

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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## What team concept is really about



by B. Ann Lastelle

The workers at the unionized meatpacking plant where I worked ten years ago had a rule: no worker could tell another worker what to do. That was management's role. The division was clear. Team concept subverts that principle and not just in nonunion plants. Saturn workers earlier this year threw out their union local leaders, in part because under the labor-management cooperation contract, which the leaders supported, union members, some appointed jointly by the union and management, help run production.

Most of the teams at my nonunion workplace have team captains. Those people, chosen by their supervisors, in addition to operating their machines are responsible for communicating with the supervisor, ordering temporary workers and placing them on the line, repositioning team members to cover for vacations and absences, and organizing a rotation among workers to relieve one another for breaks and lunch. Team captains have one overall assignment: keep the line running.

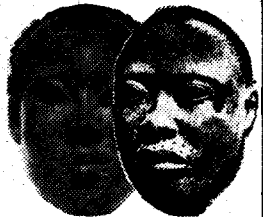
My crew has had no designated team captain, because each person to whom the supervisor offered the position refused it. Some of the team captain's duties in such a situation tend to fall on the operator of one particular machine. I was in that position for more than nine months.

Workers came to me with problems and questions when they preferred not to deal directly with the supervisor, or the supervisor was absent or abdicated responsibility ("You will run the line through breaks and lunch. Work it out."). I was all too aware of management's expectations and constantly fought, often unsuccessfully, their influence on my reactions.

(Continued on page 3)

## Black World

### The 'ceiling' of Black America



I am turning "Black World" over to the following report (excerpted) that Gene Ford gave recently at the 1999 News and Letters Plenum on the Marxist-Humanist Statement on the Black Dimension. —Lou Turner

by Gene Ford

The ultimate expression of law is not order, it's prison. There are hundreds upon hundreds of prisons and thousands upon thousands of laws. Yet there is no social order, no social peace. —George Jackson, *Blood In My Eye*

There is a need to confront the savagery of bourgeois thought around which laws are passed such as "three strikes, you're out" and the new proposed California Juvenile Crime bill, in which youth as young as 14 years old can be convicted as adults. This bourgeois society that creates prison walls to divide the haves from the have nots is a crime against the whole of society, a society waiting to explode.

The attack on youth with the "new California Crime Bill" is really a "juvenile injustice initiative." It is to appear on a March 7, 2000 ballot. With this new proposed law juvenile records could be opened up to the public. Schools and employers can use records against you in relationship to school or finding a job. While youth are not allowed to vote until they're 18 years old, they have no say on the laws inflicted upon them. If youth at 18 are not seen as mature enough to vote, how can they be "mature" enough to be convicted as adults and sent to adult facilities?

The reality is that juvenile crime is not on the rise. There is no rise in crime to back up this law, despite what the state machine politicians would like us to think. In fact juvenile crime went down 20.8% from 1991-1996. Violent crime went down 5.1%, according to California (Continued on page 8)

## Western powers stand by in face of Indonesia's genocide in East Timor

by Kevin Michaels

A history of more than 20 years of genocide against the people of East Timor has culminated in a frenzy of death and terror wholly sponsored and organized by the government and military of Indonesia. The world will not soon forget the horrifying reports of violence broadcast from East Timor's capital, Dili, in the wake of the Aug. 30 referendum on independence in which 78.5% of those voting indicated their desire to break free of the domination Indonesia has imposed since its 1975 invasion. The carnage was carried out by militias composed of members of the small minority of East Timorese who favored "autonomy" within Indonesia, as well as government-sponsored transmigrants from other parts of the archipelago nation and out-of-uniform members of the Indonesian army and police.

In the days immediately after the massacres of supporters of independence began, representatives of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), the umbrella group of East Timorese political groups working for freedom for their country, appealed both to the United Nations and the countries of the West for immediate action to stop the bloodshed. Those powers, however, in keeping with their decades-old policy of subordinating the right to self-determination for East Timor to their respective strategic interests, refused to act. Hundreds of thousands were forced to flee their homes either to the mountainous interior of the country or across the border into what are effectively concentration camps in Indonesian West Timor. The number of those butchered outright in Dili and scores of villages across the island will not be known for some time.

The tragedy of this event is that by the time the referendum took place, it was already too late to prevent the slaughter that the militias had publicly announced as



East Timorese flee attacks by Indonesia-backed militia's

their intent to carry out in the event of a vote for independence. During the period that the attention of the world was focused on the Serbian government's attempt to forcibly expel the Albanian population of Kosova, the Indonesian military was implementing a plan for a final solution to its Timor problem.

While culpability for the massacres lies primarily with the Indonesian government and military, the United Nations' refusal to heed warnings from observers on the ground that systematic preparations for a massive wave of anti-independence violence were underway well in advance of the date the referendum was finally held indicts that institution as well as the Western governments who claim to have been caught unawares.

The government of the United States bears particular responsibility because of its history of arming and training the Indonesian military. The U.S. government facili-

(Continued on page 10)

## Mumia and the movement at the cossroads

New York—Some 400 people took part in double rallies and marches through Manhattan, vowing to let the world know that Mumia must not die. The activity began on 125th Street in Harlem. After a march down Broadway and a second rally at Columbus Circle, the march continued in a protest against the media's treatment of Mumia's case.

The major media have either refused to report on Mumia's appeal and the movement to free him at all, or else they have done hatchet jobs on the facts. The march went to the offices of ABC TV national news and *Vanity Fair* magazine to protest their stories. Last year Mumia refused to appear on ABC's program about him because the technicians were on strike; he said he preferred to die than to cross a picket line, even electronically. The story they did without him was thoroughly biased against him.

At the rally at Columbus Circle, we listened to tapes of Mumia's radio programs on the criminal injustice system and to speakers from New Africa and other groups. In contrast to Mumia's very concrete analyses of capitalist American law and order, most of the speakers declaimed their passion to free him—"by any means necessary"—without discussing what work needs to be done to really do so, that is, to build a mass movement. It was sad to see such a small number of people turn out in New York, but sadder not to discuss the problem. The good news reported was that during the past "Mumia Week," tens of thousands of people took part in events in 96 cities in the U.S.

A member of Mumia's legal team reported on what is likely to happen next in his appeals. When the U.S. "Supremacist" Court re-opens Oct. 4, it will announce the cases it has decided not to hear (denied cert), and Mumia's petition will most certainly be among them. If cert is denied, the governor of Pennsylvania may decide to sign Mumia's death warrant right away. Mumia will immediately have all his possessions removed from his cell, no more visitors, and a light on in his cell 24 hours a day—to prevent suicide, since only the state is permitted to kill him! At that point, his lawyers will file a habeas corpus petition for further review, which will suspend the death warrant for a while. But a 1996 law now greatly limits federal review of state criminal appeals, throwing us back into the pre-Civil Rights Movement days. He emphasized that a mass outpouring is needed at every stage of the appeals. —Anne Jaclard

Chicago—Several hundred marchers in Chicago, a few hundred more in New York City, and a virtual absence of demonstrators in the San Francisco Bay Area, on Saturday, Sept. 25, all raise the disturbing spectre that the capitalist state now has a clear path to execute Mumia Abu-Jamal. The week of Sept. 19-25 was supposed to be a national campaign to raise the profile of Mumia's death row case, which has now entered its final and most crucial appeals stage.

The "One Hundred Cities for Mumia" mobilization was supposed to break the strangle-hold that the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) has on all attempts to publicize the raw miscarriage of justice that put Mumia Abu-Jamal on death row. The fight to get Mumia a new trial has been blocked at every turn by Pennsylvania's courts, while the FOP has sought to silence support for Mumia by threats, intimidation, boycotts, and political arm-twisting. In this they have had the ruling class support of Sam Donaldson of *ABC News* and *Vanity Fair*.

In 1995, when Governor Tom Ridge signed the death warrant on Mumia, the only thing that stood between Mumia and the death house was the international mass opposition—people, masses of people, in the streets. With the 1992 Los Angeles rebellion still fresh in the minds of the ruling class, the Black inner-city youth who showed up 2,000 strong in downtown Chicago, in 1995, made the powers-that-be think twice about taking the life of Mumia.

As recently as April of this year tens of thousands turned out in Philadelphia and the Bay Area. The momentum was once again building to stay the executioner's hand and "persuade" the courts to do the right thing: either free Mumia or grant him a new trial. Now, five months later, where did those thousands for Mumia go?

Human rights attorney Stan Willis put the challenge squarely before the movement, in his speech at the Chicago Mumia rally in Federal Plaza: at the threshold of the 21st century, the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal is a defining moment for the Black and radical movement. Unless there is, right now, a thoroughgoing reorganization of our thinking, our politics, and our priorities (No Business As Usual!), it will not only be Mumia's death staring us in the face, but the death of the radical movement.

—Lou Turner

## ON THE INSIDE

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# The unhappy marriage of Hartsock and Marx

by Maya Jhansi

Women worldwide are facing the most rabid forms of right-wing violence, from the anti-welfare and anti-crime hysteria here in the U.S. to outright gender apartheid in places like Afghanistan. Yet while women fight for their lives everywhere, much of what passes for feminist theory satisfies itself by remaining comfortably sequestered within the walled compounds of academia. The postmodernist turn in feminist theory has contributed to the demobilization of feminist politics in the world today. And this is not even to mention the question of revolution, of course. Whatever happened to that?

In her new book, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited and Other Essays* (Westview Press, 1998), Nancy Hartsock addresses this, arguing for revolutionary feminist perspectives.

The book, a compilation of her essays written over the past twenty years, is divided into three parts, the first on political movements and theories, the second on "reoccupying Marxism as feminism," and the third on structuralism and post-structuralism. While I cannot take up everything in the book here, I want to focus on Hartsock's discussion of Marx, which is central to the book as a whole.

Hartsock is known for her insistence that Marx is important for feminism and for her theory of the feminist standpoint. Unfortunately, however, the Marx she goes back to is the post-Marx Marxist caricature. It is telling and unfortunate that Hartsock fails to mention the only woman Hegelian-Marxist and feminist philosopher, Raya Dunayevskaya, who spent a lifetime working out the meaning of Marx's philosophy for the post-World War II world. Indeed, this "oversight" is obvious in her own reductive reading of Marx as an essentially Eurocentric and masculinist thinker concerned only with a narrowly defined class division.

The core of Hartsock's project is to theorize a "feminist standpoint" based on Marxist ideas. A standpoint, Hartsock argues, is a "technical theoretical device that can allow for the creation of better (more objective, more liberatory) accounts of the world" (236). Central to her concept of the feminist standpoint is Georg Lukacs' 1923 essay, "Reification and the Standpoint of the Proletariat." Though Lukacs, an important Hegelian-Marxist philosopher, was interested in the standpoint of the proletariat in this essay, he collapsed the reification (thingification) of labor as an activity into the reification of the laborer. Thus the subjectivity of the proletariat is subsumed by capitalist labor process, and the laborer himself becomes an object.

Citing Lukacs' own 1967 self-critique of this essay for equating objectification with alienation, Hartsock proposes to theorize a feminist standpoint that bypasses Lukacs' original error and not only sees women's work as a source of alienation but also of utopian vision. Her project begins with her critique of Marx for eliding the importance of the sexual division of labor. Where Marx supposedly only wrote from the standpoint of the male proletariat, she wants to "follow out the epistemological consequences of the sexual division of labor" (112).

Women's labor, Hartsock argues, is similar to men's labor to the extent that it is alienated and repetitive. However, because women produce more use-values

## Woman as Reason

than commodities, are more interested in quality of products (for their families etc.) than quantity, and are engaged in reproduction of human beings and not just objects, their vantage point is not as bound by capitalist ideology. "The unity of mental and manual labor," Hartsock writes, "and the directly sensuous nature of much of women's work leads to a more profound unity of mental and manual labor, social and natural worlds, than is experienced by the male worker in capitalism" (120).

As many have pointed out, Hartsock is on shaky grounds in her discussion of the sexual division of labor. In effect, she falls into the very biological determinism that feminists have so long fought, arguing at one point that: "The unity [of mental and manual] grows from the fact that women's bodies, unlike men's, can be themselves instruments of production: in pregnancy arguments about a division of mental from manual labor are fundamentally foreign" (120). Far from challenging the sexual division of labor or that between mental and manual labor, Hartsock, like radical feminists, seems in places to merely reverse their valuation—women's labor over men's labor, manual labor over mental labor.

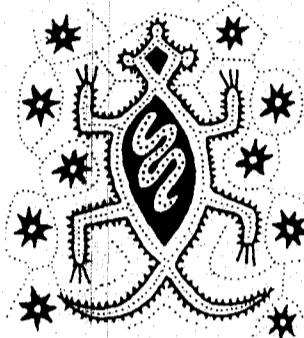
Marx, unlike his colleague Engels, refused to fall into such biologism. To him, what was key even in the sexual division of labor was the social elements, not biological origins. That is why I cannot take very seriously Hartsock's claim that what is needed is a "more systematic critique of Marx on the basis of a more fully developed understanding of the sexual division of labor" (126). It seems to me that what we need is a more systematic study of Marx. There is much in Marx, especially in his last writings on gender and the Third World, that feminists have yet to seriously grapple with.

While Hartsock is generally right that women add unique dimensions to a critique of capitalist society and to a vision of a new society, she ignores the class, race, ethnic, nationalist realities that complicate women's lives, showing the limitations of an epistemological theory. In response to those who have critiqued her work for ignoring women of color, she writes that "in following Marx's procedure of reducing the world to a two-class, two-man model, I ended up with a problem similar to his own—that is unable to see important axes of domination, even while recognizing their

operation" (239). Her solution to the problem is to call for coalition politics of various groups and standpoints for liberation.

However, Hartsock presents a very reductive view of Marx, never challenging the false view that Marx was only and always concerned with a narrow definition of class. It is not that Hartsock's standpoint theory suffers problems similar to Marx—it is rather that she has fallen short of Marx. From his 1844 *Manuscripts to The Ethnological Notebooks* written in the last years of his life, Marx made the transformation of the alienated man/woman relationship central to his vision of a new human society. Dunayevskaya, one of the very few to have analysed Marx's last writings, argued that Marx's philosophic method was driven by the search for ways to make revolution total, global, deeper and permanent. If we miss this aspect of Marx's philosophy, as Hartsock has, how are we to move beyond standpoints to a revolutionary philosophy that can truly meet the aspirations of the various, multiple, complex forces of revolution in this world today?

## Rosa Muki Bonaparte



"In East Timor in 1975, Rosa Muki Bonaparte organized the Popular Organization of Timorese Women as a group within Fretelin. She was the first one murdered when Indonesia invaded East Timor after they had already achieved freedom and ended 446 years of Portuguese rule."

—Raya Dunayevskaya

Read more about women's revolutionary history in *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future*. To order, see p. 7

## Probation not jail for Tabitha Walrond

*New York*—"Breast feeding is not a crime!" "The health care system should go to jail, not Tabitha!" we shouted outside the Bronx Courthouse Sept. 8, when Tabitha Walrond was sentenced for criminally negligent homicide in the death of her infant son two years ago. He starved to death because Tabitha, then 19, did not know she was producing insufficient breast milk, and when she twice tried to get him medical care, she was turned away because the baby had not received his Medicaid card. A campaign by feminists, women's advocacy groups, leftists and politicians resulted in her receiving five years probation instead of jail time.

The judge said he had received about 900 letters from

around the world asking for leniency. He made sure to say, however, that he held Tabitha responsible for the death and rejected "the theories of victimization." His denial served to underscore that this case is a new low point in blaming the victim and criminalizing people who are poor, Black, women or young for the horrors of today's capitalist society. The Bronx District Attorney, a Black man who chose to prosecute this young Black woman whom the medical system failed so tragically, had requested she be given six months in jail.

The case prompted action by the state legislature to pass a law sponsored by Assemblymember Richard Gottfried that requires all hospitals to provide care for babies under a year old, whether or not they have a Medicaid card. Two medical facilities had refused Walrond care for her baby, even though he was eligible for a card.

