## Equality starts here



Chicago—Over 100 University of Illinois at Chicago students demonstrated on campus Oct. 29 to show their opposition to the school's abandonment of an early registration program for minority students. The students charged the administration with bowing to anti-affirmative action pressure in the move.

## Youth on trial—why?

Memphis, Tenn.—Already serving six years behind bars for attempted aggravated robbery, 16-year-old Christopher Williams was sentenced to life in prison for the 1995 shooting of Jerry McNeal. The sentencing comes on Sept. 25, after his third trial on the same murder charge.

Monticello, Fla.—After appealing a technicality in his original case and winning a new trial, 18-year-old Aundra Akins received a life sentence Sept. 22 for attempted first-degree murder. He has previously received two consecutive 27-year sentences after pleading guilty to second-degree murder and attempted first-degree murder. Akins was one of four teenagers involved in an attempted robbery of two British tourists leaving one dead and one injured.

These are just two of the cases that have appeared in the local newspaper during the last two months regarding punishment of youth for crimes committed. It represents an issue to be dealt with: that youth are being unreasonably punished for crimes for which they are not wholly responsible.

It would be foolish to deny that youth, to an extent, are responsible for their actions. I won't deny that youth commit crimes, but I think it is simply wrong to throw away the best years of someone's life for an occurrence over which they did not have complete control.

There is no doubt in my mind that part of the problem is the exploitative society in which we live. It is hard to believe that any group of people will wholly learn to respect life when so much of our society is centered around the capitalistic, patriarchal system of domination and oppression.

Second, the lack of love and responsible parenting that some children receive is a factor. However, we cannot hold these conditions solely responsible. Part of the problem is simply the fact that all youth are, to some degree, trying to experience life and make sense out of the thousands of changes that we are undergoing. It is a matter of trying to figure out right and wrong; of our place in the world; of what it means to be human.

To punish youth as adults is to completely ignore the fundamental nature of youth that I have just described. By sentencing youth to life in prison, society is answering youth's questions for them and telling them that they do not fit into society at all.

—Peter Brinson

## Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

The movement to stop Ontario Premier Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservative party's slash and burn campaign to gut health, welfare and education programs erupted in a province-wide teachers' strike, which began Oct. 27.

Harris provoked the strike by introducing the "Education Quality Improvement Act," Bill 160, in September. The sweeping measures in Bill 160 would give the provincial government the right to determine class size, cut teachers' class preparation time, increase the length of the school year, use noncertified personnel in classrooms, determine how budgets are allocated, and set local education property tax rates. Bill 160 would cut \$700 million (Canadian) from the education budget, and eliminate from 7,000 to 10,000 jobs—which was Harris' and the Conservatives' main goal all along. Harris spent at least \$1 million in taxpayers' money to promote it.

The teachers' unions defend their strike as a political protest, not an action against their local school boards

with whom they negotiate their contracts. It is through these negotiations that teachers have some influence on genuine quality education, by determining class size and preparation time.

Virtually 100% of Ontario's teachers, public and parochial, support the strike, together with thousands of students and parents who have attended opposition rallies ever since Bill 160 was introduced. At many schools, students have held their own picket lines to support their teachers.

Nearly everyone in Ontario has suffered over the past two years from the Conservative rampage to cut social welfare programs. The "reconfiguration" of hospitals and the elimination of thousands of jobs has left health care in shambles. The 20% cut from the welfare budget has hit children especially hard. The Conservatives have also introduced legislation to shackle the rights of public sector workers.

Opposition to Harris and the Conservatives has also fueled the "Days of Action" campaign, a series of mass protests across Ontario which has been promoted by

organized labor and supported by a widespread coalition. The latest Day of Action was held in Windsor, across the border from Detroit.

Up to 30,000 workers and supporters from Windsor and across Ontario shut down the city: schools, transportation, auto plants, mail service and many downtown offices. As two lines of marchers converged towards Windsor's riverfront park, a favorite chant rose: "Hey Mike, hey Mike, how would you like a general strike!"

Simultaneous with the Windsor action, the Conservatives were holding a midterm policy convention to devise ways of putting a positive face on its so-called "Common Sense Revolution," and to stop their party's slide in popular support.

Right now, Ontario's teachers are not letting Harris get away with anything, and are exposing his retrogressive education scheme for what it is. As we go to press, an injunction to force an end to the strike was denied. Negotiations have broken off but teacher support across Ontario remains solid.

## Mexico union win

On Oct. 6, workers at the Han Young maquiladora in Tijuana, Mexico voted in an independent union of the Authentic Labor Front (FAT) and voted out the company-backed union. The workers defied an intimidation campaign backed by the Korean-based Hyundai conglomerate, and opened a challenge to the whole exploitative system in the factories along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The Han Young workers, who build chassis exclusively for the nearby Hyundai tractor trailer plant, have been saddled with a company-backed union controlled by the PRI government ever since the plant opened five years ago. This setup of company unions and no representation exists throughout all the maquiladoras. The Han Young workers finally refused to work any longer under conditions that included lack of protective clothing, amputation of hands and fingers on the job, no ventilation, inoperative safety equipment, lead poisoning and other life-threatening injuries. They were paid at subsistence wages of from \$35 to under \$50 a week.

