

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

## Lay-offs reflect crisis of capital



by B. Ann Lastelle

The question of unemployment has been on my mind since Swift-Eckrich announced the closing of its hot dog and sausage processing plant in Chicago. Then in October the U.S. Department of Labor reported that the nationwide unemployment rate had reached 5.7%; the rate in Illinois, 7.2%. Since January 1989, more than 500,000 manufacturing jobs have been eliminated in the U.S.

For most bourgeois economists, industrial employment statistics are only one of many "indicators" of the economy's health. Yet it is living labor, the worker in the process of the product, which creates all value and surplus-value and, therefore, capitalist profit. What the capitalists seem not to understand is that the failure to employ labor means the collapse of their whole system. What they do understand is that they must demand in order to maintain their rate of profit.

### MONSTER MACHINE

When we first met the workers at Eckrich three years ago, they produced a variety of products on a series of relatively short production lines. The company then decided to invest one million dollars in a state-of-the-art packaging machine, which came to dominate production at the plant. It runs twice as fast as any of the other lines and can gobble up nearly all of the meat that can be cooked in the oven even though the cooking time has been reduced.

This year for the first time, during the peak spring and summer season only a few people were called back from lay-off, and there was no new hiring. Although most people worked fewer overtime hours than in past summers with no Saturdays or Sundays, the intensity

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### Black World

## Bush's civil rights veto



by Lou Turner

With Louisiana white supremacist-turned-Republican David Duke watching from the Senate gallery, the U.S. Senate sustained President George Bush's veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1990 by one vote. Said Duke, grinning, Bush and Congress "are getting my message."

George Bush's October 22 veto of the civil rights bill makes him only the second president since the beginning of the civil rights era in the 1950s to strike down civil rights legislation. Not surprisingly, Ronald Reagan was his lone predecessor.

### BUSH'S HISTORIC RETROGRESSIONISM

Historically, however, only Reagan and Andrew Johnson, in the immediate Civil War period, had vetoed civil rights bills before Bush. In fact, Karl Marx's September 1865 letter to Johnson, in the name of the First International Workingmen's Association, was written precisely to protest Johnson's impending veto.

"Injustice against a fraction of your people," Marx warned Johnson, "having been followed by such dire consequences, put an end to it. Declare your fellow [Black] citizens from this day forth free and equal, without any reserve. If you refuse them citizens' rights while you exact from them citizens' duties, you will sooner or later face a new struggle which will once more drench your country in blood."

While Congress overrode both Johnson's and Reagan's vetoes, the 101st Congress of the United States has the pathetic distinction of being the only session of Congress that has failed to override a presidential veto of a major civil rights bill.

The Act which no legislative "revolution" in this country's commitment to civil rights. On the contrary, it was a jobs bill which essentially would have restored and codified 20 years of judicial case law that had been struck down last year by the Supreme Court in such cases as *Ward's Cove v. Antonio*, involving discriminatory employment practices at an Alaskan salmon cannery.

In vetoing the civil rights bill, Bush claimed that the bill employed "a maze of highly legalistic language to introduce the destructive force of quotas into our national employment system." A de facto quota system

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## Bush-Congress budget farce can't repair crumbling economy

by Andy Phillips

So sick, so crisis-ridden, so degenerate is the U.S. economy today that not even capitalism's ideologues look any longer for what they used to call "booms." They look only for how deep each new recession will go. It is a crisis capitalism has been unable to extract itself from ever since the 1974-75 global recession.

This is what makes the "smoke and mirror" games played all through October by Congress and President Bush over a so-called "deficit reduction plan," resemble nothing so much as Nero fiddling while Rome burns. While their games will make no real difference insofar as the underlying economic causes for the current crisis are concerned, what is very real is the impact the budget bill will have on lowering the living standards of all American workers and their families, the elderly and those already living below the poverty level. At least 31.5 million Americans, 13% of the population, live below the poverty level, and the majority of these are children.

The new increased taxes and added costs the elderly will pay for Medicare will fall most heavily on those who can least afford it. At the same time, every city and state will suffer cuts in already depleted services to help the most needy. Philadelphia is already facing literal bankruptcy and New York City plans at least a

15,000 public employee lay-off to slow its impending collapse.

### FANTASYLAND PROJECTIONS VS. ECONOMIC REALITY

Nothing more reveals the total fraud of the budget negotiations than the projection on which the \$500 billion deficit reduction figure is based. By 1995 the gross national product will supposedly reach over \$7.6 trillion, the unemployment rate will decline to 5.1% (from 5.7% now) and the cost of government borrowing money will decrease from 7.4% to 4.2% for 91-day treasury notes. There is nobody—in Congress or the administration, to say nothing of all the economists—who believe these figures to be realistic—and they all acknowledge it.

Moreover, these fantasyland projections do not take into account the additional \$1-billion per-month cost for Bush's Persian Gulf imperialist commitment of more than 300,000 troops and supplies, nor the cost for bailing out the Savings and Loan industry, conservatively estimated to add more than another trillion-dollar debt to be paid over the next 30-40 years.

What is crystal clear, despite the mind-boggling figures that are involved, is that the so-called "deficit reduction" legislation—regardless of which version has emerged—could not possibly produce significant

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### CRISIS IN THE PERSIAN GULF, pgs. 5, 12



## Czechoslovakia: reform and the workers

*Prague, Czechoslovakia*—Czechoslovakia's economic reform—a much needed essential change of the whole state-owned and state-commanded economy—has now made its first important step. The government proposal of a law, sophistically called "transfer of some state-owned objects into the ownership of private physical and juridical persons," caused an immediate clash with the trade unions. The proposal is being discussed in the Federal Assembly (Czechoslovak Parliament). By the time you read these lines it will have been adopted. The "objects" in question are small shops, restaurants and service units, tradesman workshops, etc.

What the government and the unions could not agree upon was whether those employed in these units—shop assistants, waiters, artisans, etc., including the bosses—should have preference once these units are offered for sale, as early as December. The unions argued that those working in these shops should have preference if they wished to buy the shops. This as against those millionaires who may have earned their money by black market activities or as Communist Party officials during the previous regime. The government, and indeed the media, waged a real war against this proposal by asserting that since all citizens are equal before the law there should be no preferences, and besides, the "market," not the origin of the money should be the only criterion. The most important condition was that the money be used for "productive" purposes.

Three unions were involved—commerce, catering, services—who could not agree among themselves what procedure should be followed: to strike or not, and if there was a strike, how long it should last. The members were not sufficiently informed either about the precise goal to be achieved or the procedure to be followed. Chaos ensued. The public was angered in finding some shops closed, some not, some for hours, some for minutes. The most chaotic situation was in the big cities like Prague.

It all ended in a flop. The government and the unions found a compromise, but it looks more like a defeat for the unions. It is to be hoped that they learned their first lesson since more important matters are in the offing as the reform proceeds and the unions seem to be the only organized weapon the working people have at the moment.

—Correspondent

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# Review: Black women in history and life

by Diane Lee

*Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family from Slavery to the Present* by Jacqueline Jones (Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1985) 432 pp.

This well-researched work, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow* by Jacqueline Jones, covers Black women's lives and conditions of work in the period of the late 1800s to 1984. What makes this a crucial work for review is it is a most important compilation of historical facts combining archival material that has never come together in relation to Black women's history. There are 62 pages of footnotes and a 10 page bibliography with sources from Howard University, the National Archives, Wayne State University and the Library of Congress.

Jones seems to have absorbed every bit of data she collected. She discovered two kinds of labor historically practiced by Black women. The Labor of Sorrow symbolizes the type of labor that has been imposed upon Black women's lives in society—from slavery to domestic work to Black women fighting to be clerical workers. The Labor of Love implies the kind of work Black women have produced for their families.

Jones records one historical fact after another. Yet the cohesiveness she tries to achieve fails completely. What is needed is to see, in today's historical accounting of Black women's lives, a single dialectic that actually occurs between race, class and sex.

## THE IDEA OF FREEDOM MOVES

The idea that transcends contradiction and moves to another sphere is the idea of freedom. For Jones' kind of history the freedom idea is a minor term and at many times does not exist. She totally strips Black women's history of its class character. Everything—all of human history for Jones—is in relation to what she calls "a sexual division of labor" (never a social division) and in relation to race. Never is the institution of slavery, nor the aftermath of slavery, seen as part of capitalist production.

The one archival base that is missing from Jones' work is the work of Marx. Why? Is she purposefully stripping Black women's struggles from the historical class nature? Does she want us to believe that Black women's struggles for freedom, for new human relationships and for a new human society, are confined to reform: striving for better jobs, housing an equality—all under capitalism?

Two of Jones' chapters, "Freed Women? The Civil War and Reconstruction" and "The Roots of Two Revolutions 1940-1955," show the contributions and yet the limitations of this work. On the one hand she speaks of how "Emancipation was not a gift bestowed upon passive slaves by union soldiers or presidential proclamation; rather it was a process by which black people ceased to labor for their masters and sought instead to provide directly for one another."

On the other hand, the limitations Jones places on Black women's freedom become clear when she insists that "For most black women, then, freedom had very little to do with individual opportunity or independence in the modern sense. Rather, freedom had meaning primarily in a family context... [F]reedwomen derived emotional fulfillment... from their roles as wives and mothers. Jones implies throughout that relations within the Black family were untouched by the process of production as a whole and therefore remained void of all contradictions.

Yet if one is to follow this type of formula for looking at Black women's history, what does one say about women leaders like Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth—who only get passing references? Jones' work seems bereft of a world view of what it means to be a woman for totally new relations striving to totally uproot the old.

## RELATION OF THOUGHT AND REALITY

Jones takes this kind of cracked-mirror image further in the chapter "The Roots of Two Revolutions 1940-1955." There she shows the postwar decade involved "seedtime years for the modern civil rights and women's liberation movements." Yet these historical movements do not emerge out of the consciousness of Black women and men, but rather occur solely out of material conditions of life. Although Jones shows Black women were

the first to be fired from factory jobs after the war, she never seems to ask in what way did this impact on Black women's thought—how were their demands and fights extended to all areas in society?

Jones imposes her own thinking on the developing consciousness of Black women in their struggle for freedom. This is the reason her "Epilogue" ends in generalities and comes up with some male chauvinist conceptions: "[Black] women yearned for the day when they could cast off their breadwinning responsibilities and return to full-time housekeeping and child reality." Jones' call for "radical solutions" winds up to be "For the institution of 'solidarity wages' in the workplace."

What needs discussion, but is unfortunately missing in this scholarly work, is what it would take to totally reconstruct life and labor on truly human foundations—to end once and for all this racist, sexist, capitalist society.



by Mary Jo Grey



Mothers of Russian military recruits picketed the Soviet Defense Ministry in Moscow, Oct. 25, protesting violence and brutality in the country's armed forces.