Walrond did not realize she might have trouble breast feeding due to her earlier breast reduction surgery. At the Sept. 8 demonstration, a family friend told me about her own similar surgery and its awful consequences. If only she had known of Tabitha's surgery, she could have advised her. "Tabitha was so happy about the baby; she said he was a gift from God," the friend said in response to the prosecutor's claims that she had intentionally starved him. The friend hopes to start a program to educate women about the risks of breast surgery.

A midwife at the demonstration explained that mothers are often unaware whether a baby is thriving; that is why babies are supposed to have checkups at two and six weeks of age. "I'm very pro-breast feeding," she said, "and the rates are absurdly low in New York. An incident like this undermines our efforts. Women are already so insecure about their bodies and their ability to breast feed. Hospital staffs are inadequate to teach new mothers and are overworked. New mothers are barraged with samples of formula and literature about formula instead."

—Anne Jaclard

## Southern Girls Convention

*Memphis, Tenn.*—"I don't wanna work no more! What's that you say?! I said the system doesn't work no more!" This cheer, performed by the Memphis radical cheerleaders, was screamed loud and clear to open up the first Southern Girls Convention July 30-August 1 at the University of Memphis.

Over 150 women and men came from Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, Mississippi, Louisiana, Louisville, Florida, the Northeast and West Coast as well as one woman from England. Sponsored by the Memphis Woman's Action Coalition, our purpose was to prove that activism is not dead in the South and that there are empowered womyn making this revolution spin on its head.

Southern radicals came here to network, organize, meet other amazing women, share ideas, and dance at the nightly shows filled with girl bands, radical cheerleaders from all over, and drag king shows. Our convention was mostly about radical feminism, which included a diverse set of workshops including Being a Dyke in the South; Race and Class in the South; What's Marx Got To Do, Got To Do With It?; Environmental Racism; Punk Parenting, and more.

In the Race and Class workshop an important point was made to the organizers of the event: that our logo—"a celebration for girls who refuse to be southern belles"—was not inclusive to most women of color who are not necessarily encouraged to have the same genderized experience as white women. This exclusiveness was evident in our mostly white crowd. I was happy to hear from the people at the workshop that this isolation has got to stop if we are ever to make any real changes in this world. Instead of expecting the "minorities" to come to us "enlightened ones," we need to learn from them and grow together.

What came out of the convention was a working network list of 200 people and plans on having the next Southern Girl Convention in Louisville, KY, sometime in June of 2000. For more information contact liz@brat.org or BRAT, P.O. Box 4964, Louisville, KY 40204

—Kind Lady

## Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

The Ulster Pregnancy Advisory Association (UPAA) in Northern Ireland has been forced to close down due to harassment by misogynist thugs calling themselves "Precious Life," whose goal is to make abortions and all other women's health care services, unavailable through intimidation of staff and/or terrorism against service providers. The right to abortion is already severely restricted in Northern Ireland and the UPAA had provided counselling and referred women to clinics in Britain.

—Information from Dublin Abortion Rights Group and *Women's News*

With hate crimes on the rise in the United States, why is it still not a federal offense to commit a hate crime based on gender? The Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1999, currently mired in the Senate Judiciary Committee, would include women in the protection plan of the existing hate crime law. Gender-based hate crimes are physical or mental acts of violence inflicted on a person because of their gender, and include rape, battery and death threats. As many as four million such cases are reported annually, with an untold number never reported. Only 20 states have laws covering such violence.

—Information from off our backs

The first shelter for traumatized and abused women is opening in the Kakuma refugee camp in northern Kenya, which houses more than 70,000 people from nine African countries. The shelter offers temporary refuge and counselling services in response to the growing number of cases of violence against women in the refugee camps. Each community from the nine countries living in the camp chose a support person to help women get medical care and police protection.

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## Detroit teachers beat unionbusting

**Detroit**—Despite an intense campaign by local media, school officials and the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) leadership to discredit Detroit Public Schools teachers, enough of them, disgusted with the tentative agreement, voted to strike on Aug. 30. The union leadership had proposed a ten-day contract extension so that schools could open as scheduled Aug. 31. Many teachers, with the support of almost every other union in the school system, had tried to make their voices heard in demonstrations and picket lines for several weeks prior to the strike vote.

Only 3,000 of the 11,500 DFT members attended the meeting at which the strike vote was taken. Many others had reported to their schools thinking that the union had extended the old contract—no one knows how this rumor originated. Yet support was so strong among parents and teachers who walked picket lines that Michigan's No. 1 union-buster, Governor John Engler, just didn't get around to enforcing a new anti-strike law that would have fined the union and individual teachers.

Over the objections of many, the DFT earlier this year had agreed to accept the appointed "Reform" School Board imposed by Engler and Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer. Its "CEO" is David Adamany, who earned his anti-labor reputation as president of Wayne State University in Detroit.

The school district proposed lengthening the school day from 6 to 8.5 hours with no corresponding increase in pay,



no progress on reducing class size, loss of a teacher's annual raise if they use more than eight sick days, and a system of "merit" pay.

Adamany presented the new contract provisions as the reforms necessary to improve the deplorably inadequate schools. Detroit teachers, who routinely put in extra time

with students and use their own money to provide supplies that the school district does not, resented these provisions and the entire contract as punitive and anti-union. After a week, teachers voted to return to work on the basis of a tentative agreement which included several important concessions. A long-time educator commented:

"The Board put out a contract with nothing but take-aways...they wanted to eliminate site-based management, longevity pay...Nothing was linked to 'reform'... Class size has been a fight for 25 years. Now we have, tentatively, an agreement that specific schools and specific grades will be targeted, and the board must come up with a reduction in class size proposal..."

"Adamany didn't expect the unity and determination that came out in the strike. The strike unity was over 99%. The board called all newly-hired teachers to work. Most either decided to work elsewhere, after seeing how Detroit treats its long-term employees, or told the caller that they had grown up in a union family and would never cross a picket line. This is the unity that won for the teachers."

—Susan Van Gelder

## Ranks battle speed-up

*The following is from a new rank-and-file newsletter, The Barking Dog, published by workers at NUMMI auto assembly plant Fremont, Cal. NUMMI was originally set up in the 1980s as a joint Toyota-GM venture where GM management and UAW union officials enthusiastically embraced Japanese style teamwork and labor-management cooperation.*

We all know that jobs are being cut all over the plant (one person "in the know" told me 10% of all jobs were to be cut) and the work added to other people's jobs. Jobs are taken from one department and transferred to another, in order to cut jobs. People are thrown into the "labor pool," not knowing where they will end up. Others are working harder, sweating, to do the added work. No time to talk, tie your shoelace, have a drink of water, put your hair clip in better, or whatever. Frustration. Anger.

How far will they go? How many jobs will they cut? What will it take to make people want to join together to resist? People are afraid for their jobs. But we don't realize how powerful we can be if we can unite. In Final 3 we tried to stop our best job being given to Repair (along with job cuts in Final 3 and Repair). More than 100 of us signed a petition to President Ishii, but we haven't heard from him. At least we didn't just accept the speedup without a protest!

It does not improve "efficiency" when you simply make the worker do more work in the same time period. That only increases wear and tear on the worker's body and mind. The Union Committeepeople will tell you that the Contract gives the Company the right to change the organization of work and workloads however it wants. This is true. But why do most of them try to discourage us from protesting? I think many of them feel WE are powerless and THEY are the bigshots with influence with Management. Really, they have it all wrong. Their only power comes from us.

—Caroline Lund

## Gap built on sweated labor

**Chicago**—Gap Incorporated, which owns Gap, Old Navy and Banana Republic, produces the clothes that we wear in unsafe, unclean and brutal sweatshops. In Honduras young women work 14-hour days on Gap clothes for 50 cents an hour. In Russia, Chinese migrants are working 60 hours a week for 11 cents an hour. On the U.S. Commonwealth of Saipan in the Mariana Islands, The Gap takes advantage of the "Made in USA" label on clothing but pays a fraction of the U.S. minimum wage to Asian-born indentured servants, young women forced to work either in the sex trade or in barbed wire-enclosed factories under virtual slave condition.

The human rights group Global Exchange has persuaded Nordstrom and other stores to settle a federal class action lawsuit contesting sweatshop conditions in garment factories on Saipan. Gap refuses to sign this agreement. Instead Gap proceeds along the low road to the bottom which makes sweatshop conditions like those found in New York City, Los Angeles and at the Lion Apparel factory in Beattyville, Ky. inevitable as workers "compete" for jobs.

In Indonesia, Gap contractor PT Aneka Garmentama fired 485 workers for organizing a union and demanding decent wages and working conditions. This lack of workers' rights, in the U.S. as well as Indonesia, makes it possible for billionaires like Gap CEO Donald Fisher to reap the benefits. In the U.S. as well, workers are illegally fired every day for union organizing. It is up to us to stop this skid.

We can begin by contacting the Gap, (800) 333-7899 or www.gap.com, to demand they sign the Global Exchange agreement and force its Indonesian contractor to rehire its unionized workforce; joining Global Exchange's campaign for human rights at (415) 255-7296 or www.globalexchange.org, and the Jobs with Justice campaign for workers' rights—in Chicago, (312) 226-6340.

—Dennis D.

## Fight to unionize Beverly

**Ruleville, Miss.**—Workers at a nursing home in Ruleville owned by Beverly Enterprises have got themselves together and filed a petition for a union election. They want to be represented by UFCW Local 1529 There are about 75 workers at the nursing home, and nearly all of them are Black women.

People might be surprised to see what is happening in Ruleville today. The last time Ruleville was in the headlines, it was when Fannie Lou Hamer led the voting rights fight here in the 1960s. Today they teach about her in the Ruleville schools, but a lot of the conditions she fought against are still oppressing the people in Ruleville

The organizing committee at the nursing home is really strong. It has about 15 people, from all the different departments—CNAs (nurses' aides), housekeeping, laundry, dietary, and maintenance. I have been going to their meetings, and they are really enthusiastic. One nurses' aide told how when she was in high school she went to the civil rights marches with Fannie Lou Hamer. She said that when she went to work at the nursing home, a group of workers was talking about the conditions. They tried to get everyone together to protest to the director, but people were in fear.

**This time, she said, we are going to get a union, The campaign started in April, and people have been signing up ever since. The workers say that what makes them angriest is the way management talks to them and treats them. They got accused of not doing their jobs or not taking good care of the patients. But there are too many patients-for each worker. No one could do a good job under these conditions.**

When you start at Beverly, you start at just over the minimum wage. The average wage is \$6.00 an hour. Even though it is a health care facility, there are no real medical benefits, And there is no job security. Management keeps a revolving door going, firing workers all the time for trumped-up stuff,

Beverly Enterprises is not a little company. It is a powerful giant national chain of about 600 nursing homes and hospitals across the country. Everyone knows it is a strong anti-union company. Kate Bronfenbrenner of Cornell University testified to Congress that Beverly was "one of the nation's most notorious labor law violators." They sued her for saying it, but they lost.—The NLRB has ordered them to stop threatening pro-union workers, but they keep right on trying to do it.

We have a couple Beverly facilities unionized in Jackson, after a long struggle. We won an election at a Beverly home in Memphis, but Beverly tied it up, challenging it. They fight you all the way, they just do delay after delay, instead of negotiating a contract.

The workers in Ruleville are prepared for a long fight. If you visit there, you will find that the struggle Fannie Lou Hamer began, these workers want to finish.

—UFCW Local 1629 activist

## Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

I asked the only available person one day if she would relieve other workers for breaks and lunch, but she refused. She had good reasons. The crew was missing two people, even though we had asked the supervisor for help from another team, and a woman who had just returned to work after surgery would be left in a position that she physically couldn't handle. It was the supervisor's responsibility to notice these things, she said, but he hadn't. We shut down the line for breaks and lunch.

It again seemed reasonable several days later to shut down the line for lunch, so I did. The supervisor this time called all of us into the office. His point was twofold. First, we had wasted the company's time. Second, I did not have the authority to shut down the line; that had to come from him. I suppose I should have insisted on a rotation or come to him and said...what? He later wrote in my performance review that I needed to open up lines of communication with the supervisor. Perhaps "collaboration" is a more accurate word.

**Team concept attempts to thrust the role of disciplinarian onto the workers themselves. It doesn't simply add work for the already overworked; it changes relations among coworkers. When another growing phenomenon—the use of temporary workers, who are disproportionately young, women and Third World, and who are supervised by the permanent employees—is added, relations among workers within a single factory appear overwhelmingly complex.**

Yet what Karl Marx wrote in *Capital* remains true. Workers enter the process of production as isolated individuals, brought together and united into a single productive body by the capitalist who purchases their labor power. Their cooperation can accomplish things that no individual laborer, working alone, ever could. Marx called this "the creation of a new productive power, which is intrinsically a collective one."

That new power benefits capital as long as capital has control over it. Team concept and the employment of temps help maintain that control. On what basis can the collective power of the workers assert itself on the workers' own behalf? Will the complexity of today's workplace mean that when an answer is found, the transformation will be truer, deeper and more completely human than in the past?

## Delphi jobs and GM talks

**Flint, Mich.**—GM got rid of its Delphi parts plants earlier this year, but because of our strike last year, we were able to stay under our GM contract until now. What we're all wondering about here in GM's Delphi plant is what's going to happen to us in the contract talks.

In hearing about the DaimlerChrysler-UAW contract terms, the most important provision to most of us in the Delphi plant is just what the "lifetime employment" contract language means. If our plant is closed, can I transfer to another GM plant? If the plant stays open, will we be under the same contract as other GM workers, as we are now? Will we get cuts in pay and other "fringe benefits"? All we can do is wait and worry right now.

In the meantime, the company is still getting rid of as many workers as they can. Many workers who could do it have already transferred to other GM plants to make sure they have jobs, and many others have retired. After the strike last year, the company really came down hard on the workers, harassing us on our jobs and speeding up our work as much as they could. That isn't as bad now, but they're still trying to get rid of workers.

I don't know how many thousands of workers we have in our plant now, but I have heard that management's goal is to get the work force down to 700. One of the things they're doing now is making workers stand up. The company says this is "ergonomically" better for workers, but we know better.

The fact is that many older workers are taking early retirement because they can't do the jobs standing up. That way, the company can hire young replacements who can take the punishment of the jobs and who also start out with much less wages than the older workers were getting. And that means more profits for the company, which is what they always push for, regardless of what it does to workers and their families.

—Delphi worker

## Redland Brick strike gains

**Baltimore, Md.**—In June, 105 workers at the Redland Brick plant in Williamsport, Md. went on strike. Williamsport is a small town close to West Virginia, in a semi-rural Appalachian area with poverty, and plant shutdowns.

Several striking workers insisted to a Baltimore paper that the strike was over "respect" and not mainly about wages. Despite an increased demand for bricks, the result of a boom in construction, one worker stated that company salesmen were given new cars as a bonus while production workers were given pizza.

As one worker put it, "We've built Redland into millionaires. Record sales four straight years. All we want is a share of the good times." Although the pace of work has increased and the company is making record profits, it refused to extend medical benefits for retirees and allow a more liberal vacation leave which would permit more than five workers at a time to take vacation.

Once the strike began, the company immediately brought in a private security force to videotape strikers. Washington County sheriffs were called in to offer round-the-clock protection to the factory and permanent replacement workers shipped in from surrounding states. On July 1, Redland obtained a restraining order and fine against the union, claiming scabs were being threatened.

In mid-August, the company insisted scabs be given seniority over strikers, thus showing Redland's desire to bust the union. Workers voted down the proposed contract negotiated by the union three times in a row. Finally on Aug. 29, the strike ended after ten weeks, with workers winning on key issues of vacation leave and medical benefits.

—Curtis Price

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

### Editor's Note

The shooting spree against Jews, Blacks and Asians in Illinois by neo-Nazi activist Benjamin Smith, the burning of two synagogues in northern California by individuals who had passed out flyers supporting Serbia's war against Kosova, and the attack on a Jewish community center in Los Angeles by another neo-Nazi this summer all testify to a terrifying growth of racism and anti-Semitism in U.S. society. As part of our response to this development, we here publish a 1960 article by Raya Dunayevskaya which was written shortly after an outbreak of anti-Jewish violence in Germany and the U.S. It originally appeared in *News & Letters*, February 1960.