The October election was preceded by firings and other threats aimed at pro-FAT activists. Despite this last minute attempt by Han Young to steal the election by busying in ineligible voters, the workers voted for FAT, 55 to 32.

Part of the Han Young workers' victory came from a cross border campaign of support. The San Diego-based Support Committee for Maquiladora Workers and other organizations focused international attention on the Han Young workers who drew support from around the world, including unions in South Korea.

## Germany's 'closet racists'

Despite strong protests from below, the conservative Helmut Kohl government has continued its anti-labor and anti-immigrant policies. In October, as the parliament approved Kohl's plan to privatize the postal system, 40,000 workers marched on the streets in opposition. Earlier, on Sept. 23, the majority of the country's 300,000 postal workers staged a one-day protest strike. Since 1989, 100,000 postal jobs have been eliminated. Under privatization, another 80,000 are expected to be thrown out of work in the next few years.

Also in October, the renowned writer Günter Grass hit out sharply at the harsh restrictions on immigration which have been in effect since 1993. Presiding at a ceremony where the Turkish-Kurdish author Yasar Kemal was awarded the German Peace Prize. Grass called his fellow Germans "closet racists." In arguing that government policy was working in tandem with racist skinhead attacks on immigrants, he hit a nerve.

# Canadian labor challenges government

## Protesters shadow China president's visit to U.S.



Demonstrators oppose Jiang's U.S. visit.

Chinese President Jiang Zemin's trip to the U.S. was a peculiar summit whose substance lay in the photo opportunities. Any agreements had been worked out and even leaked beforehand: China's \$3 billion purchase from Boeing, and the U.S. allowing the sale of \$60 billion in nuclear technology from Westinghouse with China's promise not to transfer to Iran.

Jiang has held the top party, state and military titles since the aftermath of the June 1989 massacres at Tiananmen Square and Chengdu, but only with Deng Xiaoping's blessing. Jiang insisted on the full trappings of 21-gun salute and banquet to reinforce abroad his authority at home.

Clinton postured by publicly raising human rights with Jiang. Many Republican officials made a show of snubbing Jiang and let corporate America welcome Jiang unconditionally, as GM, IBM and the rest thirsted for expanded access to Chinese labor.

The pretense on human rights by a government that always installed despots like Mobutu in Congo and Pinochet in Chile is because television showed glimpses of another China crushed in Tiananmen Square. Jiang reminded a reporter he held no national office then, but in fact Jiang's Shanghai began the first wave of show trials and summary executions of workers after June 4, 1989.

Even Jiang could not ignore protests of his visit, in Washington, Philadelphia and at Harvard. Beyond demands for a free Tibet, as China's rulers still use theo-

cratic rule as a pretext for crushing Tibet's autonomy, demonstrators supported political dissidents incarcerated throughout China.

One exile, Wang Xizhe, by publicly raising the banner of Karl Marx to attack China's so-called Marxist system, had spent 14 years jailed by Mao, Deng and Jiang. He called the protests "the best opportunity to express those views that the Chinese government has silenced."

—Bob McGuire

## Massacres in Algeria

Since July, a new series of massacres by Islamic fundamentalists has plunged Algeria into its worst violence since the civil war between the army and the fundamentalists began in 1992. Over 1000 people have been killed by the most barbaric methods, including beheadings and displays of heads of victims in front of their homes. In addition, hundreds of women and girls have been kidnapped, apparently to be raped and then murdered as well.

The victims of these new attacks are not army, police, or government officials, or even villages which have tended to support the government. Instead, they are villages which in 1991 voted overwhelmingly for the fundamentalists of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Since then, the more fanatical fundamentalists of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) have carried out a series of murderous attacks, discrediting the fundamentalists even among many of their former supporters. Today many of the villages which have been attacked are thought to have turned against fundamentalism, or to continue to back the more moderate FIS. The FIS, some of whose leaders have been released from prison, has recently called for an end to armed resistance and negotiations with the government.

However, few observers believe that the GIA, weakened by years of war with the military, could have carried out these attacks without at least tacit support from elsewhere. Factions of the army and police are widely suspected of allowing these massacres to take place in order to further discredit the fundamentalists, and perhaps to punish villagers who had voted for them.

The government has made it impossible for independent journalists to investigate the massacres by interviewing survivors. It has also banned attempts by secular and democratic groups to stage demonstrations against violence.

## NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

### Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that since its birth has stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and its state property form, as it has historically appeared in state-capitalist regimes calling themselves Communist as in Russia and China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the

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

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels. In light of the crises of our nuclearly armed world, it becomes imperative not only to reject

what is, but to reveal and further develop the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The new visions of the future which Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her discovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a new Humanism and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as Marxist-Humanism. This is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough and her final 1987

Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and donated new supplementary volumes to the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." We participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim... to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.