Women with AIDS are facing not only the ravages of the disease, but the ravages of a discriminatory health care system that denies them medical services because they have the disease. In New York, many hospitals and clinics are refusing abortions to women infected with the AIDS virus for such unbelievable reasons as "inexperience" in treating AIDS patients. A lawsuit has been filed in federal court in Manhattan on behalf of hundreds of women, children, drug addicts and homeless people with AIDS who have been refused federal benefits by the Social Security Administration. They were told the medical conditions for which they were hospitalized were not included in the "official definition" of AIDS formulated by the Federal Center for Disease Control on studies of mostly well-off homosexual white men. The lawsuit challenges this narrow definition, saying the Center has never conducted large studies of the effects of AIDS on women and other groups of patients.

A new study by UNICEF revealed that 25% of the 12 million girls born in India each year die by the age of 15—although girls are born biologically stronger. The report, "The Lesser Child: The Girl in India," blames many of these deaths on neglect, discrimination and infanticide because of gender. The report concludes that for girls, "birth is the only equal opportunity they will ever get."

Students at Loraine (Ohio) Catholic High School are opposing their school's anti-abortion change to the Pledge of Allegiance—adding the words "for the born and unborn" after "liberty and justice for all." Said one 17-year-old student, "What's really upsetting, they are trying to make us believe what they believe about abortion. But most of us here think it's a woman's right to choose."

Public pressure forced the Oakland, Cal. Police Department to re-open 203 rape cases involving prostitutes or drug users—cases originally dropped with little or no investigation. In 37 rapes, the victims were never even interviewed! According to Bay Area Women Against Rape, "It's always been easier to write off people who don't fit in with what we think is an appropriate life style. I'm sure it happens everywhere." Oakland's rate of dropping rape cases is two and one-half times greater than the national rate.

Explore the relationship of women, labor and the Black dimension.

**Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution**  
by Raya Dunayevskaya

See literature ad on page 7.

## The Left's feminist void

Chicago, Ill.—On the weekend of October 20-21 the first Midwest Radical Scholars and Activists Conference was held. Close to a thousand came to participate in 125 workshops and four plenary sessions—to meet in halls and gather around literature tables.

This was an important and useful event. The workshop on "Politics and Resistance in the Tapestry of Low Income Women's Lives" should be singled out as one that had community activists participating. Despite some good discussions and workshops, my overall reaction was one of anger because freedom, revolution, a new human society seemed to be on very few agendas and because out of all these workshops less than 15 took up women's activism and thought directly.

At the one Plenary Session on Women's Liberation, "Why the Left Needs Feminism," the last speaker, Ann Ferguson from the University of Massachusetts, blasted the conference itself. She said that no plenary on the "Global Crisis"—especially one that takes up the Middle East—should be only men and include no feminist point of view. She critiqued the workshop panels for being so completely monopolized by men with women appearing almost exclusively on the few directly on women. At each critique the women in the audience cheered.

What answers the question of "Why the Left Needs Feminism?" (and the organization and content of this conference shows the need is still there) is women's fight for freedom—worldwide—has shown just how deep and total revolution has to be for women—for every segment of society—to be free.

A woman at my workshop on "Future Directions for Feminism," spoke of the need to reclaim language saying she hadn't heard the words "Women's Liberation" for years. That led to a discussion of the limitations of narrowing our demands to a single issue, be that the vitally important ones of abortion rights or safe streets. These are places to begin, not to end.

Most revealing when it came to the question of why the Left needs Women's Liberation, were the comments from an Iranian Marxist-Humanist man who experienced the 1979 Iranian revolution: "When the revolution started and Khomeini got power, I remember the thousands of women who went into the streets for women's rights. Even the Left ignored them and called them bourgeois. Why? They didn't see women's rights as part of the revolution. In Iran, women were told that after the revolution we will bother with the women. But we can't separate women's rights from what happened in the Middle East. The revolution has to be for the whole of society."

—Terry Moon

## Junior high student 'sick of chauvinism!'

Glenview, Ill.—After being in Junior High for a year and a quarter, I feel very depressed and confused about the chauvinistic boys and male teachers in my school. I feel this way for many reasons. One is that in my World Geography class, when we studied the Middle East, I noticed that one of the main problems there is the male chauvinism. As the teacher spoke to the class about how women in the Middle East have no say in anything, and how they are only the property of the men, the boys could not control their laughter or the words they shouted out to us, the girls.

It makes me sick to think that the boys can laugh, say and do whatever they want to the girls because they've always considered themselves stronger, more powerful and better than girls. Many of the girls say nothing about the chauvinism and act as if they don't care, but I think the girls are just scared to stick up for themselves. As for myself, if I am put down for being a girl, I will stick up for myself and say as much as I can, even though, as I see it, the boys just don't want to hear it and don't understand.

I am also sick of the chauvinistic teachers who have made some of the rudest remarks. A seventh grade science teacher has said over and over again that "Women are here only to cook and clean for the men and they should just stay home because they are not good enough to work outside." He also said, "A woman can't be president because she is not qualified enough and all the other women would be jealous."

The band teacher is also a chauvinist. When the band wasn't playing as well as they could have the teacher said, "Come on, you're playing like a bunch of girls." Only one of the 20 girls said anything back to him. When she did, the teacher said, "It's only a joke." What they don't understand is that it's not a joke to us! We don't like to be put down.

At a party I stuck up for my rights and got punched, pinched, pushed down, shoved and had nasty names called to me by the boys. All I was doing was sticking up for myself, and each and every other woman on this earth, and what happens to me? I'm beat up. I had a real hard time with that because it was about 30 boys against me and one other girl. All the other girls either said nothing or said they agreed with me 100%. But that did no good because they were only talking to me, and not talking loud enough for the boys to hear.

Although I am very nervous about sticking up for my rights, I know I have to, and will continue to, and I hope after reading this article, you can do more to help yourself, your friends and other women too.

—Jr. High School student

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# Driver overwork not just casual abuse

New York, N.Y.—“We should have gone on strike. I wanted to strike UPS so bad, because I hate management. It's like the military—they tell you to shine your shoes, when to get a haircut. I do 110 stops a day. Twenty-five are pick-ups, the rest deliveries. It took me two years to get used to this job, that's how much work it is.

“I start at 9:00 a.m., go till 8:00 or 8:30 p.m. Christmas time, we're out till 10:00 p.m. That's too many hours, I don't care how much money they pay you. I don't like eating dinner at 10:00. No matter how much money we get, they always get it back out of you, they always get their sweat from you, and that's why I wanted to strike.” That's what a UPS driver was telling me the other day.

A driver for Valerie Freight out of Norwalk, Conn. was telling me about long hours too. He was working 14-hour days, covering Long Island, Brooklyn or New Jersey out of Norwalk. He said, “Guys'll tell me, ‘Damn, you must be making good money,’ but I tell them, yeah, but my wife spends it alone. Weekends, you're so tired you can't go anywhere, all you want to do is sleep.”

I was talking to another trailer driver, this one from Louisville, Ky., driving for Navajo Express. I asked if they were union. “Hell, this is non-union. It was union but they screwed us. I've been with the same company ten years, got the same dispatcher ten years, but they say it ain't the same company. Union contract—hell, they changed the name of the company, said Armour Food Express doesn't exist anymore. They changed the company three times now. When they got rid of the union they gave us a little more money, to keep everyone from quitting. There's only a few of us old guys left. The new guys don't get the same pay. I get 22 cents a mile, plus hourly after eight hours layover. Let's see, I can do 65 mph, I clear \$500 for some 60 hours.”

I get the picture from talking to drivers that trucking is in a tremendous crisis. Nobody seems to be making the same wages, everyone is working too many hours. You talk to one freight driver, they get \$13.05 an hour to start as a casual, which I think is the going National Master Freight Agreement rate. Then you talk to a guy driving a tractor marked E-Z Transport, pulling a Brown trailer, and he tells you he gets a flat \$620 a week (before taxes) for work days that are usually about 12 hours, and that's like \$8-9 an hour.

A big problem in the unionized freight industry is the use, or abuse, of casuals. You are hired as a casual, which means you call in everyday to see if there is work for you. You are dependent on the dispatcher and terminal manager wanting to give you another day's work, so you really bust your butt out there, so you will get work tomorrow—hopefully.

It is strongly hinted or said outright that you are

## Workshop Talks

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and pace of the work throughout the plant was such that people were saying that even two days off per week was not enough rest.

If we look at the other pole of capital, Russia and East Europe, we find that, although the history and form of capitalist development differ, the result for the workers is the same: overwork for some and unemployment for others. In June 1988 News & Letters published an in-person report from Czechoslovakia in which our correspondent wrote:

“...whole industries have to face the fact that their machines are becoming obsolete....this is most visible in those branches of food production and light industries in which women represent the overwhelming part of the labor force and where working conditions are among the worst—including frequent Saturday work shifts....”

Raya Dunayevskaya in *Marxism and Freedom* wrote about Russia that “the means of production in the process of production reveal their true value in their relationship to the worker. That is to say, if an obsolescent machine was not destroyed but continued to be used in production, the worker suffers the more since the manager of production still expects him to produce articles at the socially necessary labor time set by the time clock of the world market.”

How true this must be for Russian and East European workers today as their economies enter the so-called “free world market”! At the same time, unemployment in Poland has reached 776,000 with 1.5 million unemployed expected by the end of the year; in East Germany 400,000 are unemployed with 25,000 added to that figure each week, and one million are working short hours.

### CREATE SOME DISHARMONY

Karl Marx showed in *Capital* that unemployment is a necessary product of the accumulation of wealth on a capitalist basis. The over-work of the employed workers increases the ranks of the unemployed. At the same time, the competition for jobs created by unemployment forces those who do have work to submit to overtime, speed-up and worsening working conditions in order to keep their jobs.

Marx wrote that “Every combination of employed and unemployed disturbs the ‘harmonious’ action of this law.” Isn't it time that we began to think seriously about a new type of labor movement, one that could unite all workers, both employed and unemployed?

expected to work through your coffee breaks and hour lunch, which means you give the company about one-and-a-half hours a day of free labor, in the hopes of “making the list” soon—getting on the seniority list, a permanent job.

A casual who got fired for damaging a parked car with his trailer told me, “You're slime, you're scum if you're a casual. They can do what they want with you. They had to make an example of me. The safety director says he's on our side. If he was on my side, he would have gone a few blocks and seen where the accident happened. You can't get a 45-foot trailer in there. I shouldn't have tried. But I was ‘trying to do the right thing,’ get the job done. The dispatcher rushes you all day, tells you to ‘try to make up the time’ if a customer delays you on a stop. But if anything goes wrong, it's your butt, buddy, not his.”