#### February 1960

The most fantastic of all the current anti-Semitic acts occurred not in Cologne, Germany, but in Detroit, USA. The self-styled teenage "fuehrer" of the group that smeared swastikas on synagogues is the son of a teacher at the University of Detroit.

This instructor in the ways of democracy had the gall to say that he "didn't know" that playing with Nazi uniforms and insignia would have any worse effect on his son than playing at being cowboy, especially since he had told him that "the enemy now was the hammer and sickle."

The so-called "minister of war" in that American Nazi group is the son of a policeman.

This group of juvenile delinquents—who were not sent to a house of correction, but given back to the custody of their parents—was organized fully four years ago by the older brother of the "fuehrer," who has since become a guardian of democracy where he is stationed—in Germany.

The Army issued a statement that it would "immediately" investigate whether the soldier had any connection with the Cologne outrage. At the same time the press displayed such tender feelings in the whole matter that not only were the names of the teenagers not revealed, but neither were those of the parents or the soldier.

That this contrasts sharply with the practice followed when a Negro moves into a white neighborhood is made the more blatant by the fact that all this has occurred in a neighborhood adjoining the one that two years ago saw adult hooligan attacks on Mrs. Watkins' home. Behind every so-called juvenile delinquent stands a respectable adult with all the prejudices of decadent capitalist society.

#### ON BOTH SIDES OF THE IRON CURTAIN

Lest we forget that the Allies no sooner won the war than they began to staff their administrations with former Nazis, let me say that the Army would do better than investigate that single Detroit soldier if it looked at its own top brass. **I refer not only to the American Army, but to the four occupying powers, including Russia.**

Where, a decade after the Allied victory, "the loser" Nazi General, Spiedel, can become the head of NATO, on the other side of the Iron Curtain the Jews have gone through everything from the purges of Stalin's era to the era of Khrushchev which permits publications that rival the forged "Protocols of Zion."

(See articles entitled "Behind the Screen of Zionism" in *Souremennyi Vostok*, Nov. and Dec. 1957, and "The Priests of the God Jehovah" in *Prikarpatzka Pravda*, Sept. 24, 1958. These are translated, and others of like nature summarized, in the Sept. 14, 1959 issue of *The New Leader*.)

# The roots of anti-Semitism

The fact that Khrushchev took quick advantage of the present reappearance of anti-Semitism in Adenauer Germany to point to a recurrence of Nazism and ask for "no confidence" in West Germany is pure and cheap politics. Not that Adenauer can be absolved of responsibility, but he is not alone. All the occupying powers in Germany, including Russia, are responsible for the re-establishment of the Krupp empire which nourished and sustained Nazism. And it is now doing its own type of flirtation with Russian orders for "peaceful" goods.

#### CLASS AND RACE

It matters not which of the capitalist powers won, and which lost, the minority problem remains the open sore. This is due not only to the fact that the ruling class needs a "scapegoat" for their crime of never being able to solve a single fundamental problem in war or in peace. Nor is it due only to the fact that the perpetuation of exploitation follows the old maxim of divide and rule. Basic as these two factors are, they are not the whole truth.

**Under the open sore of the persecution of a minority is hidden the greater truth of exploitation—that the exploiters, not the exploited, are the minority. Within this greater truth will be found the answer as to why a specific scapegoat is chosen at a particular time at each separate stage of capitalism's development.**

**THERE ARE REASONS** why the discrimination against a certain race suddenly bursts forth into the lynching of an individual Negro. There are reasons why

ishes. When imperialism first revealed the truth of exploitation—that it is the majority, not the "minority," that is persecuted; when it further took on the additive of color, the "white man's burden" still seemed to be outside of the "civilized, advanced country." But by the time monopoly capitalism was transformed into the totalitarian state form in Germany, it was clear enough that it meant enslavement at home. Simultaneously with the destruction of the Jews went the destruction of the labor movement, reaching its climax in the Nazi concentration camps with their crematoriums.

Lest an Adenauer be permitted to forget his silence at the extermination of a race at the time it happened; lest an Eisenhower forget his impunity which put Nazi officers at head of a rearmed Germany; lest a Khrushchev be permitted to parade as a staunch lover of freedom and peace and protector of Jews,\* let the historic record show:

**(1) That all of them and their ilk helped Nazism, and in fact the Nazi-Soviet Pact [of 1939] gave the green light to the unleashing of World War II; (2) all of them and their ilk helped capitalism reestablish itself when Germany lost; and (3) presently all of them march, though not in unison, but rather at opposite poles, toward the same goal—preparations for a nuclear World War III which might spell the end of civilization altogether.**

#### WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

Long before the maturing of the state capitalist world in which we now live, Lenin watched the appearance of bureaucracy in the workers' state and warned of "returning backwards to capitalism." His warning—unless production and the state were run by the population "to a man," state capitalism would overtake Russia—fell on as deaf ears as his last fight against Stalin's rudeness toward minority groups.

He wrote prophetically: "Scratch some Bolsheviks and you will find Great Russian chauvinists...I am declaring war on Great Russian chauvinism...the same Russian apparatus, which was borrowed from Tsarism and only barely anointed with the Soviet chrisim."

It remains the most telling commentary not only of present day Russia but of the whole state capitalist world in which we now live.

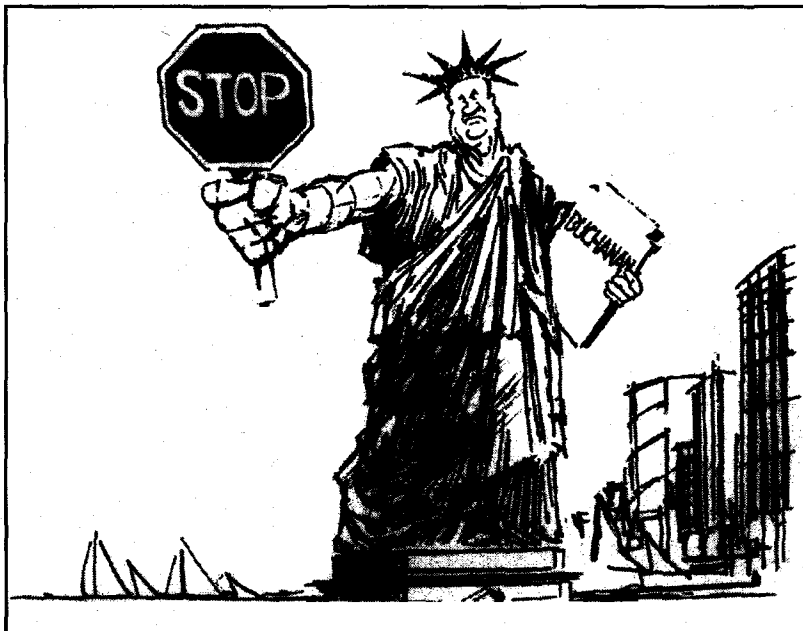
In contrast to genuine Marxists, liberals have never been able to face the fact of the **class nature** of oppression of minorities, whether that took the individual form of the Dreyfus affair or the outright fascism of our day. When fascism first came to Italy in the 1920s, they said it could never happen in an "advanced" country; the backwardness of Italy was supposed to have produced fascism.

When it came to the most technologically advanced European land—Germany—it became a question of "Prussian militarism." When the "non-military" countries by force of arms destroyed Nazi Germany, and neo-Nazism now reappears not only under "democratic" tutelage there, but is spreading to other countries, including America, then we are supposed to blame "juvenile delinquents."

**The truth is, however, that the one feature that is truly new is the mass youth demonstrations against fascism, especially in West Germany. The preponderance of youth in these demonstrations shows how deeply-rooted is anti-fascism among the youth, although they had not suffered the physical tortures and crimes and barbarism of the Nazis. It is the present capitalist world which is constantly recreating the conditions for fascism that they are rebelling against.**

Far from being rebels without a cause, the youth of today are rejecting this world they never made and searching for new beginnings of a truly human world.

\* The Russian Communist bureaucracy is so unbiased a "protector" of Jews that the *Greater Russian Encyclopedia* fails to note the Jewish origin of Karl Marx. At the same time *The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, which replaces Stalin's *Short Course* on the same subject in present teachings, shows more liberties with the truth on Jewish Marxists than even Stalin did. For example, it fails to include the Jewish Bund as an organization that prepared the first Congress [of Russian Marxists]. Perhaps Khrushchev considers all this "subtle." It certainly isn't the only untruth, or even a large one, compared to the fact that History has been rewritten.



discrimination against another race takes the form, in late 19th century France, of a single wronged individual as happened in the military conspiracy against Dreyfus, whereas in another country, like Tsarist Russia, it took the form of anti-Jewish pogroms. Whatever the match that started the conflagration, it seemed never to have reached the fantastic proportions of the extermination of a whole race. Yet the barbarous insanity of our times—the extermination of six million Jews in Nazi Germany—provoked no such unanimous outcry of horror as the single Dreyfus case. Why?

The Depression, which sounded the collapse of the economic system of capitalism, brought to the fore the flowering of the new element that came to life when the imperialist tentacles of monopoly capitalism reached for the spoliation of a whole continent with its belief in the "Superior Race."

Those who wish to forget that at the root of present-day apartheid South Africa was the "civilizing mission" of the white race—which meant, in fact, such horrors as the extermination of the Hottentot tribes by the Boers, of Leopold II's reduction of 20 to 40 million peaceful Congolese to eight million—are the ones who took the extermination of the Jews in Germany "in stride"—until the Nazi search for "lebensraum" meant a challenge to their own area of exploitation

#### AT THE ROOT: CAPITALISM

What the recent anti-Semitic outbreaks show is that it is impossible to destroy Nazism, the most bestial expression of capitalism, where its root, capitalism itself, flour-

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## Essay Article

# Concrete vs. abstract labor in health care

by Htun Lin

*The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society...The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage labourers...because their specialised skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production...thus the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.*

—Karl Marx, *Communist Manifesto*

It may be hard to imagine doctors as proletarians. Yet how else can one construe the June 1999 call from the doctors of the American Medical Association (AMA) to unionize themselves? Doctors, who already have the highest wages and benefits, are proposing to unionize for the goal that animated the beginnings of unions in history: to gain control over their concrete labor.

This is no surprise to those of us who work at the giant Kaiser HMO where doctors have joined the fight against management's restructuring plans. The turning point at Kaiser, for service workers like myself, came in 1986 when we struck for eight weeks against introducing a two tier work force. Though it did not affect us personally, we fought for the principle of no second class workers. We also learned never to trust the labor bureaucracy which betrayed our struggle. (See "SEIU scuttles Kaiser strike," *News & Letters*, Jan. 30, 1987.) What we've witnessed since is that access to affordable health care is an important dividing line, separating a growing second tier of the U.S. labor force.

Kaiser nurses of the autonomous California Nurses Association became much more radical after our strike. In 1995 they initiated a series of strikes against the erosion of adequate health care for Kaiser's predominantly poor and working class patient population. They won some specific powers over the quality of care they give. They also recently coalesced with a predominantly Black working class community in Richmond, successfully stopping Kaiser's medical red-lining plans.

Some doctors have joined the nurses in their demand for better health care delivery. They have come to realize the commodity nature of their labor under an increasingly corporatized and dehumanized health care system. There is a great divide between two worlds of health care—one with concrete human dimensions, the other abstracted to marketplace calculations. New layers of the health care work force are being forced to choose their side of this deepening divide.

Health care corporate giants like Columbia/HCA came on the American health care scene little more than a decade ago. Using their huge capital resources, they began to swallow up countless hospitals and nursing homes across the USA. The subsequent restriction in the quality and supply of healthcare was accompanied by the most ironic of popular labels: HMO, or Health Maintenance Organization, and "Managed Care." Many healthcare workers were saying the only thing "Mangled Care" managed was money, not health. That is precisely why health care workers from service workers to nurses and now doctors have been conducting a slow, simmering revolt against this increasing commodification of health care.

Health care workers across the country have been increasingly militant in their drive for "quality care," speaking out about their experiences and daily battles on the health care shop floor. Health care executives, increasingly uncomfortable with the light of day exposing the atrocities they have been committing against patients in the effort to enhance the corporate bottom line, have launched an Orwellian double-speak offensive. They have claimed that "less is more," that fewer available hospitals, hospital beds and staff actually promote "better quality." Other industry representatives have even claimed that "providing patients with more choices would lower quality." These same industry spokesmen are accusing doctors, nurses, and health care workers of a rhetorical offensive.

### HEALTH EXECUTIVES' HYPOCRISY

Take one industry expert, Gerald Kominski, who claimed that the current AMA physicians' drive to unionize to bring back quality patient care "is just rhetoric...They're primarily concerned with protecting the profession's interests and income—the concern with patients is a convenient screen." This was the same smear tactic used against the nurses in the California Nurses' Association when they alone, without any help from the AFL-CIO (in fact the AFL-CIO colluded with company restructuring by entering into a "partnership"), successfully fought to bring the first ever "quality care" provisions into their current contract with Kaiser Permanente.

Dr. David Lawrence, Chairman and CEO of Kaiser Permanente, delivered an astonishing speech in July 1999 to the National Press Club. He declared that "medical accidents and mistakes kill 400,000 people a year, ranking behind only heart disease and cancer as the leading cause of death." "Mistakes alone," he said, "kill more people each year than tobacco, alcohol, firearms or automobiles." Even more astonishing, Chairman Lawrence said, "If passengers were asked to fly with a commercial airline organized like most health care, they wouldn't get on the plane."

As head of the nation's premier and first HMO orga-

nization, Lawrence's words had the ring of a spontaneous confession. One would have thought that, in this rare moment of honesty by an industry executive, he would have perhaps weighed in heavily on the current debate in Congress over the "Patients' Bill of Rights" by siding with the patients, health care professionals and workers of America. Instead, in a stunning move full of macabre irony, Lawrence chose to lay blame for these medical atrocities on the nurses, doctors, and other health care professionals, rather than placing the responsibility squarely on the HMO industry itself.

Lawrence then boldly declared that he and some health industry leaders have "organized foundations and commissions aimed at aggressively tackling the problem of patient safety." He said he wants "improved reporting about medical mistakes and gathering of information about near misses." However, it was Lawrence himself who insisted on a gag rule in the implementation of quality provisions negotiated by Kaiser nurses. Against the nurses' insistence, he wants no public airing of medical mistakes discovered by the nurses' quality liaisons.

Kaiser management's determination to hide real life data on health care shows that it is their talk of "patient rights" which is empty rhetoric. The latest contract settlement with the Kaiser nurses over the issue of quality care was signed in March 1998. However, its "quality care" provisions have yet to be fully implemented. Throughout the 18 month strike period, Lawrence fought tooth and nail against his own nurses at Kaiser, and had vowed, at one point, to "never give in" to the nurses over the issues of control over quality.

The battle lines over the attitude towards health care has never been more concrete—and universal. No longer can anyone afford to not take a side. Not legislators. Not judges. Not even doctors. The nurses and service workers have always known which side they were on in the battle over the commodification of health care, in which health care restructured into "managed care" concentrated more and more capital in the hands of fewer and fewer HMO money managers. Their mission was "delivering" health care according to the dictates of the "market," which means maximizing profits, not patient well being. Many advocates have exposed the very real atrocities suffered by patients under the steam roller of "managed care."

The drive to cut costs shows how little a capitalist society values the health of workers—especially the poor and unemployed worker. The only resolution, and hardly anyone looks there, is through workers, in this case health care workers, having control over their own activity and its meaning.

### THE REASON OF THE HEALTH CARE WORKER

It is in the activity of the health care workers where the locus of the battle over the control of quality care vs. its commodification resides. Health care corporate executives know very well, as does the front line health worker, the very real daily struggle over the staffing levels, speedups, de-skilling, and downsizing of health care laborers in the face of ever increasing demand for health care labor by an expanding and older patient population. Much of that reality has been discussed with euphemistic (and misleading) rhetoric couched in terms of "available hospital beds," "scarcity" of "health care dollars" and "runaway health costs."