I talked to a driver who has been a casual at this one freight company for a year and ten days and is still not on the list. An old-timer told me, “It's all the terminal manager's decision. He can put you on the list any day, if he's feeling good that day, or he can never put you on the list.”

This is some of what I have heard and seen these last few months of talking to some workers in the trucking industry.

—John Marcotte

## Mississippi catfish workers on strike

*Editor's note: Some 800 Delta Pride Catfish workers, the vast majority Black women, are on strike at two plants in Indianola, Miss. The following story comes from two of the women activists, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1529.*

Indianola, Miss.—We have been on the picket line since the 13th of September. People who have been employed in this plant for almost ten years were making only \$4.20 an hour. Delta made an offer of 6½¢ an hour and said that was it. People refused to accept it, said that it was an insult. That is the main issue that made us come out of the plant.

When we were working they wanted us to work all kinds of hours, six days a week, sometimes 9 or 10 or 11 hours for little or nothing. We had to do the overtime, we didn't have a set time for getting off. In this contract we want a certain time to get off. The company says it can't set up a certain time for getting off. So we said give us time-and-a-half after eight hours. But they only wanted to give us time-and-a-half after 40 hours. The wages are so bad that we would work 55-60 hours just to bring home a \$250 check. The people said no more, they were not going to deal with it.

There are other problems. People have gotten fired for staying in the bathroom more than five minutes. They have a rule that you can't go to the bathroom more than six times in a week.

You had no control over the pace of the work. You had to skin at least 12 fish within one minute, or de-head 60 fish. Each department had a certain quota you had to do, a certain number of fish to debone or whatever. In order to keep up with the production a lot of the workers ended up with carpal tunnel syndrome. The company said they would give them light duty, but once you get carpal tunnel syndrome you have it for life. There is no other specific duty you can perform for Delta Catfish.

We brought in OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and they fined Delta \$33,000 because the plant was unsafe with open drains and people getting irritations from the iodine and chemicals they use in the water. As soon as OSHA left they went back into the same old practices. The water is still scalding hot, the drains are still left open.

Delta has hired a lot of scabs, but they are not producing. Take the kill line. When we were working, the kill line was running from 370,000 to 400,000 pounds per day. We estimate that the scabs are doing about 100,000 pounds per day. That is a big difference, a loss of a lot of money.

On the picket line we have been able to turn people away, and some have joined us on the picket line. But Mississippi is a right-to-work state. However, the workers who are out on strike are not going back. Delta is going to give or we are all going to go under. The morale among the strikers is very high. You don't have a lot of people being frightened as it was when we were organizing the union. People are more sure of themselves now. And we have a lot of support with people giving us groceries and funds.

Assistance can be sent to Delta Pride Strikers Finance Assistance, UFCW Local 1529, 3387 Poplar Ave. Suite 401, Memphis, TN. 38111.

*“I do not think a newspaper should be symmetrical, trimmed like an English lawn. Rather, it should be somewhat untamed, like a wild orchard, so that it will pulsate with life and shine with young talents.”*

—Rosa Luxemburg

## Bitter end of Eckrich jobs

Chicago, Ill.—Swift-Eckrich Chicago plant #6 is closing Nov. 30, and the company is working the hell out of us. Most departments are working nine or ten hours a day. Smok-ys (sausage) will work Saturdays until the closing, which the company may try to extend into December for them.

Darrell Weick and Joann Sadler, the supervisors in department 647 (hot dog packaging), just won't quit—standing behind us, watching us constantly, rushing up the moment the machine stops: “What's wrong? Why did you stop?” Why did they close down the second shift if they need all of this production?

When they announced the closing, the company said they would work with government agencies and other employers to help us obtain job training and other employment. They allowed the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training only 30 minutes to take a survey, give us a pep talk and hand us a packet with names of agencies, their addresses and telephone numbers. The company has some job openings at their St. Charles, Ill. plant. Isn't that nice! That plant is 40 miles from here, gas prices are rising, and winter is coming.

Six weeks after the closing was announced and four weeks after the first group of people were laid off, the company and the union agreed on severance provisions. Our medical benefits will be extended for three months, until March 1. We will receive our vacation pay for next year, but they aren't giving it to us, because we've already earned it.

The severance pay ranges from \$250 for people with less than two years service to \$1,000 for those with nine years or more. After taxes that won't come to even \$100 per year for a lot of people. That's no money! I spend that much at the grocery store every week. And no job, too?

—Eckrich worker

## Speed-up even in banks

Los Angeles, Cal.—I have been working for the financial and banking industry for more than 15 years and I have seen what the introduction of automation has done to our lives as workers and as human beings. We spend between eight and ten hours in front of a computer that has taken our brain and our creativity away. The atmosphere is boring and very routinized.

Each person is doing the job of approximately 15 to 25 workers, yet the managers and supervisor want more and more production every day. If one of our fellow workers leaves, his or her work is distributed among us. If we ask for help, for them to hire another person, they answer that the company wants to cut down expenses. In the meantime, the company continues investing in more buildings, more machinery, more facilities, more dead labor, in order to compete with other companies within the same industry.

In other institutions within the same industry more than 5,000 workers have been laid-off and the rumors are that more and more workers will be terminated in the years to come as machinery replaces human beings. But the work of the people that are laid-off is being rolled over to another department, which means that workers will have to produce more for the same salary.

In this industry people are living under constant stress and risk of nervous breakdown. People are complaining not only about salary but about inhuman working conditions. The despotic orders of the managers are the same as despotic orders of a foreman in a factory, but we do not even have any union. We have the same concept of an assembly line and production for production's sake, and the treatment that women receive is of open harassment and humiliation. Our production time is measured every day and every minute, and the more we produce the more they want. The hunger for profits of the capitalist can never be satisfied.

Under this exploitative, racist, sexist economic system, the working conditions and exploitation are the same wherever we go, wherever we work, be it manual or mental work. We need a new society based on human relations.

—Marcos

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## From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya Marxist-Humanist Archives

by Raya Dunayevskaya  
Founder of Marxist-Humanism

*Editor's note: The following excerpts from Raya Dunayevskaya's presentation to the National Editorial Board of News & Letters of Aug. 5, 1986, was delivered as part of the preparation for the Executive Session to the Convention of News and Letters Committees, held over Labor Day, 1986. It was entitled "The Philosophy of Marxist-Humanist Leadership." The full document, along with Dunayevskaya's marginalia added after the Convention, is available in the Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection Vol. 13, microfilm #10665. All footnotes and material in brackets are by the editors. The text was not prepared or checked by the author for publication.*

### I. The Why Post-Marx Marxists didn't (couldn't?) continue Marx's Marxism rather than be only its followers.

It is necessary first and foremost and always to have inwardized and practiced projecting the whole Body of Ideas—and this time I do not mean Marxist-Humanist Archives but Marx's Humanism, his Archives, which did not become known until a century afterwards. In this, I wish to concentrate not so much on the 1880s as a trail to the 1980s, but 1844 as containing the whole, including his *Ethnological Notebooks*. Indeed, let me further stress that the very concept of the Man/Woman relationship became so visible in the 1980s because the phenomenon of Women's Liberation had become a movement. It wasn't that in the year 1844.

It is precisely that year, 1844, that [is] the ground for seeing "The Why" orthodox Marxists were followers, not continuators of Marx's Marxism—i.e. not facing the new reality of the 1880s through 1890s, the 12 years that Engels outlived Marx. That was when the world confronted monopoly capitalism, imperialism, statification—what Marx had called the "hot-house fashion" in which the state helped capitalism to develop through colonization. It was Marx's analysis of the Accumulation of Capital that Rosa Luxemburg attacked, claiming that was Marx's position but adding that one had to wonder what Engels had done with Marx's manuscripts. (We will return to this later.)

For the 1840s, the first dividing line is 1845, Engels' collaboration in *The Holy Family*. Here is why I'm asking you to take a second, third and fourth look at the 1843-44 period, on the one hand, and 1845, on the other. Engels met Marx in August of 1844. He had written the essay called "Outline of Critique of Political Economy" which was published by Marx-Ruge in the *Deutsche-Französische Jahrbuecher*. They talked endlessly for 10 days, but Marx did not show Engels his actual manuscripts,<sup>1</sup> which he considered unfinished and which he said he would return to some day. They decided that their meeting in 1844 was an historic happening that would draw a balance sheet on the Left Hegelians for which each of them was to send to the other a chapter. Engels wrote 27 pages and Marx 250 pages—nearly a whole book. But Marx insisted that *The Holy Family* should be signed "Engels-Marx." That was 1845. That is what all Marxists ever since have been burdened with—the concept that Engels and Marx are the same. Nothing could be further from the truth, as is clear from a look at Marx's single-pager on Ludwig Feuerbach, written that same year.<sup>2</sup> Nothing makes the difference between Marx and Engels clearer than the edited version of Marx's single-pager that Engels appended to his own

1. "His actual manuscripts" refers to Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, never published in his lifetime. They were translated and first published in English in the 1958 edition of Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*.

2. Marx's "single-pager" refers to his "Theses on Feuerbach," written in April 1845. Unknown during Marx's lifetime, it was discovered by Engels and published by him, in a version differing from the original, in the appendix to Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of German Classical Philosophy in 1888*.

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## Why post-Marx Marxists didn't become continuators of Marx's Marxism

Feuerbach in 1888.

The one word is Dialectics, Dialectics pure and simple. "Dialectic proper," i.e., dialectic as Hegel expressed it in his mystical form without ever forgetting organization, but making it clear that the Absolute met its Golgotha: "The goal, which is Absolute Knowledge or Spirit knowing itself as spirit, finds its pathway in the recollection of spiritual forms (*Geister*) as they are in themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their spiritual kingdom. Their conservation, looked at from the side of their free existence appearing in the form of contingency, is History; looked at from the side of their intellectually comprehended organization, it is the Science of the ways in which knowledge appears. Both together, or History (intellectually) comprehended (*begriffen*), form at once the recollection and the Golgotha of Absolute Spirit..." (Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, p. 808, Baillie edition)

Dialectic as Marx recreated it [was] second negativity—against Feuerbachian materialism, fully aware that the Hegelian dialectic remains source for all, but insisting that once the communist revolution abolishes the class structure, only by the new "transcendence of this mediation, which is nevertheless a necessary presupposi-

were continuators of Marx's Marxism is rooted in Marx's body of ideas, its totality and being able to comprehend the new stage and work out that new in production in the heartbreaking 1880s-1890s with the new state of monopoly capitalism and the beginnings of imperialism which Marx called colonialization, which had been developed by him fully in Vol. I of *Capital*. We had better first of all get straightened out on the facts.

First of all, the Accumulation of Capital in Vol. II of *Capital*, which Luxemburg departed from but claimed it was Engels' editing, was actually worked out in Vol. I. To this day, the English edition of Vol. I that Engels edited is not the edition as Marx left it. Not only had Engels left out parts of the 1875 fundamental additions to fetishism of commodities, but when it comes to the center of all disputes—Accumulation of Capital—what Marx had written for Vol. I, Part Seven, included the part on the "So-Called Primitive Accumulation." Engels decided to create a new Part Eight for that section which should have been inseparable from the Accumulation of Capital.

Now, when it comes to Vol. II of *Capital*, that is not the way Marx conceived Vol. II to be. He had left Vol.



Rosa Luxemburg addressing a rally prior to World War I. The picture on the right is of Karl Marx; that on the left is of Ferdinand Lassalle.

tion, does there arise positive Humanism, beginning from itself."

In a word, Marx's critique of the dialectic (whether it be 1844 or 1867 or 1875-83) is the trail to the 1980s, when organization is spelled out anew for this age, and when the Self-Determination of the Idea is grasped as the Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty in new organizational forms.

This has no precedent. I do have to go to uncharted roads in the dialectics of organization. I do know what it will not be—Trotsky's concept of the party, any more than Lenin's vanguardism (we will return to this later).

Remember that, though Engels' clear statement to the new edition in the 1880s of the *Communist Manifesto* asserted that Marx alone, in 1844, had related orally all that we now (1888) call Historical Materialism and that Marx alone was its sole author—we have been burdened with the concept that Engels and Marx were one, and were brought up as Engelsian Marxists, not as Marx's Marxists. This seemed right to the German Social Democracy precisely because Engels was as sharply critical of Lassalle as was Marx and was faithful to Marx for 50 long years and had Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Program* published. This does not change the historic truth that Engels was a post-Marx Marxist, an original as the pragmatists insist, who do not see the half-way dialectic that Engels introduced with his "rigorous" materialistic version. The diversity was, indeed, not due only to the 12 years that Engels outlived Marx. The start, the determinism, the Feuerbachianism, began in 1845, continued throughout his life, and was not Marx's Marxism, long before his first work after Marx's death, *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. It begins with the way Engels edited (comprehended) Marx's 1845 single-pager against Feuerbach that he appended to his own lengthy, very different pamphlet, his *Ludwig Feuerbach and the end of German Classical Philosophy*.

The WHY post-Marx Marxists didn't (couldn't) become continuators of Marx's Marxism, is that the coming stage of production that Marx pointed to with his concept of the centralization and concentration of capital to where it would be held in the hands of a single capitalist or capitalist corporation, was not concretized by any in the 1880s when Engels' publication of Vol. II of *Capital* caused the raging disputes on the Accumulation of Capital. To have been able to confront the new stage when it appeared would have meant the inwardizing and practicing projecting [of] Marx's body of ideas.

The new continent of thought and revolution that Marx discovered in the 1840s demanded so total an uprooting of capitalism—its production and its culture—its politics and all its alienations—in a word, its dehumanized existence. It meant all human relations, beginning with Man/Woman, centering on Labor, and at the same time extending it to culture (yes, he used the word class culture).

Why no Marxists, beginning with Frederick Engels,

II and what we call Vol. III as Vol. II. What we now know as *Theories of Surplus Value* was called by Marx "History of Theory" and was to be Vol. III and was written first.

We cannot here go into detail on that or the 1880s and 1890s—and we all know very well how the study of the Russian economy as state-capitalist rooted itself in Accumulation of Capital, Vols. I through IV.<sup>3</sup> The point here is that all the debates on Accumulation of Capital [in] Vol. II were naturally stopped once World War I broke out. That was no debate; the test of Marxists was to transform the imperialist war into civil war, and that produced the Russian and German revolutions.

As we saw, Marx's Archives were not just a question of the parts of the Archives that were unknown, that is to say, that neither Engels nor Eleanor Marx had read the whole. Yet it wasn't because something wasn't known, as the 1844 Manuscripts weren't. Marx no sooner broke with capitalism in 1843 than he discovered a whole new continent of thought and of revolution, by no means limited to the necessity of overthrowing capitalism. The greatness of the 1880-81 *Ethnological Notebooks* was not (I repeat, not) "new" in the sense in which we read it now, Marx starting something entirely different from what characterized his whole life. Quite the contrary. The greatness of Marx's *Ethnological Notebooks* is that all of the new Marx was finding out about what we now call the Third World confirmed what he had said about pre-capitalism. You could see that in his greatest work, *Capital*, as well as in the *Grundrisse*, as well as the 1840s and 1880s. As early as 1843, in the essay, "On the Jewish Question," (actually on religion in general), he made it crystal clear that he wasn't talking just about civil rights. To uproot capitalism, said Marx, it was necessary to abolish exploitation and its culture and the only way to do that is through "the revolution-in-permanence." This was his concept, his action, his vision through all his life.

### II. Why it is also necessary to contrast the 1986-87 Executive Session to the 1985-86 Executive Session.

In concretizing that for our age, as the Marxist-Humanist Archives have shown, it was necessary at all times to begin with the new in the decade and to see that that newness, its discontinuity with all that came before it, was not a break with a continuity with Marx's Humanism.

We did not consider what form of organization that would take when the first worker's state was transformed into the state-capitalist society we know it to be; what loomed large on the horizon was the giant figure of Trotsky who fought Stalin. The fact that the expulsion from the Communist Party signified only an op-

(continued on page 11)

3. This refers to Dunayevskaya's analysis of Russia as a state-capitalist society in the 1940s. See *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, Vols. I-III and XII.



## Editorial

# Israel plunges toward barbarism

The Israeli border police's horrendous gunning down of Palestinians at the Al Aksa mosque in Jerusalem Oct. 8—killing 21, wounding 150—marks the latest degenerate stage of Israel's barbaric rule as occupier of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem. For over two decades Israel has betrayed its own anti-imperialist origins by its imperial rule over the Palestinian people. Today it has reached its most vile moment. Begin and Sharon's despicable invasion of Lebanon in 1982, which led to the massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, has now, under the rule of Shamir and his ultra-orthodox nationalist cohorts, become daily policy within East Jerusalem and the occupied territories.

The slaughter of the 21 Palestinians was only the logical expression of the Israeli government's response throughout the 37 months of the intifada, the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. Tear-gas and expulsion, dynamite and the billyclub, and now the bullet, has been the inhuman Israeli response.

### ISRAELI GOVERNMENT MOVES FURTHER AND FURTHER TO THE RIGHT

It is not a question of whether or not the Israeli government's shooting of Palestinians at the mosque was planned. But what was planned was the Israeli state reaction to the uproar following it.

First came their fabrications which sought to link the stone throwing which preceded the shootings to outside forces, including Saddam Hussein. No, the cause was right within Israel's occupation, beginning with the home-grown ultra-religious zealots who have continually called for the destruction of the mosque and the building of a Jewish temple on the site. The present Israeli government is based precisely on such fanatical thought. To this can be added the Israeli government's constant drive to repopulate East Jerusalem, including proposals for settling Jewish refugees from Russia into areas populated with Palestinians.

Next came Israel's refusal to allow any United Nations fact-finding mission to enter Israel or the occupied territories to investigate the shooting. The Israeli government appointed its own three-member commission which quickly proceeded to whitewash the shootings, blaming the Palestinians for provoking the entire response. Israel has taken further police-state measures, sealing off Jerusalem from any Palestinians not living there and barring any movement of Palestinians from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into Israel.

We must now ask, what will happen to the Palestinian people within the occupied territories? For it is not alone that Israel has moved further and further to the right; it is that the Palestinian question today lies within a profoundly changed Middle East world, one wrought by the U.S. armed presence in the Persian Gulf following Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

Take those Arab countries which previously had at least paid lip service to the Palestinian question. The presence of 200,000-plus U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf has caused dramatic changes. The most recent meeting of the Arab League produced a sharp 11-10 split against the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) draft reso-

lution which sought to condemn not only Israel, but U.S. policy toward the Palestinians. All the countries which voted against the resolution support U.S. war policy in the Persian Gulf.

### THE DANGER TO PALESTINIAN MASSES

The danger to the Palestinian masses lies not only within Israel, but within the Arab world as well, including contradictions within the Palestinian movement. With Israel moving further and further to the right, will the ground of the Palestinian struggle be totally reduced to the narrow nationalism of Israeli vs. Arab? Will it even be reduced to right-wing Jewish fanaticism vs. Islamic fundamentalism?

The greatness of the intifada when it began was that it was both indigenous to the masses of the West Bank and the Gaza strip and held out hope for projecting a vision of the future different from all existing state powers. But where is the vision of a freedom-filled future in the Middle East today? Will the search for such a vision be squeezed into the narrow vortex of nationalist and fundamentalist politics?

That PLO leader Arafat has decided to throw in his lot with Saddam Hussein, the butcher of his own Kurdish and Iraqi population, shows how deep are the contradictions in the Palestinian movement. Arafat's flirting with Hussein today is only the other side of the coin of his previous flirtation with the U.S. in trying to get Palestinian-Israeli talks going.

As for the U.S., it is just as opposed to any movement of self-determination for the Palestinians as the Israeli government. Today the U.S. concern is with keeping its newly-formed Arab anti-Saddam Hussein coalition together by putting "back in the bottle as quickly as possible" any "diversions," i.e., discussion of self-determination for the Palestinians. Where there are differences between Israel and the U.S., they lie over how to thwart a movement for self-determination, when Israel's drive is for "Eretz Israel" (greater Israel), while the U.S.'s is to extend its imperial presence in the Middle East.

The question is how to begin anew in face of such retrogressive counter-revolutionary events in deed and in thought. What is being lost is a liberating vision of the future from which to begin anew.

Within Israel the peace movement needs to concretely oppose the fascist policies of the Shamir government by working out the vision of an Israel based on new human beginnings, one which overturns Israel's class rule from within as well as demanding withdrawal from the occupied lands.

Within the Palestinian movement, any vision of the future tied to the likes of a Saddam Hussein or the Islamic fundamentalists is a dead end. The Arab-Israeli question simply cannot be reduced to the "future" of a mosque or a temple in Jerusalem.

Realizing human freedom for both Israelis and Palestinians depends upon working out a vision of the future rooted neither in religious fundamentalism nor in the capitalist class rule of Arab and Israeli rulers. It must instead be a vision which both transcends narrow nationalism and allows for the expression of national self-determination of Arab and Israeli alike.

## Protests coast to coast oppose Bush war drive

### New York

Five thousand people rallied at Columbus Circle Oct. 21 to protest Bush's war drive in the Middle East. A group of protesters came marching from Harlem, and other groups rode public transit with banners displayed. Several youth we spoke with said this was the most racially and ethnically diverse rally they had ever attended.