Those who control the reins of our health care dollars—the HMO executives—openly pose the health care crisis as an either/or choice. Either we solve the "crisis in health care cost" or we address the "crisis in patient care" by expanding patient rights. HMO executives claim that the "Patients' Bill of Rights" backed by health professionals would make health care less affordable and accessible by "unnecessarily" mandating certain care standards, thereby bringing up the cost of health care. In other words, we would necessarily have to be killing Peter to save Paul.

Such sophistry only focuses on the surface, the realm where commodity fetishism and the bottom line rule, where the exchange between things and interaction between dollar figures dictate interpersonal relations between human beings. Such sophists have not allowed us to look into the nature of the commodity itself, by delving into the meaning of our activity through human relations in our workplace.

The one unifying concept which is now animating all levels of health care workers is opposition to speedup. The notion which motivates and animates the health workers', the nurses', and now, the doctors' drive to take the lead in self-activating their status as union members, is the general notion of regaining control of

one's own work activity on the shop floor. This is couched, for the physicians, in terms of "regaining control of the doctor-patient relationship"; and for nurses, in terms of "nurse-to-patient ratios." The latest episode of that struggle came not only in the form of AMA doctors wanting to form a union, but also in the increasing number of rank-and-file Kaiser doctors who signed on to a petition refusing to cooperate with an impending Kaiser merger with Summit, which, in turn, is positioned to be swallowed by health giant chain Sutter.

I remember when AFL-CIO President Sweeney gave a very fiery speech in front of Kaiser Hospital in 1995. It was at the height of SEIU's corporate campaign against managed care in which he proclaimed: "Patients are not parts on an assembly line, and patients should not be treated as commodities." (This was before his betrayal of the nurses in the midst of their strikes with an announcement of a new "strategic partnership.") Many of us who were present at that rally wondered amongst ourselves, "then why is my labor a commodity?" Why is my labor being bought and sold, like any other commodity, and our labor leaders bargain with the employer across the bargaining table the price at which my labor will be sold?

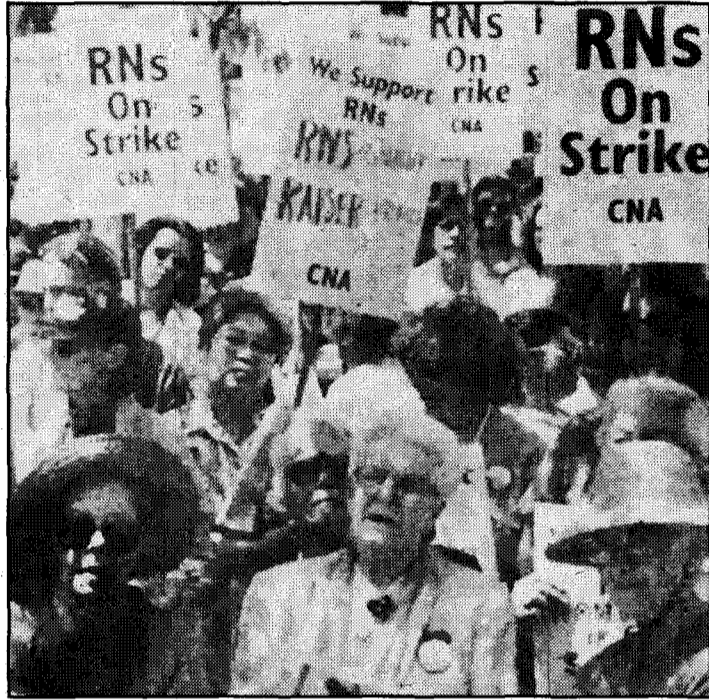
HMO executives fight at all costs the emerging resistance of health care workers—a resistance coming from active questioning of the meaning of their own labor. This kind of "collusion" by health care workers, this kind of solidarity, unity in thought and action, threatens the very core of the existence of the commodity fetish in health care. They see correctly that, once workers gain control of the very specific activity of their own work, the very fundamental commodity nature of their labor begins to unravel. Speedups and

de-skilling would be difficult under such circumstances. Without the implementation of further speedups, de-skilling, and other controls over the quality and pace of production, the managers of capital would find it very difficult to maintain the rate of increase in surplus labor they can extract in order to maintain the desired rate of profit, in order to be "competitive" in the marketplace.

Managers carry on endlessly about the need for "teamwork" and "cooperation" which is praised to the heavens as long as it increases efficiency and the bottom line. Their concept of cooperation is always under the rubric of cutting cost and labor time. In society as a whole the attack on health care cost is aimed at bringing down the cost of labor, which in capitalist terms is merely human "capital." Because under capitalism labor is the commodity of commodities, health care holds a unique position in the extraction of surplus value. Any attempt to fully take control of the basis of our cooperation is called "socialism." At the same time, that doesn't keep capitalist managers from trying to take credit for positive socially cooperative endeavors.

The present stage of permanent restructuring is revealing that there is no longer any middle ground or compromise with the logic of restructuring. You either take the side of capital, HMO executives, and the labor bureaucracy or the side of doctors, nurses and other workers fighting over the meaning of their concrete human labor. In order to create our humanity, basic human cooperation and free association has to determine our priorities. Health care is a service centered on the well being of the human being. De-masking the production process in health care can lead to demasking it in all areas of life. An unraveling of the present mind-forged view of the production process would spell the disintegration of the neatly ordered process of commodity production's extraction of surplus labor in health care to generate profits.

It is high time to stop allowing the dictates of capital in any form to determine the nature and direction of our fundamental drive towards freely associated social cooperation. Not only that, we must stop seeing through the distorting prism of capital to construct social labor and social production. We need autonomous unions—like the CNA. However, only full social cooperation that cuts across all professional boundaries and classifications can lift the false sense of reality that animates capitalism in which we all participate. The nurses did show that autonomy was a way not to get caught in that other backward thinking layer outside of production—the labor bureaucracy. In addition to autonomy, the full potential of our movement will not be reached until we face this reality through a philosophy that brooks no compromise with the anti-human logic of capitalist restructuring. Therein lies the relevance of Marx for today.



Senior citizens joined other community groups in supporting the California Nurses' Association's 18-month strike against Kaiser for quality of care.

## EAST TIMOR AND KOSOVA

The post-Kosova "New World Order" is proving to be anti-climactic when it comes to the U.S., living up to Clinton's pledge made during NATO's bombing in the Balkans not to allow the century to end with the same atrocities of ethnic cleansing with which it began. The U.S. continues to shed crocodile tears by asking to be "invited" into East Timor by the Indonesian regime. There is no need for an invitation. The U.S. has always been an integral part of that region ever since General Suharto took power by committing one of the worst massacres of the 20th century, slaughtering hundreds of thousands of workers, activists, leftists, peasants and ethnic minorities. The U.S. is as responsible for the current atrocities as it was for the genocidal invasion of East Timor in 1975.

As for the Left in the U.S., when no NATO bombs are dropping, they do not feel any urgency to organize mass demonstrations to support the people being massacred by para-military forces, be they pro-former Soviet sphere or pro-Western imperialist sphere. They have taken a rabidly one-dimensional form of protests against only "NATO bombs." They seem to be waiting their cue for action as soon as the supposed "bombs" begin to fall in the next episode, which will never come.

**Asian-American  
California**

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The pattern in East Timor is so similar to Kosova a few months ago, I wonder whether the Indonesian military have consciously copied their Serbian counterparts, or is it just a case of like circumstances producing like results. I believe intervention is demanded when it is needed to stop genocide and the people of the country involved want it. Some on the Left would call it a capitulation to imperialism, not understanding that the greatest blow to the worldwide opposition to imperialism would be to allow a liberation movement in a country like East Timor or Kosova to be massacred and crushed. The countries with blood on their hands over this situation certainly include Britain, which has been the major vendor of arms to Indonesia for many years.

**Dick Bunting  
Oxford**

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It was easy for Workers World people who were silent about the genocide in Kosova to yell against genocide in East Timor because they could run their same sole line that it was all about the U.S. interests. Their flier at the demonstration I participated in said it was all about U.S. corporate interests and "oil and natural gas in the East Timor area," which is absurd. East Timor is very poor in everything, and it costs Indonesia more to hold onto it than they get out of it. They must hold on to it for fear that it will spark other independence movements, and possibly break up the whole country. It could even spark social revolution, due to the poverty in the rest of Indonesia.

**Demonstrator  
New York**

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As I write this, Albanian nationalists are brutally mistreating inoffensive Kosovan Serbs and Gypsies. Because the Kosovan Albanians were an oppressed nationality within Yugoslavia, I considered that the call for self-determination

for Kosova was legitimate. However, Kosovan Albanian nationalism has rapidly become a mirror image of all the rotten nationalist forces which helped to blow up the old Yugoslavia. It is time the Left looked more closely at its knee-jerk support for national liberation movements. However legitimate a struggle against national oppression may be, nationalist forces have been shown time and again to be merely a ruling elite in waiting. Kosova is another example of this miserable process.

**Paul Flowers  
London**

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My agreement with *N&L's* position on Kosova means more than agreement on one issue. I see the position as an expression of Raya Dunayevskaya's statement in *Marxism and Freedom* that "Marxism is a theory of liberation or it is nothing." Many on the Left have lost sight of the role of subjectivity. They treat the labor movement and other anti-capitalist movements as objects, objects of study. They are fettered by the relations of the status quo.

As for the multiple forces of liberation today, I feel they have to be directed against bourgeois society, and give evidence of some vision of the future. Otherwise they stay enclosed in bourgeois relations as, for example, narrow nationalism does. Then it is no real movement of liberation but becomes even the inversion of it.

**Worker  
Amsterdam**

## BATTLE OF VIEQUES

The tourist literature about this "fantasy island" off the coast of Puerto Rico doesn't mention that over two-thirds of the island is controlled by the U.S. Navy and used for military target practice and bombardments. Plenty of evidence of environmental destruction is visible; not so visible is the increase in toxic chemicals in the air, water contamination, decline of the fishing industry; and the long-term radiation hazard from the uranium bullets. Studies show a higher cancer rate and lower living standard for the 9,000 residents than for Puerto Rico, which itself has been described as the "poorhouse of the Caribbean."

The people of this island have organized a "Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques" which has made four demands on the U.S. government: Demilitarization, Decontamination, Devolution of the land to civilian control, and Development by means of a land trust.

During the nine-days I participated with the International Delegation to Puerto Rico to report on the situation, I was impressed with the unity and persistence of the Puerto Rican people in their struggle against the "Goliath" U.S. military, as well as by the extensive coverage given to the issues by the media there, which contrasts sharply with the coverage given to anti-military efforts within the U.S.

**Gloria Bletter  
New York**

## COM ED'S MERGER

I read in the newspaper that Com Ed, the utility company which services Chicago (when we're not all blacked-

# Readers' Views

out), is merging with another company headquartered on the East Coast. I doubt that is going to do anything to improve the terrible service we experience on the South Side. The newspapers said hundreds of Com Ed employees will lose their jobs in this merger. I doubt that they will be the upper management people responsible for all the bad service.

**Southside Mother  
Chicago**

## WE ARE ALL MUMIA

The mood of those at the Sept. 11 event here, aimed to help prevent the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, was caught by a Black man who had been in and out of prison and bought five copies of *Voices from within the Prison Walls* pamphlet to help him start a study group centered on the voices of the incarcerated. The event had been billed as a "911 Emergency meeting for Mumia" and had brought out a large audience, the majority of whom were Youth — Black, white and Brown.

The key to the Black man's thinking was that he had three sons and felt we had to confront the police state conditions that exist within Los Angeles, and that Mumia is the reality which confronts us all — that is, the death and imprisonment of the Black community.

**Gene Ford  
Los Angeles**

## NEEDED — A HUMANITARIAN WAR ON POVERTY

The recent wars that were said to be about stopping "ethnic cleansing" were falsely termed "humanitarian." They were, rather, a redistribution of wealth from the taxpayers to businesses profiting from war. In the Bosnian and Kosova wars, NATO was seeking control of the Balkans. In Rwanda NATO did not oppose the Hutu killings.

There is another war being waged against our minorities here, Blacks and Hispanics. Many live in overcrowded areas and are displaced (as in Cabrini-Green) if their choice land is sought. It is a rite of passage for minorities to be under suspicion and jailed for their color. Poor women with children must work, replacing union employees. Neither universal day care nor health care are provided. If humanitarian reasons existed, there would be a "war" on poverty in this country.

**Bernice Russell  
Illinois**

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In conjunction with new laws enacted to allow the Federal Government to wash its hands of public housing, people who have grown up and raised their own families in public housing are being evicted, relocated and otherwise displaced in unprecedented numbers. In Chicago more than 42,000 public housing residents will be forced out of their present units, often so the land can be "redeveloped" at market rates. Numerous studies have shown there are not nearly enough affordable sites for those who will need them. The Committee for New Priorities is sponsoring a forum on the crisis on Oct. 19 at 37 S. Ashland, Chicago 60607. Whether we are directly affected or not, it is a human crisis we need to come and express our concerns about.

**Concerned  
Chicago**

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Rising rents are putting a terrible squeeze on the Los Angeles area's working poor. A recent study found that low-income people are working more hours than ever to afford a decent apartment, and thousands have had to settle for slum housing because they can't afford anything else. The study concluded that a couple holding down two minimum-wage jobs would each have to work 11 hours a day, seven days a week, to be able to rent a typical \$1,140-a-month apartment in LA County. No less than 760,000 people earn the state's minimum wage of \$5.75 an hour, which is less than \$12,000 a year. This is a booming economy?

**I Don't Think So  
Whittier**

The Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign is a national effort led by poor and homeless men, women and children of all races to raise the issue of poverty as a human rights violation. Beginning on Oct. 1, we will unite poor and homeless families from across this country in a month-long march from Washington D.C. to the United Nations in New York City, marching ten miles a day, setting up tent cities every night, and arriving at the UN on Nov. 1. You can find out how to get involved by writing to the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, PO Box 50678, Philadelphia, PA 19132.

**Campaign activist  
Philadelphia**



## WOMEN'S LIBERATION SPEAKS IN MANY VOICES

The revolution is in our lives, every time we make a conscious effort to combat patriarchal actions of oppression and attempt to live our dreams of liberation. That's how long we will keep coming together, as we did at the Southern Girls' Convention (see article p. 2), becoming more organized, learning from others and from our history of revolution to focus on what it can be now. While capitalism still reigns, so does the spirit for freedom.

**Kind Lady  
Memphis**

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Representatives of the Nicaraguan Network of Women Against Violence will be on a speaking tour from Nov. 1-14, co-sponsored by the Committee for Health Rights in the Americas. We aim to raise awareness about the need to stop violence against women in Nicaragua. That tour will be followed in March of next year by a delegation to Nicaragua to foster the international movement against violence. Any readers interested in hosting one of the Nicaraguan speakers in their community can contact us by phone at 202-544-9355, by e-mail at nicanet@igc.org, or by writing to us.

**Nicaragua Network  
1247 "E" Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003**

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I was shocked to see the anti-choice, anti-women signs proclaiming "Pro-life = anti-death penalty" displayed at the anti-death penalty demonstration here. What shocked me was that the progressive group sponsoring the demonstration saw nothing wrong with the signs until I pointed out that they supported a position that causes the deaths of countless women every year. It shows how successful anti-abortion forces have been in eclipsing women from the abortion debate.

**Women's Liberationist  
Tennessee**

## A NEW YEAR IN ISRAEL?

In this New Year which coincides with the beginning of the New Millennium, the Middle East is making significant strides toward peace. The Israeli High Court has outlawed the use of torture, 200 Palestinian political prisoners were released, 7% more territory was returned to Palestinian civilian rule, and the Israeli Knesset overwhelmingly voted support (54-23) for the revised Wye agreement. True, the challenges that yet await us are enormous—transforming the peace of bargaining and brinkmanship into a peace of justice, sharing and cooperation. But we can look back at the Year 5759 with gratification and gird our energies for what awaits us in 5760. Happy New Year to my friends and family everywhere.