Speakers expressed outrage at the war drive abroad as urgent needs go unmet at home in housing, health-care, education, and jobs. Many speakers saw the Bush Administration carrying on a war against them at home as they demanded rights which challenged the kind of human relations this exploitative, racist, sexist society has. A woman said that the relationship of New York's Black Movement would be crucial for the anti-war movement to really make a new beginning beyond the anti-Vietnam war movement. The crowd seemed to have many looking for information and ideas to put the Middle East crisis in a deeper context.

One woman told us before the march began that "I'm really bothered by the way the nightly news shows images of women in the military serving in Saudi Arabia. They're trying to show us that these are the rights we've won. This is our history they are appropriating."

### Bay Area

Over 5,000 marched in San Francisco on Oct. 20 against the U.S. mobilization in the Persian Gulf. Chants like "Hell, no, we won't go! We won't die for Texaco!" and "Bring the troops home!" expressed mass opposition to Bush's unprecedented military build-up and drive for war.

While the organizers of the march harkened back to the anti-Vietnam war era and limited their thinking and discussion to slogans from the '60s, many of the new generation sense that the crisis is now much deeper. There were signs against Hussein as well as against Bush. Our leaflet, posing the new society as the opposite of war, generated a lot of discussions.

As the marchers assembled at UN Plaza to hear speakers and then left for Delores Park two miles away, dozens of homeless people and unemployed Latino youth were left behind.

A Black student from Berkeley who marched in a "People of Color" contingent told us, "We tried to bring a new element into the march. When we passed the projects, we made up some chants of our own—'No drug wars at home. No oil wars abroad,' and when the leaders chanted 'U.S. out of the Persian Gulf,' we added 'Out of East L.A. and West Oakland!'"

### Los Angeles

On Oct. 20 an animated and serious crowd of 700 to 800 demonstrators gathered in Los Angeles at Leimert Park, located at a major intersection of a Black neighborhood, to protest Bush's war drive in the Middle East.

The crowd, mostly non-Black, represented colleges and high schools from all over southern California. Alongside youth were the powerful voices of mothers of U.S. soldiers in Saudi Arabia. One of them read a letter from her son calling himself and the other soldiers "hostages no one talks about."

Some of the most eloquent voices never made it to the podium. These included several women from the neighborhood who had come upon the demonstration unexpectedly. This is what one of them told News & Letters:

"I'm against all the U.S. troops being over there in the Middle East. As Blacks we know very well the way the U.S. government goes over to another continent and takes the wealth from the people who live there. Human lives will be lost over something material, oil."

"I deal with the gang problem here in the community, and the government reminds me of just one more gang—only the gang members from the ghetto are punished far worse than the government leaders ever are. We need to be putting our money and resources into dealing with all the problems we have right here at home, and not sending our youth to fight other youth overseas."

### Detroit

On Oct. 20, over 500 lively demonstrators filled the sidewalks of downtown Detroit to protest the war in the Middle East. Students, working youth, anti-war activists from the Vietnam era, parents of draft-aged youth, and other Detroit citizens marched a half-mile to a teach-in on the crisis in the Gulf.

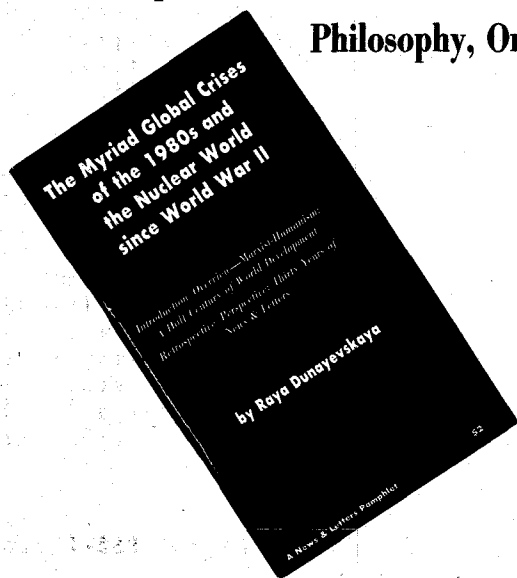
The most interesting discussions occurred outside the packed auditorium:

A Black woman, spoke about how she could not see that any government existing today truly supports freedom for its people, and that if we are to have a world without wars, we will have to create our own society, not follow any plans laid out by state powers.

One white high school youth spoke of how women and Blacks have their own vision of a free world, but that often people try to impose one on them, just like his teachers try to force feed him their own views of "freedom."

## What is Marxist-Humanism?

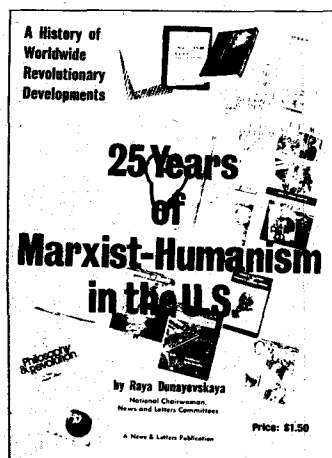
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Philosophy, Organization and Newspaper



"To have dared to venture onto the untrodden paths of 'Absolute Idea as New Beginning' had taken a whole decade of digging into the Hegelian dialectic and of listening to the new voices of the turbulent 1960s and early 1970s. The record can also be traced in the battle of ideas with great Marxists, from Lukacs to Marcuse, from Adorno to Rosdolsky. The philosophic dimension became increasingly inseparable from analysis of current events."—from *The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s...* (1986)

"What we had done from our birth—listening to the new voices from below, singling out new revolutionary forces, seeing that the movement from practice is itself a form of theory—does not free the Marxist intellectuals from their responsibility. Indeed, what Hegel called "The Self-Thinking Idea" cannot itself think, without people thinking it. It remains the intellectuals' responsibility to work out a new relationship of theory and practice."

—from 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. (1980)



### Special Offer!

Raya Dunayevskaya's 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. and *The Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II* are now both available from N&L for \$3.00

## CONFRONTING TODAY'S DRIVE TO WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

What was most striking to me in the last several issues of N&L is that they showed that the uniqueness of the Marxist-Humanist stance on today's drive to war is certainly not alone the question of singling out Hussein's nature, although the precise designation "counter-revolutionary anti-imperialist" is uniquely Marxist-Humanist. Nor is it even a question of the "vision of the future" expressed as a generality, because there are many others who focus on the main war is at home, that military spending is at the expense of the homeless, etc., etc. What is uniquely Marxist-Humanist is rather the process inseparable from the goal. As Raya Dunayevskaya put it in the October issue of N&L, "The old radicals also say they are for a new society. Indeed, they would want it—IF you would give it to them on a silver platter on which all workers kneeled, asking 'to be led.' What they all forget is that a new society is THE human endeavor or it is nothing."

Michelle Landau  
Los Angeles

\* \* \*

What will happen now? They've been trying to get people to volunteer, but now they've used them all up and nobody else is volunteering. They're beginning to rotate them back after a month, but it looks like the next group will be there for three months. If I get called up I hope I come back in one piece.

National Guardsman  
Chicago

\* \* \*

Although the anti-war march here in Detroit was about 500-600 and largely Left, I believe from talking to people in the city that there is widespread disillusionment and opposition to the war, especially among the Black community.

Activist  
Detroit

\* \* \*

I don't think Hussein ever intended to invade Saudi Arabia. If he had, he would never have waited for the U.S. to build up its forces there. The U.S. military was looking for a reason to keep from having their budget slashed now that the Cold War is over.

Black worker  
Chicago

\* \* \*

The Editorial statement you ran against Bush's troop deployment in the Persian Gulf is unique in showing the counter-revolutionary history of Saddam Hussein. Ba'athism holds out a mythical Arab unity which is secular, but which always had an affinity for fascism. The only lack in the Editorial was not enough specificity on who are the concrete forces of opposition within Iraq.

Long-time activist  
Detroit

\* \* \*

With the Baker policy, the U.S. will stay in the Persian Gulf for years to come. If the U.S. does go to war in the Middle East, the Arab masses will permanently turn against them; and the longer the crisis lasts, the more the crisis with Israel will develop. The present nationalism we see in the area, however, is a response to U.S. imperialism—it will die out if U.S. domination ends.

Behzad  
New York

\* \* \*

Raya Dunayevskaya hailed the Iranian Revolution in 1979, and in her first Political-Philosophic Letter on it she pointed to the unfolding of contradictions from within it, as she singled out all the new forces challenging Khomeini before he came to power. She pointed to the way the Left was falling for Khomeini's anti-imperialism, just like a part of the Left in Latin America had earlier been fooled into supporting Peron's anti-imperialism. Hussein's use of counter-revolutionary anti-imperialism today has to be seen in this historic context.

Cyrus Noveen  
Los Angeles

\* \* \*

How do I feel about troops being sent to the Middle East? I just hope people

will see the difference between Hussein and the majority of the Arab people living in the Middle East.

Latina worker  
Chicago

\* \* \*

On Friday, Oct. 19, over 100 protesters gathered to voice their anti-war sentiments at Loyola University. The group mainly consisted of Loyola students, but there were also students from nearby universities as well as non-student participants. The rally was organized by the U.S. Out of the Gulf Committee at Loyola.

There were six main speakers as well as a number of impromptu speakers. One speaker, a member of the Marxist-Humanist Forum at Loyola, spoke beautifully about the need for total opposition to Bush's drive for single world domination. Many other speakers brought up the crisis at home, such as the growing number of homeless people, the S&L scandal, etc.

What became increasingly apparent during the rally was the separation many of the students were making between the war at home and the war abroad. Although speakers spoke of the war at home, they spoke of it as a priority to war—not as something inherently related to war. People spoke of imperialism as a conspiracy, not as a natural outgrowth of capitalism.

Student activist  
Chicago

\* \* \*

Opposing Bush's actions today isn't alone a question of focusing on the war at home or being for revolution. Many of the youth I speak with don't like the war footing but tailend Bush because they ask who else will stop Saddam Hussein. Philosophy is the only thing practical if we want to create a different future.

Ron Brokmeyer  
Oakland, Cal.

### ON WAR, PEACE, AND REVOLUTION



Things feel very precipitous overall—at a new level. I love Raya's phrase, "the pull of the future"—I have felt sometimes that the future is trying to speak with us here in the present, that we need all the clarity of minds like Raya's "On War and Peace" to help us hear over the official jamming.

Adrienne Rich  
Santa Cruz, Cal.

\* \* \*

The writing by Raya Dunayevskaya in the October issue of N&L drove home how the drive to war is built into the very structure of capitalism in the era of state-capitalism. That single world domination is what Hitler reached for, and almost succeeded. After defeating him, Russia and America each strove for single world domination. Today America drives for that single world domination, having seemingly defeated Russia. The more it drives toward it, the more American capitalism brings us to the brink of war and total destruction. But the capitalists have no choice in the matter; they must drive for single world domination or perish.