**Gila Svirsky  
Jerusalem**



## DEMAND A FAIR TRIAL FOR FRED BUSTILLO

Fred Bustillo, a Marxist prisoner jailhouse lawyer who has been in the federal prison system for decades is being denied a fair trial by corrupt prison guards at ADX-Florence, who have confiscated his legal and political materials and are trying to starve him into submission by denying him regular meals for months.

Bustillo demands the opportunity to establish that he was tortured in retaliation for exposing corruption within the

federal prison system and for his revolutionary politics. He asks that letters be written to Judge William D. Stiehl, U.S. District Court, Southern District of Illinois, PO Box 249, East St. Louis, Illinois 62202, demanding a fair trial, as well as to T.J. Bondurant, Assistant Inspector General, Investigations Division, U.S. Dept. of Justice, Box 27718, Washington, D.C. 20038-7718, demanding an investigation of torture and prison guard corruption.

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**'WORLD CRISIS AND THEORETIC VOID'**

Having just read *N&L's* Draft Perspectives Thesis, "World Crisis and the Theoretic Void" (Aug.-Sept. 1999), I, of course, agree with its starting point: that we are in "a struggle for the minds of humanity." I believe that we are at a socio-political, historical crossroads, a time when the social morality and myths of the contemporary social-superstructure no longer "speaks to" the masses. Or more precisely, that super-structure is no longer strong enough to coerce the consent of the people.

Unfortunately, I also agree that due to the widespread misconception of "state-capitalism" as "Communism" or "socialism," the language of revolution has been discredited, and therefore a void between the Idea of revolution (the theoretician) and the Act of revolt (the concrete actions of the mass movement) has been created. As we saw with the destruction of state-capitalism in the East, such a void will always be filled by the fetishism of commodities and its insidious nature. The question is: How is it possible in our age—when the power of fetishism is so much greater than in the past—to see through this barrier?

**Todd Morrison  
Connecticut**

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I found Sections I and II of the thesis clear and liked them very much. Section III is the one we have to think about more deeply. Crucial is the question of the forces of liberation and the thinking Reason of these forces. Two aspects are important: First, the centrality of dialectical thinking, the position of Hegel, Marx, and Dunayevskaya. There is a very high level of abstraction in this section and I think it may be necessary to translate some of the language for those who are not "at home" with Hegel's language. Second, is the question of class and the other forces of revolt. "Abolishing capitalism requires the creation of new social relations which dispense with the division between mental and manual labor." Yes! The question is how are the social movements related to each other. In mind you can unite them, but there has to be unity objectively. Otherwise there is voluntarism.

**Supporter  
Netherlands**

The situation in Kosova has obvious parallels to Hitler's European policies during WWII. However I don't know if I could completely agree with your suggestion in the Perspectives that "no event since 1989 (the collapse of "Communism" in East Europe) has so exposed the fault lines of world politics, revealed the missing link in the radical movements, and shown the need to meet the challenge posed by the self-determination of the Idea of Marxist-Humanism." Such a broad statement can be confusing. Though the last part of the statement may be correct, one would find many opportunities since 1989 which easily exposed the fault lines of world politics.

**Writer from the Gulag  
South USA**

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Here is a question for socialists that I would like to see answered in the pages of *N&L*: If it took a Civil War to abolish as immoral a form of ownership like ownership of people (slavery), then what kind of war would it take to abolish private ownership of the means of production? I am pessimistic about the prospects of getting anyone on the Left to answer that question. All I've ever got from others is silence and evasion.

**Subscriber  
Massachusetts**



**NEW LABOR  
STRUGGLES**

One of the strawberry workers at Coastal Berry, where they just lost the vote for the UFW, said it had become apparent very early in the struggle that it wasn't just about money. The supermarkets were saying they could charge a little more money for the strawberries so the farmworkers could get a little more, but the growers refused it. It became clear to him over the last three years that the struggle is about the power the growers want over conditions in the field. In short, it's all over the control of production. This comes at the time the UFW has dropped the ball on trying to

organize the whole industry. When a worker has reached the kind of understanding this strawberry worker has, there's no better way he could develop that theoretical grasp than in an organization like *N&L*.

**Labor activist  
California**

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POWER (People Organized to Win Employment Rights) is organizing workfare workers to win fair and equal treatment in San Francisco. We are fighting to change workfare into a fair work program, which pays workers the prevailing wage for the work they perform. Authorization cards have already been collected from 2,800 of San Francisco's 3,000 workfare workers. Recognizing that living wages for all workers cannot be won without cooperation between organized labor and workfair workers' organizations, POWER fought for and won equal representation on a Labor/Management Welfare Reform Committee, charged with developing San Francisco's public apprenticeship program. We want to stop development of any two-tier system.

**Activist  
San Francisco**

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In 1977 The Labour Callaghan government launched an assault on the firefighters union. In 1999, fire stations up and down the UK are closed on management rationale. Public spending is the lowest in 40 years; the economy is held together by a pension raid and higher taxes. Labour's history has been one of failure and the defeat of working people. New thinking across the globe is needed to deal with new labourism in its different forms.

**Pat Duffy  
England**

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Workers from all over the Bay Area as well as Los Angeles gathered in the Mission District on Sept. 11 to discuss the growing internal crisis in our unions. Participants included members of a number of SEIU locals, from the Janitors to the Carpenters Union, and from Office Workers to Registered Nurses. Over half the participants were Latino, Asian, or other minorities. Many were part of a group called the "Multi-Racial Alliance." The discussion from the floor included a multiplicity of concerns.

We are calling for a rank and file labor conference on Oct. 10 in Los

Angeles to begin to outline the present crisis in the workers' movement and how to overcome it. We are also calling for a demonstration the next day in front of the AFL-CIO which will be meeting in LA. We call on all workers who can make it there to join us in letting the AFL-CIO know they can't crush our democratic rights. If we don't organize ourselves now and restart the labor movement, the right-wing will certainly organize labor for us.

**Kaiser Service Worker  
Bay Area**

**CAPITALISM'S 'NATURAL'  
DISASTERS**

The natural disasters that rocked Turkey, Greece and Taiwan in the form of earthquakes, and in the U.S., Hurricane Floyd's devastation of North Carolina, show the one-worldedness of the crisis of the capitalist system. It takes no great penetrating analysis to expose this fact. One finds it expressed in the popular media in the words and anguish of the victims. The Turkish press immediately headlined the popular perception of the government and the developers as "Murderers!" and the mayor of Tarboro, North Carolina invoked the image of the "Third World" to describe the extent to which his town was at the mercy of nature's destructive force. But how much more telling is the extent to which Tarboro's Black and white working class are at the mercy of this rotten capitalist system. What does it mean that the government's replacement trailers are the best housing that Tarboro's poor working class have ever had?

**Lou Turner  
Chicago**

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For one brief moment, the retrograde politics of victimization in the U.S. collapsed with the devastation wrought by Hurricane Floyd. Not only were middle class victims of the natural disaster made to share the same media space with the working poor victims, but the poor as scorned social victims, supposedly responsible for their victimization, were, in sharing the spotlight with their middle class counterparts, for a moment viewed as "truly needy" victims. For one brief moment the two Americas were one.

**Marxist-Humanist  
Illinois**

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## Black/Red View A case for reparations?

by John Alan

Only a few Americans probably know that in 1989 John Conyers, the prominent Black Congressman from Michigan, introduced a bill to create a commission to study reparations for African-American descendants of Black slaves. So far his bill, H.R. 40, has produced no significant political action.

On the other hand, a growing number of African Americans are becoming aware of the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America, known as N'COBRA. The Summer 1999 edition of N'COBRA's informational magazine claims that N'COBRA has gained the support of a wide range of Black professional groups, student organizations and churches with a diversity of political thought and religious beliefs.

N'COBRA's lawyers are now in the process of preparing a class action suit to win reparations for people of African descent in this country. They have found the legal ground for their case in English and American common law and in "[Thomas] Jefferson's allusion to 'human rights' in a complaint about slavery and other injustices..."

### MASS REVOLT IGNORED

Can any serious demand for reparations rest its case solely upon 17th century common law and what the slaveholder Jefferson said about slavery and, at the same time, ignore the revolts of the African-American masses against both slavery and the existing conditions of capitalism, that is, the current economic crisis in Black communities and the violent racism that is very much alive more than 30 years after the Civil Rights Movement? Hardly.

History has shown that only when the Black masses organize themselves and challenge racism are major changes in race relations accomplished in this country. N'COBRA seems not to remember this and projects the belief that a capitalist court will actually order the rulers of this country to hand over billions of dollars representing three centuries of unpaid slave labor. According to N'COBRA, this is the African American's "just inheritance," and it "will remove Blacks from dependency on others, including the U.S. government and the descendants of slave owners and colonizers."

The concept of paying reparations or indemnities is not new. Victorious imperial nations have compelled their vanquished foes to pay for the damage they cre-

ated during the war. Japanese Americans were paid a minimal reparation for their internment and the loss of property during World War II. German industrialists have agreed to pay reparations to people forced to work as slave laborers in their factories also during World War II.

### MORE THAN REPARATIONS NEEDED

Obviously payment of reparations is a form of punishment for a social wrong committed by a state, but African Americans need much more than punitive financial redress because, first, their slave labor was nothing less than the original source of America's vast accumulated capital and, second, the institution of slavery socially planted and nurtured a practice of racism which is now a distinguishing trait of American civilization. What African Americans need and demand is the destruction of a society founded on racism and exploitation of labor, and the creation of a totally new humanist society.

However, Baba Hannibal Afrik, the National Co-Chair of N'COBRA, does not see the necessity for transforming existing American civilization. He instead proposes the payment of reparations which "might include land, equipment, factories, trade licenses, banks, education, training ships, airplanes [and] various forms of tax relief..." Baba Hannibal Afrik's list of capitalist goodies in essence makes the African-American struggle for self-determination an adjunct to capitalist accumulation and the world market, the two historic features of capitalism that are responsible for the enslavement and exploitation of African Americans.

The emphasis on reparations comes mostly from a group of nationalistic thinking Black middle-class people, while liberal Black intellectuals are more concerned with the overflowing African-American prison population, poverty and police brutality. However, N'COBRA is not a totally isolated group.

It has found ideological support in Conyers' bill and in Michigan state representative Ed Vaughn's reparations bill in the Michigan House of Representatives. Both of these politicians represent districts with a high concentration of poor African Americans who have experienced Clinton's "welfare reform" and cutbacks on social programs. Undoubtedly because of these awful economic conditions, the mirage of reparations has a momentary appeal.

## Black World The 'ceiling' of Black America

(Continued from page 1)

Department of Justice statistics. Yet the state feels a need to implement new, strict, reactionary laws to suppress the youth, in body and soul.

The "war on crime" is a war against people of color—and in particular the poor, jobless, inner city youth who are characterized as gang-bangers and are walled in their own Warsaw ghettos. Whole communities are segregated off in their own misery where the color of the skin determines what money you have in your pocket, or what kind of "justice" you can afford.

### EDUCATE, DON'T INCARCERATE

Many in the prison movement see the need to get information out in order to raise consciousness to fight the unjust laws that are being passed by the state and also to fight the building of new prisons—like the one going up in Delano, Calif., where residents are saying don't incarcerate, educate. Money is not being spent on schools, but on prisons. The combined average spending on prisons for operations and construction increased from \$6 billion in 1984 to nearly \$30 billion in 1996. Meanwhile, inner city schools barely have books for their students.

The population of prisoners nationally rose to a record of 1.3 million last year. The U.S. has the greatest number of prisoners in the world.

We see the massive population of humanity confined behind prison walls as a reflection of the police state mentality nationwide. All politicians are screaming, "lock them down." The untouchables are Black and Brown, and the poor. The prisoner's story reflects the alienation found within the whole of society. Prison just multiplies the alienation of the outside world. In other words, the contradictions are without as well as within, but they are multiplied by being locked down.

The contradiction can be seen more clearly through the eyes of the prisoner. D.A. Sheldon in the *Voices from within the Prison Walls* pamphlet says in the introduction that, "To develop a socialist-humanist society one of the first places the struggle needs to begin is within the prison community, since those incarcerated are the most severely oppressed persons of society, having nothing to lose but their chains."

The California inmate population increased by 3.9% in 1998, placing it 30th among the states. Mississippi had the highest growth rate in the country, almost 17%. The increase in population growth of prisons is the result of tougher citizen laws and a dying economy. Stricter enforcement of drug laws resulted in an explosion of California's inmate population throughout the 1980s. In this decade the number of California inmates increased by 263%, outpacing all other states.

The nation's rate of prison incarceration is now at 461 per 100,000 residents, up from 292 in 1990. With this increase of untapped labor power, the prison class is being seen by corporations like the Correctional Corporation of America as a new found commodity. They're attempting to get their foot in California now. Privatizing prisons is a

new frontier. This is a new gold rush, Black gold that comes from the backs of prison slave labor.

The private prison corporations are contributing millions to politicians like California Governor Gray Davis and powerful lobbyists. The private prison concept is popular because it allows companies to hire unqualified local residents as guards to staff the prisons. Up to 80% of the staff in privatized prisons consists of people from local communities. So people from these communities are saying, "yeah, we need these prisons because we need these jobs."

### BLOOD IN MY EYE

"For those who live oppressed in the state of totalitarianism and inhumanity" (H. Carruth), George Jackson said in *Blood in My Eye*, "monopoly capitalism is the enemy. It crushes the life-forces of the people. It must be completely destroyed as quickly as possible. Utterly, totally, ruthlessly, relentlessly destroyed." Capitalism places the majority of people of color within a life and death struggle in conditions of a tortured and twisted existence which suppress the mind.

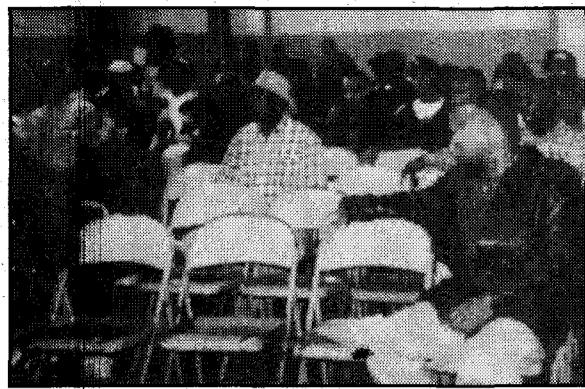
That, in a sense, is a first "ceiling" of Black America. Racism from birth condemns the color Black as a crime against white America. The Chicanos, the Brown people, are also condemned by the state, their color being the crime.

At the "Seeking Justice '99" Conference, Geronimo Pratt stated that some people want reform, some want revolution, some want to abolish capitalism altogether. There are different tendencies. The point is, if we're talking about a revolutionary concept, prison itself has to be abolished. That's why you have to look at yourself as an abolitionist.

James Carr, a comrade of George Jackson who attempted to break from the Black Panthers, wrote that "Marx said that basing a revolutionary movement on prison reform was like basing the abolitionist movement on better food for slaves."

Jackson criticized the Left for trying to escape reality by not facing the new reality that by 1969 the movement was defeated. Individuals like Angela Davis, whom Jackson considered a comrade and a friend, could not face the fact that the Left had lost a major battle theoretically and practically by the end of the '60s. Until the radical left movement faces up to the ideological coup inflicted on the Left and the nation by U.S. imperialism, there can be no rethinking and regrouping for future progressive movements to wage any successful attack ideologically and practically against fascism in Amerika.

## Mississippi Workers' Center



Ingalls Workers for Justice members meet

The Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights, jointly with the Southern Regional Office of the Center for Constitutional Rights, published a newsletter entitled "Hate Crimes in the Workplace." It details the pervasive racism workers at the Ingalls Shipbuilding plant in Pascagoula, Miss. have faced on the job.

A group of Ingalls workers approached CCR-South for advice in November 1998 and formed an organization with the help of Black Workers for Justice. The Workers' Center has assisted Ingalls Workers for Justice in their efforts to organize, has held training sessions on workers' rights, has hosted meetings with workers at other plants and, in conjunction with CCR-South, is preparing a class action lawsuit against Ingalls.

The Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights is dedicated to achieving justice for workers in this right-to-work state. They need your support to carry on their work. Please send donations and requests for information to: **Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights, P.O. Box 1223, Greenville, MS 38701-1223.**

## Rally demands justice

*Holly Springs, Miss.*—On Sept. 9 over 400 people demonstrated to demand justice in a series of incidents related to crimes against African Americans as well as to protest the insensitivity of our local law enforcement officials in dealing with those crimes.

I am president of the Marshall County NAACP. We have led the attempt to try to find out what has happened in a number of cases. We have joined with citizens of the community who want one simple thing: for law enforcement to deal with each case on a case by case basis and in a fair manner, and to investigate with the same vigor with which they would investigate if it were a white citizen who was victimized.

We've asked for the resignation of Sheriff Dickerson based on his refusal to dialogue with us about what's going on. Incidents have ranged from some of his deputies beating a man while he was in handcuffs to shooting and killing Lester Jackson, a man who had a bat in his hand.

Willie Roy Foster was beaten and left on the side of the road, and no one was charged until we had protests. An 87-year-old man, Elmo Boss Stimson, was hit and killed by a car, and we feel the investigation process was very, very weak in that case. Up until recently, before we inquired about it, no information had been given to the public, family members or church members about what happened to Mr. Stimson.

One person who said he was beaten by officers has pictures and has filed a lawsuit against the sheriff's department. We've had Black citizens shot and killed by white citizens, and those white citizens are walking the street. We think that we're in a dangerous situation in relation to our confidence in local law enforcement and its commitment to our safety.

We have launched a series of events to demonstrate our displeasure. We began with the rally Sept. 9. On Sept. 13 we presented the Marshall County Board of Supervisors nine petitions in relation to Lester Jackson's case. Among those were petitions to dismiss and charge the officer who killed Mr. Jackson, to remove Assistant District Attorney Ralph Doxey, to deal with the expenses involved with the burial of Lester Jackson, a very poor man, and to deal with information about the proper use of deadly force and the qualifications of local law enforcement—information the sheriff's office has refused to share. On Sept. 17 we surprised Sen. Trent Lott at a luncheon and presented him a letter asking for a federal investigation.

There's a clear double standard for law enforcement: one for Blacks, one for whites—as victims and as perpetrators. Incidents like these have been going on for a long time, but

over the last three years, under the insensitive administration of Sheriff Dickerson, we have had a hostile law enforcement organization that resents our questions. Assistant District Attorney Doxey said on a TV interview that it's none of our business to inquire about what's going on with some of these cases. If our own public safety is not the people's business, whose business is it?

—Kelvin Buck

## Rethinking Fanon The Continuing Dialogue

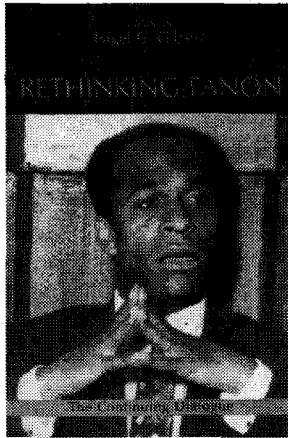
edited by Nigel C. Gibson

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- III. Fanon, Gender, and National Consciousness
- IV. Fanon's Quest for a New Humanism

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# Beyond philosophy—or beyond anti-philosophy?

*Reconciliation and Rejection: Three Essays on Aristotle and Hegel*

by Ute Bublitz (London: Universal Texts, 1998)

The value of this book lies in its passionate affirmation of human freedom. Ute Bublitz never ceases to stress that freedom is not something which we **have**; it is something which we **are**. Our ability to shape reality through conscious, purposeful action defines **freedom** as our very essence. At the same time, the ability to create a world of our own making enables us to impose conditions, codes and concepts which **restrict** human freedom.

As Bublitz puts it, "The whole of our life is a contradictory process. Freedom, essential humanity, our very selves, with all our powers and capacities, create the opposite: un-freedom, inhumanity, a world which constantly tramples underfoot our dignity, crushing our capacity for true community and beauty. The general reality in which we all live, which we perceive and experience, and the continuance of which we assure by our own actions, contradicts the **essence** of the human being" (p. 6).

This problem comes most sharply into focus in the struggle for freedom itself. How many revolutions tried to overthrow the old, but ended up creating a new set of narrow and oppressive social structures and moral codes? How many freedom struggles tried to redefine what it means to be human, but ended up forgetting about the freedom of others—be it of a different race, nationality or sexuality? The closer we come to the affirmation of our essential being as **free** subjects, the more directly we confront the problem of creating conditions which can narrow the content of freedom itself. As Bublitz puts it, "our essence exists in the face of its denial."

## HAS PHILOSOPHY FAILED?

The central theme of this book is that philosophy has failed to come to grips with this problem. Philosophy, she argues, can explain the **necessity** and **reason** for the existing world, but it cannot provide an explanation for how and why to change it. Philosophy tries to **reconcile** thought with existing reality: "Philosophy's task is to demonstrate truth, revealing what is necessary in the way we live...when philosophy demonstrates that this necessity is something that **has** to be, it puts a seal onto the lock of our prison...with the liberation of humanity from the power of abstraction, philosophy will have lost its reason for being" (p. 110).

Bublitz does a good job showing that Aristotle's philosophy tried to **reconcile** thought with reality—as seen in his defense of slavery. Her case is far weaker when it comes to Hegel.

Bublitz takes Hegel's famous statement, "what is reasonable is actual, what is actual is reasonable," to mean that his entire thought is a philosophic rationale for existing conditions of unfreedom. She writes, "To be 'reasonable' means to be of reason, to have the property of reason. To be 'actual' means to be part of the general makeup of the world, to be the opposite of a contingency. What is actual has the laws of reason acting within it. Actuality carries out the purpose of reason, which is **active**. The principle of reconciliation states that, whatever the subject matter, we can only think on the assumption that both the reasonable and the actual are **the same**. What governs our reality **must** be reasonable, **must have** the character of reason" (p. 14).

## THE IDEA WITHIN REALITY

Bublitz's view rests upon a misreading of Hegel. Hegel was not claiming that reason and reality are **immediately** identical. To presume that they are identical is to equate the Idea of freedom with what Hegel called "the untrue being of the objective world." Hegel instead was saying that the unity of reason and reality is the result of a **process**. Through "the labor, patience, and suffering of the negative" the presence of reason in reality is **realized** through the **negation** of the "untrue being of the objective world."

Hegel's point is that it does no good to assert, as did Kant, that reason and reality **ought** to unite; one must instead discern the elements **within** reality which contain the Idea. While the realm of appearance or "untrue being" is indifferent to the Idea, reality itself is not. The Idea is contained **within** reality, even if only implicitly and under the surface. It is in **this** sense that Hegel writes, "It must be held that whatever is actual is only in so far as it contains and expresses the Idea" (*Science of Logic*, Miller trans., p. 756).

Bublitz is right that for Hegel "thinking has to discover reason in the world; the notion has to be grasped **within** the manifold, not as removed, abstracted from it" (p. 92). She errs, however, in assuming that this necessarily involves a **reconciliation** with existing reality. For the young Marx, Hegel's concept pointed in a very different direction—to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Marx followed Hegel in holding that the Idea of freedom exists **within** reality; reason must have a **bearer** within actuality in order for it to be **realized**. That bearer, Marx held, was the proletariat. Through the proletariat's negation of "the untrue being of the objective world" the Idea of freedom would be **realized** in a new society.

It is true that in the final analysis Hegel reconciled himself with existing society. The root of the problem is found in his dehumanization of the Idea. Hegel conceived of the **subject** of the dialectic as disembodied thought, not as live men and women. Disembodied thought, even when posed as an absolute, cannot by itself overcome the antithesis of reason and reality. Faced with an inability to surmount the contradiction, Hegel resigned himself to accommodation with existing structures.

## THE DIALECTIC UNCHAINED

Marx did not turn his back on Hegel upon discovering this central defect. On the contrary, his engagement with Hegel became all the deeper. By following Hegel's approach of discerning the Idea **within** reality, while avoiding Hegel's defect of restricting the Subject to thought alone, Marx unchained the revolutionary implications contained within the Hegelian dialectic.

Those revolutionary implications have exerted a pull on the mind of humanity ever since. German Marxists and Russian Populists, French Existentialists and African revolutionists, U.S. Marxist-Humanists and Latin American Liberation Theologians have all in one way or another been drawn to Hegel's dialectic as "the algebra of revolution." You would never know that from reading Bublitz, however, who sees Hegel as only about reconciliation. Have all the others simply misunderstood, or has Bublitz missed something?

The problem may lie not only in Bublitz's reading of Hegel but in her attitude toward actuality itself. Though she powerfully projects the need to reject all forms of dehumanization, commodification and unfreedom—which she calls "the power of rejection"—her examples of resistance, while moving, are of isolated individuals, not of masses in motion. One gets a sense of a "great refusal" on the part of the individual to conditions of unfreedom—yet little sense of how it is worked out in a collective social movement. The failure to pinpoint a subjective agent or force in society as the negative factor for transcending the given seems to cut away the ground for seeing the revolutionary role that **can** be played by a **philosophy of liberation**.

Yes, we are ruled by "abstractions"; yes, philosophy has often served as the vehicle of their rule by explaining the necessity of what is, instead of what can be. But do not throw out the baby with the bathwater. The presence of the Idea in reality through a social subject which strives to think through and realize the abstract idea of full-blown freedom opens up the space for the birth of emancipatory forms of life which annul the false abstractions of bourgeois society. Here is where what Marx called "the power of abstraction" becomes a matter of life and death urgency.

Where does Bublitz's wholesale rejection of philosophy, on the grounds that Hegel's limits disclose the nonviability of philosophy **per se**, leave us by the end of her book? The conclusion is rather thin: "Only art can rescue human freedom from within these narrow walls of normality. For only in artistic creativity is human making free making" (p. 171). This after writing, "In our world, people are dealt with like things; and for that no wisdom is required...when the human belief, the belief in the other person, has become so immensely difficult to maintain, free creation takes refuge in the making of things" (pp. 128, 137).

## TOWARDS PERMANENT REVOLUTION

Where then do we go with the basic question which informs Bublitz's book—namely, how, given our freedom to define ourselves, do we not chain ourselves to false definitions of what it means to be human? This question, it seems to me, is precisely what compels a turn to philosophy—not a philosophy of "reconciliation," but one so imbued with negativity that it is negative even in regard to its own assumptions and concretizations. What is needed is a philosophy that is **self-negating** in not allowing any particular definition or concretization of freedom to be outside the realm of re-examination, redefinition and critique. The philosophic source of that dialectic of **absolute** negativity, of course, remains Hegel. His thought will surely survive this latest attempt to bury him.

—Peter Hudis

## Save the life of Walter Bell!

*Huntsville, Tex.*—A new and sad development has occurred in Walter Bell's case. Walter Bell is the longest living Black man on Texas' death row. He is mentally retarded and was framed for a murder case by racist police who beat a confession out of him. They also threatened to turn him loose at night on the streets of Vidor, Texas, a known KKK enclave.

The following is from a letter that Walter Bell recently wrote to me. Let Walter tell it in his own words:

*This is just a short note to inform you that my lawyer came by this morning to see me and told me some shocking sad news. CCA had denied my appeal way back in October of 1998—and they just now told him about it! They also denied giving him a copy of the ruling which by law they are supposed to do and send me a copy.*

*My lawyer and many others who he works with think the court did that intentionally. They are only now telling us what was decided back in October 1998, knowing that*

# Stop Tenn. state killing

*Memphis, Tenn.*—There has not been an execution in Tennessee since 1960, and a coalition of activists in Memphis is working to ensure that remains the case. As part of a statewide campaign, people from a variety of organizations have been demonstrating against the death penalty. With one demonstration in August and another last month, the plan is to continue on a monthly basis. So far some 60 people have participated in the demonstrations at a busy Memphis intersection during rush hour.

Response to the demonstrations from those driving by reveals the nature of opposition to and support for the death penalty. The most consistent and strongest support comes from Black motorists. Honking and giving a wave or a "thumbs-up" has been typical of Blacks driving by. Those who respond with derogatory shouts or raised middle fingers have been, almost without exception, white males. These demographics are telling in terms of the racism inherent to the application of the death penalty and how the death penalty has functioned historically with regard to Blacks as a form of legalized lynching.

In addition to the demonstrations, those involved have organized a letter-writing campaign to the governor, will be placing ads in local papers stating reasons to oppose the death penalty and are speaking at local civic and religious organizations to stir opposition to the death penalty. With legal appeals nearly exhausted for two of the more than 100 death row inmates, an execution could happen in Tennessee as early as late fall.

—Pete Gathje

## Voices From Within The Prison Walls

### Where genocide begins

I would hope that we all realize that there is something different between watching ethnic cleansing in Kosova by way of our television sets and being pulled out of your house in the middle of the night, having high velocity military ball ammunition killing a group of people in a yard, having a tank run through your street shooting indiscriminately through your walls.

It can be easy to say that we shouldn't arm—or call for arming—the abused population. But then, we are not physically in harm's way. Would Hitler have been so quick to commit resources to exterminating the Jews had they been arming themselves and offering resistance? Would Milosevic be so quick to practice his 1980s-90s version of Hitler's policies if the same were done in Kosova? One cannot gain freedom if those who wish to be free are all dead.

Genocide does not begin with the act of killing the people in a physical sense. It begins by indiscriminate jailing of the disenfranchised. It begins with rewriting histories in schools. It begins with the destruction of knowledge which does not correspond with the goals of the Right and the contemporaneous discountenance of anyone who attempts to intellectualize the path that this leads to.

Genocide begins with apathy towards the conditions of a country's—or culture's—citizens who may not fit within the contemporary society as defined by the Right. It begins with torture chambers called "super-max," a concept of confinement which was deemed abusive and "cruel and unusual punishment" over 100 years ago.

Genocide begins when the highest court in the land allows the police to have almost unlimited powers to arrest or to invade a home, and when the police themselves are immune from prosecution. It begins with a proliferation of state-sanctioned murders with limited opportunity to address one's innocence. Genocide does not simply begin when the bullets start flying and the bodies begin to be buried in mass graves.

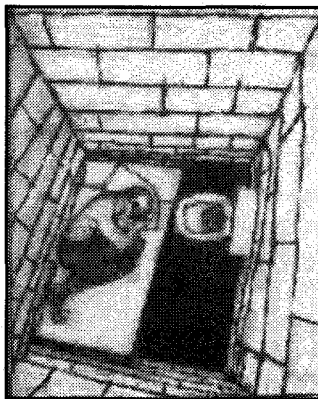
—Prisoner, USA

*after a case has been denied by them we have only 90 days to file with the federal court.*

*Something isn't right; it doesn't seem right to me. I think they are trying to have me killed. I feel I might be put to death. No date has been set, but I will be getting one now because I'm going into the federal court and we had already filed for clemency. I just wanted to let you know what is going on.*

The 90-day limit to get into federal court is one of the stipulations of Clinton's Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which has made it extremely hard and lethal on death row prisoners fighting for their lives. If anyone wishes to help Walter with legal expenses, please write to: Praise God Foundation, 1214 Sterret St., Houston, TX 77002-1141, and please write at the bottom of the check, "For Walter Bell." Letters of solidarity can be sent to: Walter Bell, 524 Ellis, Huntsville, TX 77343.

—Gulf Coast Red



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# Western powers stand by in face of Indonesian genocide in East Timor

(Continued from page 1)

tated General Suharto's rise to power after he led an apocalyptic purge of leftist peasants, students and intellectuals in the aftermath of what may have been a coup attempt on the part of the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965.

## COUNTDOWN TO BLOODSHED

Indonesian acquiescence to a referendum on East Timor's future was a result of Suharto's forced retirement from office in the spring of 1998 by mass pressure from students, workers and the middle class. The thaw in Indonesian society which took place after his departure permitted unprecedented opposition to the authoritarian society he built to appear. The political ferment even allowed movement on the question of East Timor, a topic on which the Suharto regime had been inflexible since it crushed that country's fleeting period of independence after the collapse of Portuguese colonialism.