Sociologist  
Indiana

\* \* \*

I thought the Editorial in the October issue of N&L spoke so much to the writing by Raya Dunayevskaya in the same issue (see "To the barbarism of war we pose the new society"), not so much on a one-to-one level or even on the level of applying Dunayevskaya's conclusions to the present war situation, but in the way the Editorial brought the questions of a war "out there" to the relations at the point of production. That was precisely the focus in Dunayevskaya's emphasis on the domination of dead over living labor as the decisive factor in capitalist militarism.

Maya  
Chicago

# Readers' Views

The October issue of N&L was excellent, especially the Editorial and Raya's column. They show how a Marxist-Humanist looks at a situation and it's very concrete. In my discussions with Iranian revolutionaries, they seem always overwhelmed with practical questions and lose sight of the meaning of what is going on. Raya's column looks at a concrete, practical situation and addresses those issues of war and peace, but always with a vision. This is a division between Marxist-Humanism and the whole left, not just the Iranian Left.

Ali Atesh  
Illinois

\* \* \*

I have often heard radicals say that the opposite of war is revolution, but Dunayevskaya places within that the theoretic responsibilities as well, as seen from her writing in the October N&L. I want to think more about her statement "We do not shift to the shoulders of the workers what is our task, the theoretic clearing of the ground for the reconstruction of society on new beginnings."

Anti-war activist  
Wisconsin

### DIALOGUE BETWEEN CONTINENTS



I have read in your June 1990 issue an essay about my country, the Philippines. To me, it is not enough to say or suggest "a new beginning" for the Filipino revolutionary. We have experienced a lot of opportunities to renew ourselves and yet we keep going back to zero. I believe what we need most is an internal revolution, a re-evaluation of self, going back to the very basis of human values. After this, there would be no stopping us and the result of this eventually would be a newly-directed Philippines.

Subscriber  
Quezon City, Philippines

\* \* \*

N&L helps us in keeping touch with the ongoing struggles in Latin America as well as the U.S. The commercial media from the West, widely circulated here, gives a false picture of America as heaven on earth. Only through media like N&L can we come to know about the struggles of the majority of the people in your region. It is important for us to relate the conditions in different cultures who have different languages because we are equal in trying to fight all kinds of oppression.

Steady readers  
Bihar, India

\* \* \*

Thank you for sending us News & Letters—your periodical is one that we find full of useful information for our struggle. We want to continue to receive your publication in our mutual interest.

Confederation of Indigenous Peoples  
of Eastern Bolivia  
Santa Cruz, Bolivia

### WOMEN IN CLASS SOCIETY

I can't agree with people like the lesbian separatist philosophy professor Marilyn Frye who urge women to be "economically independent"—it isn't possible under capitalism. Women's reality, even in this richest country of the world, is to be trapped into needing men's help. What Frye doesn't see is that the crucial question is what kind of work should human beings do—live in order to work, or work to make society better? Working out new human relations as an ongoing process is what will create something new.

Miriam  
Detroit

\* \* \*

East Europe is surely going backwards as seen in the lopsided vote to outlaw all abortion in Poland. Women always said abortion was a matter up to them, with God and the priest having

no place in it. People like Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik, former Marxists, are now the essence of anti-Marxist, only allowing discussion about getting back to capitalism.

Urszula Wislanka  
San Francisco

### AMERICA'S HIDDEN HISTORY

When I was visiting peasants in the villages of El Salvador last year, they would ask me where I'm from. As soon as I told them I was from Chicago, they would ask me about the Haymarket Martyrs and the origins of May Day in Chicago. I was amazed to find out that Salvadoran peasants know more about the U.S. revolutionary labor history than many youth here. We don't hear anything about that history in our schools.

Cristina  
Chicago

\* \* \*

I was glad so many people watched the PBS series on the Civil War, even though it gave relatively little attention to the role of the Black regiments which helped turn the war around. Though we are beginning to get some discussions of this since the film *Glory* came out, all-too-few Americans know of Marx's insistence that "a single Negro regiment will have an electrifying effect on Southern nerves." The American roots of Marxism still remain largely unknown.

Student of History  
New York

### CRISIS IN BRITAIN

In the United Kingdom political situation there are at long last shifts in popular perceptions of how society should be. Reformism is gaining credibility as a political option for the system. The usual vehicle for channeling and dissipating reforming zeal is the Labour Party and the trade union bosses. In order to crush and distance itself from its own internal left-wing critics, the Labour Party leadership has taken the LP to the right. This now puts the LP out of tune with popular perceptual changes that have taken place.

The poll tax is a strong political issue that has aroused and activated politically disparate layers in British society. The present decoupling of the LP from the new state of affairs has given opportunities for socialists to operate. The Gulf crisis makes predictions of domestic politics difficult. One thing that has emerged is a reactionary economic and military bloc forming around the European economic community.

Bob D.  
England

### HUMAN RIGHTS IN PERU

When world leaders converged in New York for the UN celebration of children in September-October, they were met by protests which gave the lie to their humanitarianism. Demonstrators exposed the mass murders of civilians and dissidents in El Salvador, Korea, and Peru. At a meeting on the situation in Peru, members of the National Human Rights Coordinating Committee described the proliferation of groups defending life and human rights in response to the growing torture and execution practiced by the government and the Shining Path guerrillas. Peru had the largest number of disappeared in the world last year, 404.

Some of the activists in the human rights groups have themselves been killed and threatened in the last year, but the principle victims are the poor and urban squatters, as well as left and labor leaders. In spite of the violence, there has been an increase in mass organizations such as miners, teachers, and urban women's groups, as well as peasant defense committees who must fight the government and guerrillas to survive.

Ann Jaclard  
New York

**THE "TWO SIDES OF AMERICA"**

I have been to West Africa, I have visited the Miami area (and right before the last outbreak of riots there) and I have lived here in Chicago for many years, and one thing I've seen all over that even the best leader never gets to express all of what masses of people demand. The leaders are always one step behind. How do you get around this separation of the Black leaders from their supposed followers?

**Black activist  
Chicago**

We were able to take a visitor from East Europe to see Detroit—from 12th St., Poletown and Chrysler Jefferson to Belle Isle and Grosse Pointe. What made a sharp impression were all the abandoned and demolished houses here. He told us, "Nobody in Europe knows the two sides of America," and that he can't tell others there about the "blessings" of the "free market." At the same time we met a professional woman who had just moved here from Texas and she had also been suffering "culture shock" to find such general devastation, on the one hand, and people who still honored picket lines, on the other.

**Librarian  
Detroit**

Last week one of the nighttime cleaning men where I work fell and seriously injured himself while he was in the computer room, requiring nine stitches in his head. He was in there for several hours before anyone could get to him because the room can only be entered with a code number, which almost no one knows. Blood was everywhere when he came to work the next morning. Supposedly security found some liquor bottles hidden in the room, so the very first thing the boss did was fire the injured man! All they seem to care about protecting those damn computers, not the people who have to work around them. My parents spent their whole lives working in factories and didn't want me to work in one because they'd seen so many people get injured. Wonder what they would say about this new

kind of factory.

**"White collar" worker  
Chicago**

We are now headed into our fourth threatened furlough in less than two months! The media are idiots. They keep talking about thousands of federal workers when 2.4 million will be sent home. Even our paltry 3% raise in January has to be subtracted out of our already reduced budgets. That means not filling vacant jobs, which is just double-talk for speed-up among those who are still working. I already took a huge pay cut to get out of a job where they worked me half to death. How much more can they take before I have to start paying them to "let" me come to work!

**Fed-Up fed  
Illinois**

The other day I was helping to escort women into a health clinic where they were being harassed by anti-abortionists. One of these "God-fearing Christians" came at me swinging an axe, and calling me a "whore," a "slut," a "pig." They supposedly are against "killing babies"—but these right-wing anti-abortionists are the very ones who are most militant in supporting Bush's drive for war.

**Chicana anti-war feminist  
Claremont, Cal.**

I'd like to think that N&L speaks for all war victims past and present because "unless you begin with a change in production relations, nothing else changes either." Capitalism's military madness will continue creating more and more war victims under the banner of a free market system.

**Jerry  
Chicago**

**CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL**

Lou Turner's report on Ethiopia (August-September N&L), could not be more disturbing. How can the people of this world allow imperialism to author

such atrocity? I would hope the collusion of the superpowers would shift some of the billions spent to get Africans to kill one another to help the people now facing famine—even with their slim capitalist strings attached. It is no doubt too much to hope for. It's against the grain of capitalism to put people as the priority.

**Prisoner  
Washington State**

I have read your publication *American Civilization on Trial* and was pleasantly surprised. It tells the truth without the chauvinism I have encountered so often in the white Left. I have sent it on to others I know in the struggle.

**African-American revolutionary  
California**

**HEGEL, MARX,  
AND WOMEN'S  
LIBERATION**



The "Philosophic Dialogue" published in the last issue by Patricia Altenbernd Johnson was such a breath of fresh air. She was not afraid to relate Hegelian-Marxism to feminism. At a moment when a lot of feminist theorists try to dismiss Hegel and Marx's relevance to women on the grounds of their being male, it was a truly brave statement on her part.

**Revolutionary feminist  
California**

In the October N&L in *Philosophic Dialogue*, Patricia Altenbernd Johnson points out that, unlike the non-methodological conclusions of other feminists who focus on the discussion of the family in Hegel, Raya's breakthrough on Hegel's Absoluteness show a pathway out of the exploitative society. Raya shows the indispensability of Hegel because of his method, which allows for a "free release," and does not stop at a transition into other.

Johnson begins an important dialogue about creating our world, and then be-

coming free from it and within it. How can Raya's method and her development of "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning" lead us to a world where we are not subjected to the "old" male chauvinism, but where all of us, men and women, are truly free?

**Julia Jones  
De Kalb, Ill.**

How do we get back to the quest for full freedom? Johnson finds a method in Hegel, and identifies Dunayevskaya's essential rootedness in Hegel's Absoluteness. But wasn't Dunayevskaya's philosophy called "Marxist-Humanism" because it was Marx's re-creation of Hegel's dialectic of liberation that Dunayevskaya's own re-creation of Marx's humanism was founded upon? Isn't Dunayevskaya's rootedness in Marx's dialectic of liberation what allows her to say that her *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future* is actually about the dialectics of revolution and is what I call a window on her whole body of ideas?

**Susan Van Gelder  
Detroit**

**TWO OF A KIND**

First we get Gorbachev trying to force a merger between two different economic plans, each awful, then finally putting his weight behind the "500-day" plan to supposedly rescue the disastrous economy. Now we see Bush doing the very same thing in trying to "merge" the "budget-reduction" plans of the Democrats and Republicans. Who says Bush and Gorbachev aren't twins?

**Jan Kollwitz  
Chicago**

I was re-reading my bound volume of *News & Letters* and I couldn't help notice how Raya Dunayevskaya had labeled Reagan and Gorbachev "Two of a Kind" back in 1985. At that time, an awful lot of people thought that was an extreme statement. Today, no one thinks so.

**Old radical  
New York**

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## Essay Article

# An inside view of debates on alienation in China

by X, Chinese student

### I. Introduction

Although I had met the term alienation several times in the titles of some academic journals, I had not paid more attention to it until the Chinese government started a mass movement to criticize the discussion of alienation under socialism, a discussion which had developed in the academic field by 1983.\* I still remember the first day when we were asked to criticize this academic discussion of alienation under socialism. It was in a scheduled political study time on Tuesday afternoon. (Every Tuesday and Friday afternoon was political study time in our work unit.) We were asked to study an article in

\* The discussion of alienation in academia can be traced back to 1978. The key person in the discussion was Wang Ruoshui. The Chinese government suppressed the discussion in 1983. Hu Qiaomu, an official ideologist, played an important role in the suppressing of the discussion.

## Review: The dialectic and Marx's Capital

*The Logic of Marx's Capital: Replies to Hegelian Criticisms* by Tony Smith, State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y., 1990, 271 pp.

Tony Smith's new study of the relation of Marx's *Capital* to Hegel's *Logic* is a serious work that students of the dialectic will be interested in. It is because the philosophic foundations of Marxism raise vital issues for revolutionaries struggling to overcome the restricted vision of post-Marx Marxism in both thought and organization that Smith will find an audience. Yet Smith is so concerned with proving that a linear progression of categories makes *Capital* intelligible as a whole that he loses sight of both Marx's creativity of cognition and the self-activity of labor, the Subject, which gives *Capital* its humanist foundation from beginning to end.

### COMPREHENSION OF THE DIALECTIC

In Part I on "Philosophic Foundations," Smith clearly lays out the purpose of the work as investigating "1. How did Marx employ dialectical logic in his theory? 2. What purpose does it serve? 3. Did he get it right?" But what is Smith's comprehension of the dialectic, does he get it right?

Of all the Hegelian categories, there is none that Smith objects to so much as the Absolute Idea and its "self-activity." According to Smith, the Notion seems to be self-acting but self-acting simply means that its content is "objectively and intrinsically determined." Smith calls self-activity an unfortunate

"extravagance of language" which Hegel employed in order to appeal to his more religious readers. In his impatience to prove that Hegel's absolute method is empirical and concerned with necessary, objective transitions rather than any metaphysical supersubject, Smith actually is opposing the concept of the self-developing Subject. Smith explains what he thinks the dialectic is and is not in the following quote:

"I discuss a number of passages that establish that Hegel's methodology involves a reconstruction of an object realm in thought rather than any process of thought 'creating' its object out of itself. Hegel did indulge in picture-thinking that suggests the latter. However in the context of Hegel's own philosophy such picture-thinking is clearly assigned to a pre-philosophical level, a fact that many of his critics (including Marx) have failed to realize." (p.xi)

Although it is clear that Smith thinks that Marx himself had some lapses in philosophic rigor, he attempts to defend Marx's development of the dialectic in *Capital* in opposition to those who argue that Marx failed to meet rigorous Hegelian standards. Yet it seems that Smith's concept of method is more appropriate to the formal, external "inquiring cognition" of analytic thought, which Hegel describes in the "Idea of Cognition," than the chapter on the Absolute Idea where Hegel writes that "the transcendence of the opposition between Notion and Reality rests on this subjectivity alone."

At the end of the chapter on the "Idea of Cognition," Hegel himself specifies how cognition in the Absolute Idea will differ from that of inquiring and practical cognition: "Accordingly in this result cognition is restored and united with the practical Idea; the actuality found as given is at the same time determined as the realized absolute end; but whereas in questing cognition this actuality appeared merely as an objective world without the subjectivity of the Notion, here it appears as an objective world whose inner ground and actual subsistence is the Notion. This is the absolute Idea." (Miller, *Science of Logic*, p. 823)

Hegel then begins to develop a new subjective-objective dialectic in the Absolute Idea whose method is self-movement, the absolute negativity of the self-thinking Idea. This method of self-development is far from being what Smith calls "picture-thought" or an immediate generation of the objective world of Nature out of thought. Yet, the single category which Hegel makes central to the *Science of Logic* is the one Smith rejects—the creative self-thinking Idea.



People's Daily (Renmin Ribao), one of the official newspapers of the Chinese Communist Party. The article sharply criticized the discussion of alienation under socialism in China.

But, I wondered, what is alienation? Most of my colleagues had not heard of it, including the Secretary of the Branch Committee of the Chinese Communist Party of our unit. Some of my colleagues asked me to explain it because they knew I used to read social science books. However, I did not know the exact meaning either at that time. This led me to read Marx directly in order to make clear the concept and to understand the movement of critique as well as to answer the colleagues' questions.

After I got some ideas from Marx's *1844 Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* and explained them to my colleagues, most of them said publicly or privately to me that alienation as described by Marx still existed in China. In addition, they said that it was

### THE DIALECTIC OF THE NOTION IN MARX'S CAPITAL

Part II of Smith's book is called "The Systematic Ordering." Despite Smith's comprehension of Marx's *Capital* as "a systematic theory of economic categories constructed according to dialectical logic," it is necessary to raise several objections to his reading of *Capital*. Smith holds that *Capital* corresponds to Book Two of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, the Doctrine of Essence, rather than Book Three, or what Hegel refers to as "Subjective Logic or The Doctrine of the Notion." Whether this is because Smith follows the post-Marx Marxist view that what Marx analyzed as the commodity form of capital dominates over the human subject, or because Essence discloses the dialectic of contradiction which characterizes the class struggle at the point of production relations, the fact is that in the very first chapter of *Capital*, Marx has us confront not only Essence, but Notion, i.e., the concept of the future society of "freely associated labor."

Smith misses this dimension of labor because Marx did not merely "construct" economic categories "according to a dialectical logic," but recreated the dialectic anew in strict relation to what he called in the *Grundrisse* "the absolute movement of becoming" of a self-developing Subject. Smith ignores this expression of Subject as Marx developed it in relation to the Paris Commune. He substitutes Marx's expression "association of free individuals" (p. 206) for the labor dimension and favors Ernest Mandel's concept of the Paris Commune as "socialist pluralism" (p. 207). Smith ends his linear progression of categories with Mandel's model of "council democracy" where he envisions a pluralism of parties and the individual is "reconciled" within the political community through free speech and freedom of assembly. Where is labor as self-activity in Smith's vision?

Smith's key concept of unity-in-difference manifests its organizational expression in "reconciling" the individual with the universal through political forms of freedom alone. The limits of such a concept of dialectic and organization are seen in the incredible way Smith drags the value form into a socialist society in his final section of the "Evaluation of the Final Stages of the Capital Form." He says, "A new social form of production must be introduced, one which combines the affirmative aspects of the value form while overcoming those features of it that must be criticized. This is the socialist form." (p. 194)

The quote above begins to illustrate why "socialist pluralism" does not address Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program where Marx expressed his concept of the new society as one which must overcome the division of mental and manual labor. Smith's organizational concept flows from his key category of unity-in-difference. That is why we need to dig deeper with our critique to see the origin of Smith's self-limiting concept of the new society in his concept of the dialectic in-and-for itself.

Marx critiqued Hegel for dehumanizing the Idea in 1844 and yet stressed Hegel's great contribution was the concept of negativity. Negativity is what Smith eliminates when he argues that the dialectic begins with unity. The fact is that Hegel's chapter on the Absolute Idea tells us from its first paragraph not of unity but of the "identity" and "opposition" between the theoretical and practical Idea. As Hegel observed in *The Science of Logic* in Remark 2 on Becoming: "Unity even more than identity, expresses a subjective reflection; it is taken especially as the relation which arises from comparison, from external reflection....Unity, therefore, expresses wholly abstract sameness and sounds all the more blatantly paradoxical the more the terms of which it is asserted show themselves to be sheer opposites." (Miller trans., p. 91)

In Hegel's treatment of absolute method in the *Science of Logic* a single dialectic of absolute negativity emerges from thought and actuality which "completes its self-liberation in the science of spirit" (Miller, p. 844). This vision that aims at absolute liberation, in which Raya Dunayevskaya recognized Marx's concept of revolution-in-permanence as a new relation of theory/practice, is missing from Smith's concern with "transitions" in the dialectic of categories in *Capital*.

—Ted Rosmer

getting worse in some respects. Furthermore, some of them questioned the government's aim in its critique of the discussion of alienation under socialism. The result of the whole process was a total reversal of the government's intention. Before the government critique of the discussion, the word alienation was only in the language of intellectuals, and the discussion was only within academia. The public did not pay any attention to the discussion. Yet after the critique movement, the concept of alienation became popular, and the discussion was broadened. The results reversed the dictatorship's intentions and gave people a powerful tool with which to examine and criticize the society. We can easily see some of the ramifications of this "negative" influence of the critique of alienation under socialism in the students' democracy movement, especially the 1989 movement.

The interesting results of the critique of the discussion of alienation under socialism also bothered me, because they conflicted with the doctrines I had espoused that socialism is the solution to the problem of alienation. As I understood the issue in 1983, using the concept of alienation from a negative aspect to analyze society is the starting point of Marx's criticism of capitalist society. Through a lifelong and painstaking study of the economic, political and ideological foundations of alienation, Marx reached the conclusion that through a socialist revolution which would set up new productive relationships, alienation of labor would be overcome, resulting in a communist society, a real humanist society.

However, the discussion of alienation under socialism in academia and the fear of its own people discussing it, by the Chinese government indicated that some of the facts of alienation are still in existence in China, a country ruled by the Chinese Communist Party in the name of "constructing new socialist society" for more than 30 years. That raised many questions. What is the real meaning of alienation? Why did the intellectuals discuss alienation under socialism in China?

In the 1844 Manuscripts, Marx develops the scientific concept of alienation. To Marx, the alienation of labor is expressed in four aspects: (1) the alienation of the laborer from the product; (2) the alienation of the laborer from the labor process, the labor activity; (3) the alienation of the laborer from the species, and (4) the alienation of the laborer from nature.

### II. Why the Chinese Intellectuals Discussed Alienation under Socialism

After making clear the meaning of alienation, it is easier to understand why some Chinese intellectuals discuss alienation under socialism.

The development of science including social science has its inner logic. The discussion of alienation under socialism in China in the early 1980s is not an incidental event. There were many factors which influenced the discussion. The plain facts of the existence of alienation in actual life in China, which I will explore later, is the most fundamental factor. The influence of the actual development of Marxism, especially Western Marxism, is another important factor.