Suharto's successor, B.J. Habibie, seemed to grudgingly admit that holding on to East Timor was no longer worth the great expense it required and gave signs that he was willing to consider change. He consented to releasing Xanana Gusmao, the imprisoned leader of the East Timorese resistance movement, to supervised confinement in a house in Jakarta. He also relented to allowing what was termed a "popular consultation" on the future status of East Timor, subject to approval by the People's Consultative Assembly: "autonomy" within Indonesia or independence.

An agreement was signed between the Indonesian and Portuguese governments in May to arrange for the vote. Portugal, East Timor's former colonial power and the political entity recognized by the United Nations as still having legal authority over the territory, has long been plagued by a bad conscience over its failure to permit the decolonization process to take place after the Carnation Revolution of 1974. While Portugal regularly consults with the CNRT, it did not formally participate in the signing of the agreement.

Even before the signing took place, a highly organized effort to undermine it was underway. Sections of the military, which continues to play a strongly politicized role in Indonesian society, were sponsoring armed groups in East Timor to disrupt the process which was to lead up to the referendum. Militia attacks occurred all through the spring, including a vicious one on a church in the village of Liquica in April, in which 57 people were killed.

A report has surfaced that shortly after this massacre, Dennis Blair, a U.S. admiral, met with General Wiranto,

the commander of the Indonesian military, ostensibly to tell him to reign in the militias. Instead, Blair in effect promised Wiranto future U.S. military training of Indonesian troops.

Targets of the increasing militia harassment included international humanitarian aid groups and the United Nations Assistance Mission to East Timor (UNAMET), the body charged with the preparation for and supervision of the referendum.

The interference became so intense that the date of the vote was pushed back twice. That UNAMET had to rely on the Indonesian police and army, the forces ultimately responsible for the rising tide of violence, to provide security for the organizing of the referendum exposes the basic absurdity of the arrangement. The UN and the West did not exhibit the will to ensure that the referendum would take place in a secure environment and thus are complicit in its horrible outcome.

## VOTE ENDS IN TERROR

The vote itself and the counting of ballots took place with a minimum of disturbances. It was the announcement of the outcome however—an overwhelming majority voted for complete independence—which provided the signal for the nightmare to begin. Gangs armed with machetes and homemade firearms exploded into unbelievable violence as the Indonesian police and army stood idly by. Anyone deemed to be a supporter of independence, no matter what age, was considered a target. No one was safe, including the clergy in this predominantly Catholic country. Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, who shared the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize with independence leader Jose Ramos Horta, fled to Portugal.

The inadequate UNAMET force was confined to its compound in Dili, in which as many East Timorese as could make it over the barbed wire sought refuge. The violence became so fierce that eventually UNAMET vacated the island completely, a move which marked a humiliating end to the referendum process.

While the few remaining journalists transmitted stories of the genocide to the outside world, the Indonesian government claimed it needed time and the imposition of martial law to gain control of the situation. The fact that East Timor was already one of the most heavily militarized places in Asia seemed to be lost. Journalist Allan Nairn's eyewitness reports of militias operating directly out of Indonesian military facilities exposes this patently false claim of the Indonesian government.

Just as the Indonesian government protested that it was powerless, the governments of the West sat on their hands as well. Australia, long a silent partner in the

Indonesian occupation in the sense that it formally recognized the latter's claim to the territory, stated it was ready to intervene but declined to take unilateral action. The U.S. and Britain made the token effort of interrupting military relations but likewise refused to go further. The plea of Falintil, the small armed East Timorese resistance force, for immediate assistance went unheeded. It was only at the Asian Pacific Economic Council meeting in Auckland, New Zealand—during which the murderous terror still raged—that President Clinton convinced Indonesia to permit an outside force in to restore order.

Incredibly, the first token air drop of food to the refugees facing starvation in the countryside did not take place until Sept. 17. The first elements of the Australian-led peacekeeping force began arriving on Sept. 20.

## THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

This horrific genocide has revealed that the "New Order"—Suharto's name for the bloody regime he constructed—lives on after his departure. Nothing less than the course of Indonesia's unfinished transition to democracy is now at stake. The small numbers of courageous Indonesian students and independent labor unionists who denounced the genocide—far outnumbered by the larger demonstrations of narrow nationalists—are now confronted with a military which has been humiliated by what it considers a foreign incursion into its territory.

How it and Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, who is set to become leader of the government later this year will deal with the ongoing movements for freedom in Aceh and Irian Jaya remains to be seen. Megawati has consistently opposed self-determination for East Timor and criticized Habibie's decision to allow the referendum to take place. It is possible that her nationalism will dovetail with the interests of the leaders of the now-chastened military and result in a less, not more, democratic Indonesia for its millions of peasants and workers still attempting to emerge from Suharto's authoritarian legacy.

This situation represents a grave challenge to a country with a long and distinguished history of anti-colonial and popular struggles.

The carnage in East Timor however, did reveal that millions the world over stand in solidarity with the Timorese people. From Australian dockworkers and students to activists in the U.S., Britain and Canada, to virtually the entire population of Portugal; all showed their support for a free and independent East Timor. Hopefully it is not too early to say that with the resilience of the people of East Timor and the solidarity of their friends abroad, the free country that existed for such a brief time in 1975 can now be born anew.

## Editorial Clinton's selective clemency

The release of the 11 Puerto Rican prisoners of the FALN is a welcome victory for their long-time supporters in the independence movement, as well as for the movement in solidarity with all political prisoners in the U.S. It is more than a painful irony that it follows so closely upon the unjust sentencing of José Solís Jordán, who on July 7 was given 51 months in prison on trumped-up charges of bombing a military recruitment center in Chicago.

In granting clemency, albeit with some outrageous strings attached like the denial of the right of free association, Pres. Clinton cited the example of former President Carter's release of Puerto Rican Nationalists during his administration. It would be helpful to go back to Carter's own motives for that act of clemency in order to understand better why Clinton has acted. At that time, National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote that release would be seen as a good will gesture toward Latin America, as well as "remove a propaganda issue from the agenda of various international fora which is used each year against us and is increasingly used as an example of the inconsistency of our human rights policy."

This kind of strategic thinking surely goes much farther toward explaining Clinton's current decision than does the Right's speculation about winning Puerto Rican voters for Hillary Clinton's senatorial campaign. The 1998 general strike in Puerto Rico and the large demonstrations against the U.S. military presence in Vieques probably have much more to do with the timing of it.

The current House committee hearings on this issue are of a piece with the earlier maneuvers of Kenneth Starr, Henry Hyde and their cohorts—with violence now in place of sex to juice up their reactionary agenda. The massacre in Waco is being used for the same ends, with the authoritarian Right screaming so hypocritically about the perfidy of Clinton's Justice Department.

The truth is far better revealed in this event by silence, that is, the silence which is surrounding the case of José Solís. The Right is saying absolutely nothing about the Justice Department's conduct in this regard—of the terrifying invasion by heavily armed FBI commandos of the Solís family home; of a trial in which no evidence was actually presented but the word of a paid informer—who received \$119,000—and an alleged accomplice who couldn't remember names or dates; or of a jury with no Spanish speakers which was asked to judge a taped conversation conducted largely in Spanish.

Who would have expected any better from the Right? They aren't the friends of human freedom. The real surprise is how little the broad Left has had to say on the Solís case. His fate should be of importance to all those who care about human rights, the rights to think, speak, and write as one chooses without having to fear imprisonment. Prof. Solís is a significant academic and thinker, for whom decolonization begins with the mind. He is being

unjustly persecuted by the U.S. government for his views in favor of Puerto Rican independence, which were used against him at his trial.

Prof. Solís is as well a person of the Left. He has received support from labor unions in Puerto Rico and was a participant in the 1998 general strike, walking the picket lines in an effort to create unity between intellectuals in the academic community and workers. True internationalism would compel an interest on the part of U.S. activists in a case like this.

Perhaps the relative silence about this can be explained if we look at how so much thinking on the issues of internationalism and revolution mirrors the same tired rhetoric of the Right and how much needed rethinking remains undone. A COINTELPRO document from 1960, from J. Edgar Hoover, shows the roots of today's campaign against *independentistas* in the effort to combat the influence the Cuban Revolution was having in Puerto Rico and elsewhere and, as well, the "inevitable communist and/or Soviet effort to embarrass the United States."

The Right has today replaced Communism with so-called "terrorism," or whatever else, as the demon that drives its historical agenda. These are the counsels of the living dead. But movements for human freedom can't be satisfied just to be the reversed mirror image of the Right; they need to embody creativity and a real vision of the future. In this respect, some of the most hopeful signs have come from the willingness of the FALN prisoners to openly question some aspects of their political past.

As Alberto Rodríguez put it, "We thought we either held on to our old views and became dinosaurs and obsolete, or we adapted to reality. It was not that we sort of had this spiritual transformation and renounced violence. But from a political perspective, to influence the process of Puerto Rico's decolonization, we had to change."

Even earlier, a statement was released by Oscar López Rivera, a founder of the FALN who isn't included in the clemency, calling on the independence movement to give greater support to José Solís. It also called for some serious rethinking in the independence movement.

A question for the future is, can some needed dialogue and rethinking, an effort to work out new pathways to freedom and self-determination, begin to be worked out at the same time as we work to build solidarity with José Solís? It isn't just about breaking down a silence in general, but breaking down internal and historic barriers within the movement itself.

We urge our readers to begin by showing solidarity with the Solís family, which has been hit very hard by legal costs and loss of income. Checks can be sent to:

Martha González-Solís  
Urb. El Senoral  
Calle Fray Granada #2006  
San Juan, PR 00926

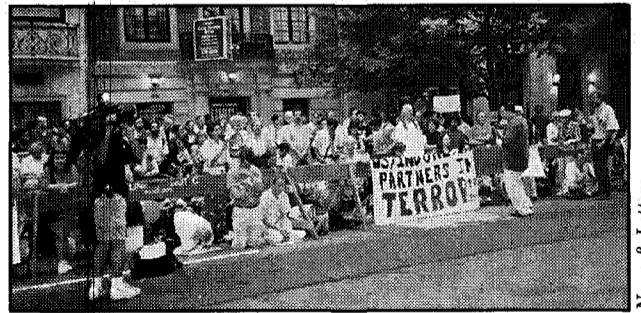
## Support East Timor!

*New York*—The Sept. 19 demo at the UN drew 300-400, and most of them were Portuguese Americans who came on buses from Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Fervent in their support for the East Timorese, they are a part of the working class. The thousands we expected from a similar community in New Jersey and from the New York Left were not there.

Had the Left dropped its concern for the East Timorese because the UN is going in, or is the Left just demobilized?

Allan Nairn, the writer for *The Nation*, deported from East Timor for illegally entering Indonesia, spoke to us by phone from the Bali Immigration Detention Center.

Some of the rally was in Portuguese, including a Black woman from the Azores who talked about all the former and current colonies in the world! Another extolled the recent workers' demonstrations in Brazil. The Portuguese community clearly has a strong sense of loyalty to the



New York protest in support of East Timor in front of Indonesian consulate.

Portuguese speaking world. There was a strong Catholic Church presence; many of the nuns in East Timor were Maryknolls.

Since I had previously heard individuals express hatred for Indonesians, since the crowd seemed pro-Portuguese, and since you never know if non-leftists are going to be critical of the U.S., I was glad to hear the crowd roar approval for all three points made by a political scientist who spoke: 1) Nothing would be better for Indonesia than a free and safe East Timor. The people of Indonesia are being oppressed by their government, and by helping to free East Timor, we are helping them. We are not anti-Indonesian; we are for the people. 2) Portugal must bear responsibility because of its special relationship. 3) The U.S. government says politics and economics dictate that it be friends with the people in power in Indonesia.

A woman from the group, Coalition against Violence against Ethnic Chinese Women of Indonesia spoke. She discussed the rapes of women by the army and special forces in East Timor, Aceh, Irian Jaya and during the rebellion against Suharto, saying, "all together we will be strong and get justice."

—A. J.

## Youth Police harassment at Chicago school

**Chicago**—Prologue Alternative High School students and community residents in Uptown were upset on Sep. 21 when a Chicago tactical police officer spat on a student in front of the school where students were peacefully congregated for their lunch break. This was just one incident in the city's ongoing war to criminalize Black and Latino youth.

Two plain clothes officers appeared on the scene in response to a tip that a drug deal had taken place on the corner of Winthrop and Lawrence. They, however, were 45 minutes too late to catch the alleged drug dealer, but were just in time to catch approximately 15 teenagers eating potato chips and talking. The officers entered a store and came back out with angry looks on their faces. According to over a dozen witnesses, one of them, who later identified himself as Officer Costillo, spat on the pant leg of a 16-year-old male student.

People immediately began demanding to know why he spat on the student. Costillo, according to witnesses, angrily responded, "Because he spit on me first!" He then turned on the student and tried to grab his arm. The student said, "I have nothing to say to you," and headed into the school. The cops tried to follow him through a crowd of angry students, and grabbed one young Latina and slammed her up against a brick wall. The older sister of the spat-on student followed the police into the building shouting that the police were wrongly trying to arrest her brother.

Prologue teachers attempted to block the cops from entering and stood between the cops and the student. The police insisted that they were in pursuit of "a suspect." When asked what was the crime, they said "resisting." After a tense standoff the police cuffed both the young man and his sister and put them in a squad car.

A large crowd of angry students and residents gathered on the sidewalk demanding that they release the students. Within minutes, over 20 cops were on the scene and began threatening people with night sticks. Despite intense efforts by Prologue's principal and executive director the cops refused to release the students and charged them with disorderly conduct.

At a spontaneous mass meeting that immediately followed, people denounced the harassment and verbal abuse of Prologue students that has been going on since the beginning of the school year. They reached a consensus to demand that the charges against their classmates be dropped, that the targeting of Prologue students end and that officer Costillo be discharged.

Fifteen students and six staff members attended the Community Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) meeting that evening. CAPS is a police-organized initiative to encourage property owners to single out who the police

should arrest in order to protect their property values. The police public relations people explicitly stated that they had worked out a strategy at the previous month's meeting to "clean up" the corner of Winthrop and Lawrence. And police Sargeant Gold accused Prologue students of "intimidating" older people in the community. The only senior citizen to speak up, however, said that she passes that corner every day and the students are always friendly to her.

Students defended the school as the one place in the city that welcomed them with open arms to get their education. Prologue Principal Pa Joof denounced CAPS for developing a strategy behind Prologue's back and the police for their "systematic campaign of harassment" against Prologue students.

The real estate developers and the newcomer white property owners, however, remain determined to cleanse the neighborhood of the wretched of the earth. To them this does not just include the homeless families who sleep in the park or drug addicts on the corner, but also the youth forced out of public schools. So they want a school that welcomes these youth out of their back yard. The police, whose control of the streets is threatened by the critical consciousness taught by this alternative school, are happy to help in this effort.

—Participant

## Links between political prisoners



**Chicago, Ill.**—Supporter of recently released Puerto Rican political prisoners reads solidarity message at Sept. 25 for Mumia Abu-Jamal. See "Mumia and the movement at the crossroads," page 1, and "Clinton's selective clemency," page 10.

## Aftermath of the student movement in Iran

Since the suppression of the July 8-13 student protest by the Islamic Republic regime, there has been a massive crack down on the student organizations and political opponents. In the aftermath of the student demonstrations, the government began an arbitrary arrest and abduction of the youth on the streets, which was followed by raids on residences of the opposition figures.

On Sep. 12, the head of Tehran Revolutionary Court, in an interview with a Tehran daily, announced that death sentences had been passed against four people involved in the recent student protest. He also stated that there were 1,000 more cases under investigation.

A day after the announcement, the head of the Revolutionary Court in the city of Tabriz announced that 21 people had received sentences ranging from three months to nine years. These announcements did not even disclose the names and the charges of those convicted. The government figures for the number of people arrested and tried are dubious considering the credibility of the Islamic judiciary system. The actual figures are believed to be much higher as reported by student groups and political opponents.

The manner in which these sentences were announced leads one to believe that so called "conservatives" within the Islamic regime are uncertain about the domestic and international reaction to a new wave of executions in Iran. Since the schools and universities are going to be open soon, it appears that the "conservatives" want to create an environment of fear, but at the same time they are concerned about a backlash.

President Khatami's administration has not taken any steps to confront these sentences. This behavior is not surprising since his faction was in line with the "conservatives" in suppressing the student protest. The special committee formed by his administration, investigating the attacks on the Tehran University dormitories and subsequent events, did not produce any substantial result. In spite of all the evidence gathered by students on the identity of the attackers, nobody from the state security forces or their allied thugs was arrested.

The student protest indicates that the crisis of legitimacy of the regime has deepened. Even the youth born and raised under the repressive Islamic social order are clashing with the Islamic values. It has also reaffirmed the limits of reform in the Islamic Republic of Iran. President Khatami and other factions had a monophonic voice to preserve the fundamentals of the Islamic state against a genuine and spontaneous social movement.

These events have created a new momentum amongst Iranians. The mood of indifference has given way to a more positive and constructive attitude. Iranians living abroad, in support of the student movement and other democratic causes in Iran, are forming new committees. Committee in Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Iran is one such committee. The urgent action and support of progressive forces and individuals are crucial to save the lives of those in prison.

—Bahram Tymorian

## Gwendolyn Hogan, supporters, fight for justice

**Chicago**—A Cook County corrections officer shot an unarmed man 14 times on Aug. 14 outside a South Side bar. The cover-up that followed compelled the victim's widow, Gwendolyn Hogan, to take action and organize a movement to bring the Cook County sheriff and the county administration to account. It was on Sept. 10 when a busload of protesters arrived at the steps of the Cook County Courthouse. Hogan led the demonstrators down the block to the sheriff's office attached to the courthouse and jail.

"We have to take the blinders off the eyes of the county," she shouted. "If we don't talk about it, they will sweep it under the rug." The name of the sheriff who killed Kelsey Hogan has been kept a secret as have all details about the incident. "This man is back at work. We want to find him, to have him prosecuted and put in jail," she demanded.

"Don't let today be your last day out here," she continued. "If we don't stand up for something, we will fall for anything." Hogan's plea joins that of

*Editor's note: Gwendolyn Hogan gave News & Letters this account of her fight to bring her husband Kelsey's killer, an off-duty Cook County sheriff's deputy, to justice.*

I never thought I'd encourage people to fight, just like I thought I'd never spend my life by myself or raising a baby myself. One day people will see this man who murdered Kelsey is wrong and will ask how could he get away with it. I got in the car today and asked why Kelsey isn't calling me to say what the baby did. Yesterday it felt like a month since he was killed. Today it felt like it happened this morning.

Someone from the October 22 Coalition called us with condolences. They said I could come to a meeting with other families. I was turned around. I was feeling like a roller coaster. That's how my mind was. I wanted to talk to someone with that experience. I'm not crazy, I'm smart [but I was feeling that way].

Rev. Jakes called; he was on his way to a Justice Coalition for a Better Chicago meeting. They were the first people I told my story to. He asked if I could go with him. There were people there talking about Mumia Abu-Jamal. The roller coaster began to slow down. I was beginning to see what is going on around here, a lot of organizations with separate issues, but it all comes down to the same cause. I inherited a spirit. I don't want it to be with "our" group. I want it to be with all groups. I will pass out your flyers while I'm going around putting mine under doors.

other families with loved ones victimized by police. Still on the minds and on the lips of protesters are the senseless police shootings of Robert Russ and Latanya Haggerty this summer. Demonstrators answered, "No justice, no peace! Arrest that police!"

Rev. Jakes of The Christian Council on Urban Affairs delivered a letter to Cook County Sheriff Michael Sheahan demanding he fire the killer. George Morris of the October 22 Coalition against police abuse and himself a family member of someone murdered by Chicago police spoke. "After 500 years of slavery, no one has a right to think he's better than us," he stated, alluding to one known fact about Kelsey's killer, namely that he too is Black.

The Stolen Lives Project brought a banner bearing hundreds of names of victims of lethal police violence. "Kelsey's name is on it with many others," Gwendolyn Hogan noted. "Their families are walking the streets with me. If I can keep on going to work every day and keep on fighting to expose Kelsey's killer, so can you."

—Jim Mills

I'm going to look into this man [who killed my husband], to know all I can know. I know a lot of people in jail who did not commit a crime. We are supposed to be innocent until proven guilty, but there are people who are under the monster that killed my husband, who are guilty until proven innocent. I bet in his department he beat and assaulted someone at the Cook County jail.

The banner with all the names, that had an impact on me. Don't a day go by without thinking about that banner. There are so many who are hurting, over 2,000 people out there feeling what I feel. There's that roller coaster. The hurt from loss would have been no different. But this way, on the roller coaster, it has caused me to question everything.

The Chicago police have an attitude with the citizens that they don't care. If they really cared, or if the officer had been killed, they'd have had the whole area blocked off. What makes them better than us?

Before, if someone convinced me someone was a good candidate, I'd campaign for someone. Now I didn't ask to be political. They made me political. I don't know what road to go down, but I need to get out. There are people above me, but I have no fears. I welcome the challenge to get knowledge. I have a strong will. I want to thank them for giving me that strong will.

I want them to prosecute this man like everyone else; then I'll go on to the next movement for justice for every name on that banner. We didn't ask to be here; they made us be here.

## Asian-American struggle

*Editor's note: The following is excerpted from a talk given by Kimi Lee, the daughter of immigrants from Burma, at a prisoners' rights conference in California.*

It is impossible to talk about issues facing Asian Pacific Islanders without discussing our history and our experiences as we are the "youngest" exploited people of color. Our history is still being written.

Asian Pacific islanders have been oppressed, exploited, raped, slaughtered, beaten—we have had our land taken away, our homes burned and families destroyed. Just a few examples today include the indigenous Hawaiians who are fighting for sovereignty as tourism eats up their land and commercializes their culture. In the Philippines, farm land and fishing areas are being destroyed to make way for golf courses, yacht areas and resorts. In Polynesia, nuclear weapons are being tested on their land contaminating their food and water.

What about Asian women in America? We are exploited as garment workers, food servers, domestic help and factory assembly workers—working 16-hour days without bathroom breaks, no fresh air, no time to eat or rest—like the 72 Thai garment workers found in a slave sweatshop right here in El Monte. Exploitation is closer to home than we may think.

Which brings me to the history of why Asians were brought here in the first place. The Chinese were brought as coolies to build railroads; the Japanese and Filipinos were brought here to farm and develop swamps and hills into fertile land. And let's not forget the U.S. military influence in the Korean and Vietnam Wars—as Asian "refugees" flee their home to come to the land of the free and opportunity. We may have come here by different paths, but we share the same path of struggle.

So as we sit here today and try to seek justice for those in prison, let's not forget that even though we here are not physically in prison, our communities are slaves, isolated by language barriers, beaten by police, terrorized by the INS and hungry because of welfare reform.

We must fight for social justice together. We must fight with everyone: prisoners, garment workers, restaurant servers, farm workers, our mothers, brothers, sisters and fathers—as our Asian ancestors fought with Latino farm workers, Asians stood by Malcolm X and Martin Luther King and fought for civil rights. We must all stand together now to seek justice.

## Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

This fall, as chill winds began to be felt in the mountains of Kosova, half of the 800,000 Kosovar Albanians "ethnically cleansed" by Serbian forces still lacked adequate housing for winter. Thousands more languished in Serbian prisons, people whose fate was not even mentioned in the agreement between NATO and Serbia that ended the bombing campaign and created a NATO/UN protectorate over Kosova.

NATO and the UN have concentrated most of their efforts not on these issues but on establishing "order" by disarming the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA), something they may have achieved with its transformation

## South Africa strikes

South African trade unions have challenged the market-friendly economic policies of ANC leader Thabo Mbeki, who was elected president in June. The government's program, "Growth, Employment and Redistribution" (GEAR), includes the usual neo-liberal mix of cut-backs, privatization and layoffs.

Public sector workers in unions affiliated with COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), a critical ally of the ANC in the struggle to overthrow apartheid, staged a series of two-day strikes in July and August—the largest demonstrations since the apartheid era. The unions demanded a 7.3% pay raise, equal to the inflation rate, but when the Mbeki-ANC government made a "final" offer of a little over 6% in September, COSATU backed off from further strikes.

Under the government's directive for "international competitiveness," which began in the Mandela years, whole sectors of the economy either owned or managed by the state—including telecommunications, transportation, municipal services and timber resources—have been or are slated to be sold off, either fully or partially, to private investors.

Over 500,000 workers have lost their jobs since 1994, and unemployment continues to rise. The layoffs include gold miners, at least 100,000 since 1996. Now one-third of South Africa's gold mines claim they can't operate at the current reduced price for gold in the world market, and plan to lay off another 20,000 miners.

As Mbeki and the ANC move further away from their roots in the mass movement which overthrew apartheid, the government's GEAR program is finding firm support among current and former South African Communist Party officials whom Mbeki has appointed.

## Middle East negotiations

In September, after four months of delay and stonewalling that perplexed even his supporters, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak grudgingly agreed to implement the Wye River peace accords signed last year by his predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu. While many breathed a sigh of relief that the peace process was inching along once again, few could miss the fact that there remains much continuity between the Laborite Barak and the fanatically anti-Arab conservative Netanyahu.

Barak has finally carried out the first of three small withdrawals from Palestinian land Israel occupies on the West Bank. He has also released 200 political prisoners and promised to allow Palestinians a seaport in Gaza and a safe-passage route between Gaza and the West Bank.

In the final status talks which have just begun, the long-delayed and hardest issues are to come up: control of Jerusalem, citizenship rights for the Palestinian diaspora, Jewish settlements in the heart of Palestinian land, and the borders and powers of a future Palestinian state. Barak, one of the few Labor Party leaders to oppose the 1993 Oslo peace accords, shows every sign of intransigence on these issues.

# Kosova and Serbia after war's end

into a lightly armed Kosovo Protection Corps in September.

The new occupiers have also allowed a Serb enclave led by paramilitaries to form in Mitrovica, as Albanians continue to be terrorized from re-entering the main part of the town. Not coincidentally, Mitrovica is close to the richest economic prize in Kosova, the Trepca metal mines, where in 1988-90 thousands of Albanian miners were fired and then imprisoned for striking to defend the autonomy granted to Kosova in the 1974 Yugoslavian Constitution. During the 1998-99 war, the area was an important stronghold for KLA guerrillas whom the Serbs could never dislodge from the surrounding hills. Today, the Trepca miners are still waiting to get their jobs back.

Some contradictions have also developed within the Albanian community in the wake of violent attacks by some of its members on Roma and Serb civilians. While the numerous war criminals need to be identified, tried, and punished, some have embarked upon collective punishments directed at civilian populations. Adem Demaci, a longtime supporter of resistance to Serb rule and a leader of the KLA, put the issue most forcefully: "I was not happy when I saw ordinary Serbs going. I don't accept freedom only for Albanians. We must understand that all these miseries were done by the Serbian regime, not every Serb" (*The New York Times*, Aug. 10, 1999).

Although increasingly challenged from below, Serbian dictator and indicted war criminal Slobodan Milosevic remains in power. Much of his staying power is due to deep contradictions among the Serbian masses, with many blaming him not so much for launching eight years of genocidal war for a "Greater Serbia" as for having

failed to hold onto enough territory in those wars.

During the NATO bombing and the Serb genocide in Kosova that immediately preceded it, many were startled by the nearly unanimous belief among Serbs, even oppositionists, that it was they, not the hundreds of thousands of Bosnians, Croats, and Albanians killed by Milosevic's men, who were the real victims. In explaining this phenomenon, many have stressed the emotional appeals of demagogues such as Milosevic, but few have noted the role of leading philosophers and intellectuals in the creation of today's Serbian nationalism.

A September 1999 article by Laura Secor in *Lingua Franca* details as never before the role of Serbian intellectuals, some of them formerly oppositional Marxist humanists, in creating the ideological ground that even today props up the Milosevic regime. Most prominent among them has been Mihailo Markovic of the Praxis group, who already in 1990 was able to write that "Slobodan Milosevic endorsed the initiative of Kosova Serbs and invited people everywhere to an 'anti-bureaucratic' revolution—against the injustices of the system, against incompetent and corrupt functionaries, against the Constitution of 1974 and, especially, against discrimination against Serbian people" (*Praxis International*, January 1990).

Writings like these, especially the infamous 1986 Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences which Markovic co-authored, formed, according to Secor, nothing less than "the conceptual framework for a greater Serbia." Markovic became a Vice-President of Milosevic's party, later breaking with him for allegedly giving away too much Serbian land in the 1995 Dayton accords. In 1996, Secor notes, Markovic and another former Praxis philosopher signed a petition urging the Balkan War Crimes Tribunal to drop charges against the butcher of Bosnia, Radovan Karadzic, calling him "the true leader of all Serbs." Such ideological pollution forms a major barrier to the dismantling of the Milosevic system.

## German state elections

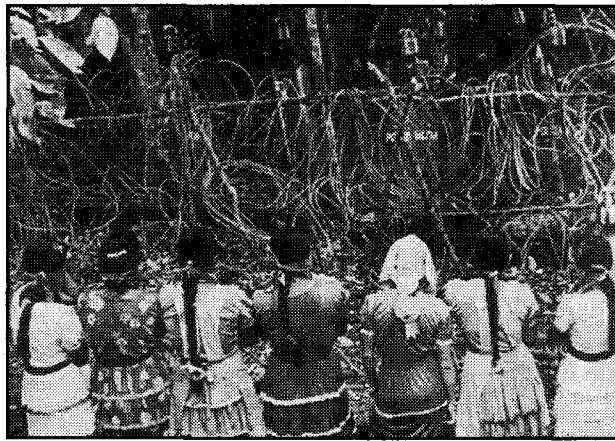
In September elections in five German states, the Social Democrat-Green coalition lost badly to conservative Christian Democrats. In Brandenburg in the former East Germany, a neo-Nazi party also won 5.3%, making it the second state in which neo-Nazis have seats in the state parliament.

Social Democratic (SPD) Prime Minister Gerhard Schroeder helped seal his own defeat when he moved sharply to the Right. During the summer he put forth a new economic program of budget cuts, lower taxes, weakening the power of unions, and other "free market" measures favored by capital. This touched off a deep split within the SPD as well as a sense of betrayal among its rank and file. In addition, Schroeder's government has failed, after nearly a year in power, to put a dent in the country's longstanding unemployment rate of over 10%.

While the strength of the neo-Nazis should not be overestimated, neither should it be underestimated, especially in the former East Germany where its base includes unemployed youths who have joined skinhead groups. In a region where unemployment reaches over 20%, neo-Nazis devote their energy to immigrant bashing, verbally and sometimes in the form of physical attacks that include murder.

A few formerly leftist intellectuals have also transformed themselves into open racists. One of them is Bernd Rabehl, a prominent Marxist student leader in 1968 who is today a sociology professor in Berlin. Giving his anti-immigrant racism an anti-capitalist twist similar to that of some Serbian intellectuals, Rabehl now fulminates against "the foreign invasion that signifies the total destruction of the people and its culture, especially when one realizes how much national identity has already been destroyed by capitalist values."

## Chiapas solidarity



The Mexican army sent 10,000 soldiers into the Lancandón jungle in Chiapas, Aug. 14, to occupy, for the first time since 1994, the Montes Azules area, where most of the Zapatista leadership was located. Some 30 communities in the area are in a virtual state of siege, and troops have surrounded the village of Amador Hernandez with razor wire.

The villagers had opposed government plans to build a road that would connect to a military base used to house soldiers engaged in hunting and harassing the Zapatistas. Men, women and children turned out to block the military from preparing to build the road.

Also on Aug. 14, mineworkers at Cananea held a convention against privatization of industry, and came out strongly in support of the Zapatistas. A Chiapas Workers Convention, held June 26 in Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, initiated this link by calling for solidarity between peasant and worker struggles. They also issued a call for solidarity with U.S. workers by supporting the conference in Defense of Trade Union Rights, to be held in San Francisco in February, 2000. The Zapatistas also plan to send a contingent to protest the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, Nov. 29.

## 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*.