Let us first look at the influence of the development of Marxism. One important development of Marxism concerning the so-called established "socialist country" is Marxist humanism which was developed by writers such as Raya Dunayevskaya. Her theory of Marxist humanism is developed in part from her study of the concept of alienation. Beginning in the 1940s she wrote on Marx's concept of alienation from his 1844 Manuscripts as part of her studies of state capitalism. The concept of state capitalism reveals the phenomenon of alienation under socialism to some extent. Based on Marx's theory and method in *Capital*, Vol. 1, Dunayevskaya concluded in *Marxism and Freedom* that in Stalin's Russia they "substituted for fetishism of commodities the fetishism of the [State] Plan." (p. 239)

Furthermore, she considered humanism as a central category from which to grasp the whole of Marxism. I am not sure whether or not the Chinese writers on humanism and alienation in the 1980s had read Dunayevskaya, but it is clear that the development of thought of the Chinese intellectuals takes a similar path to that of

(continued on page 10)

For a Marxist-Humanist view of two decades of events in China read



China in Revolt and the Idea of Freedom available from News & Letters for \$2, including postage



# Black/Red View

# Civil War's true meaning

by John Alan

Fourteen million Americans watched PBS's (public television) mini-series *The Civil War*. We can be sure that Ken Burns, the young filmmaker who conceived and created this documentary and was able to get a three million dollar grant from the General Motors Corporation to complete it, was well aware of the fact that *The Civil War* is the most unforgettable war in America's historical consciousness, and keeps finding new expressions in current history. As the war of America's second revolution, it has remained a vital source of passionate, partisan debate among historians, as well as in the popular thought of the country. However, its real "reality" in American history comes from its unfinished nature, its failure to go beyond the historic myths that American racism places upon Black American freedom.

Burns, in his retelling does not make the issue of Black emancipation the root cause of the Civil War. By not doing this, whether he is aware of it or not, he places his documentary among those who would escape the revolutionary nature of that war by romanticizing the personalities of its leaders, no matter where they stood regarding the burning issue of slavery.

## CENTRALITY OF SLAVERY

Marx wrote that there could be no reconciliation between liberty and slavery, and he criticized Lincoln for thinking that such a synthesis was possible. Burns, on the other hand, during an interview characterized his *Civil War* documentary as a "Homeric epic" of the American family. Such a vision of the Civil War makes it appear as a tragic breaking of the unity in a presumably white family and a desire for reconciliation. Within the context of his "philosophy," it is not accidental that Burns selected Shelby Foote as the main commenting commentator to carry the drama of *The Civil War*. Foote expresses the opinion that the issue of slavery was not at the root of the Civil War, and that the truth was only concerned with defending its institutions and way of life. The average Confederate soldier fought to defend home and family. In Foote's words the war was brought on "because we failed to do the thing we really have a genius for, which is compromise."

Foote's type of unreconstructed ideology dominates the form and content of Burns' *Civil War*. It dominates in spite of the fact that Burns gives the most detailed picture of the magnitude of the human carnage.

But the point of pathos in *The Civil War* is not at Vicksburg, Antietam or Gettysburg, where the human slaughter was greater than all the wars that this country has ever been engaged in, but at Appomattox, when Grant met a defeated Lee and offered lenient terms of surrender. It was like two old comrades reconciling differences amiably.

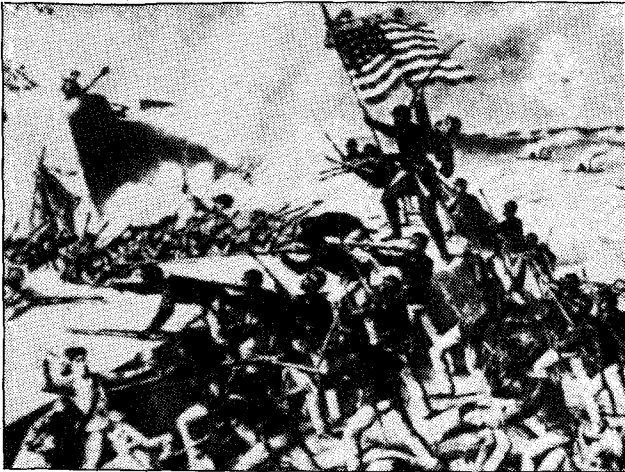
Burns has been praised for recognizing that Blacks played a considerable role in the Civil War. He let us hear Frederick Douglass and did select Barbara J. Fields, a Black professor of history at Columbia University, as an on-screen living commentator. She spoke in a different voice than Foote. In my opinion, she made two important contributions. First, she pointed out that only when the Union General Edwin McClellan won the battle of Antietam did Lincoln gain enough political courage to announce to his cabinet that he planned to issue an emancipation proclamation, thus changing the character of the war by "giving it a cause."

Second, Fields said that the Civil War is a continuing element in current Black history. Unfortunately, Fields is put into the position of offering only footnotes to Foote's conservative drama of *The Civil War*.

## THE VOICE OF BLACK REVOLT

Throughout Burns' retelling of the Civil War, we don't hear an authentic voice of Black revolt, the self-bringing forth of liberty. Nor does Burns deal with the constant internal fear of the Confederacy, Black revolt, and how this haunting fear dictated the limits to how the South could plan its war. Recent historic research is beginning to uncover this hidden history.

Burns could have dealt with this Southern fear when he depicted Gen. William T. Sherman's burning of At-



The Fifth Massachusetts Colored Regiment charges Fort Wagner, South Carolina.

lanta and his march to the sea, destroying the plantations, the major economic unit of the slave system.

It was at this moment in the history of the Civil War, in Savannah during the winter of 1864-65, that Blacks told Lincoln's Secretary of War, Stanton, and Gen. Sherman that they wanted the land of the slaveholders to work for themselves. This led to Sherman's famous Order 15, which expropriated 400,000 acres of slaveholders' land for Black use. But Black ex-slaves went beyond the limits of Order 15 and began to universally take over their ex-masters' land and set up free Black communities.

The Civil War is not past history; in reality, for Black Americans, it's ongoing history. The idea of freedom that the Civil War gave birth to has yet to be realized.

## I.B. Tabata

### South African Revolutionary

Isaac Bangani Tabata, South African exile, who died in Harare, Zimbabwe, Oct. 13, was born in Lesseyton, Queenstown, Cape Province. To his political friends he was known as "I.B." or "Tabie," to his African proteges as "Mdengentonga," meaning a man of short stature but tall in deeds.

Coming to Cape Town to seek work just before the Hertzog Bills, which proposed to remove Cape African voters from the Common Voter's Roll, he threw himself wholeheartedly into the political activities of Cape Town. A young college intellectual became a worker, and saw first-hand the brutal exploitation of the African workers on the shop floor.

He met other young intellectuals from the Coloured, Indian and White communities, all locked in the great debate on "Socialism in South Africa." Tabie and his group chose the way of Trotsky, seeing revolution in South Africa as the only way out. The ideas they debated anticipated the ideas of the Liberation Movement. The ideas in his booklet, "The Boycott as a Weapon of Struggle," are prevailing ideas in today's movement.

In 1941, when the South African government set up the Coloured Affairs Department (CAD), they launched the ANTI-CAD which showed the Coloured their lot was bound up with the lot of the African oppressed. Those seeds came to full bloom during the 1976 Students' Rebellion.

Touring the country twice each year, Tabie was instrumental in bringing into the All African Convention the Cape African Teachers' Association (CATA), which exposed the evils of Bantu education and made the boycott of Verwoerd's School Boards stick for 15 years. The CATA's strongest branches were in the rural areas, the base of African education in South Africa. They worked hand-in-hand with peasant organizations like Khongo in East Griqualand and Pondoland; Makhuluspan in the Transkei; the Cape Farmers' Association, African Voters Association, and the Women's Zenzela.

Most of those who became politically aware in the mid-1940s learned their political ABCs from Tabie. The late Robert Sobukwe, founder of the Pan African Congress, acclaimed Tabie as his mentor. He devoted his whole life to the cause of his people.

Forced to flee South Africa in 1963 he stayed in Lusaka, Zambia, for a few years, moving to Harare, Zimbabwe, in the 1980s. He leaves behind his devoted life partner, comrade, colleague and friend, Janub Gool, a sister, Nozizwe Tsotsi and two brothers, Pule and Max. In bidding this gallant warrior "farewell," we call to mind the sages of our people who say: "The grave of a warrior is by the roadside." Translated: "Ingwaba lendoda lise caleni kew ndlela" (Xhosa). "IeBeta la monna lethokoa tsela" (Sotho).

—Phyllis P. Jordan

## Haiti

### What type of education?

*Port-au-Prince, Haiti*—Today the organization of knowledge in the hybrid Haitian system (part capitalism, part feudalism, part slavery) articulates itself around a conception of education which is both elitist and marginalizing. It divides society into two concurrent social categories.

One of them dispenses varied and extended forms of knowledge in order to offer a complete education. This assures its socio-cultural superiority, gives it access to leading positions and justifies its economic ambitions.

The other one, for the majority, is composed of those who either do not have access to education or who are prematurely excluded. It includes the great mass of the peasantry and the impoverished urban masses.

Such a system of education perpetuates the double antagonism of rich/poor and urban/rural, devalues manual labor in favor of intellectual labor, and values foreign knowledge over local technical knowledge. Such a system of education should be abolished. While waiting for the establishment of "self-education," which would replace the traditional school and which would be organized by the popular organizations, it is advisable to propagate a cultural revolution which would engender human emancipation, and which would make possible the appropriation of the universality of intellectual knowledge and technique by all of the women and men of the country.

Additionally, the essential task of the "cultural revolution" would consist in giving a new content to the objective conditions for the flowering of the "Haitian individual" [l'etre Haitien], henceforth as the subject of his or her history. It goes without saying that such a panoramic vision of the future of Haitian education implies, in the first place, the total reshaping at all levels of the relations between those who provide universal knowledge.

—Hugue Andre Chrysostome

## Black World

(continued from page 1)

already exists in which white males are, and have historically been, the overwhelming beneficiaries, while Blacks, Latinos and women have been its marginalized victims.

In a series of six retrogressive decisions last year, the Supreme Court systematically undermined a whole generation of civil rights legislation guaranteeing affirmative action and protection against job discrimination. Bush's veto effectively upheld the Reagan Court's dismantling of civil rights job protection, making him the Court's "tenth justice."

Undoubtedly, the chickens are coming home to roost behind the fact that the Souter nomination to the Supreme Court elicited no significant Black opposition from the civil rights establishment. (See John Alan's "Black-Red" column, "Women stand alone against Souter," in the October, 1990 issue of *News & Letters*.)

In the face of such retrogressionism, today's civil rights establishment merely distinguishes itself by its historic inability to theoretically develop the revolutionary Black dimension which came into being at the birth of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

Rather, over the decade, today's Black political leadership has come, as Hegel says, from nothing through nothing to nothing.

## AMERICA'S RACIST FOUNDATION

Moreover, Bush's veto is an expression of the objective needs of America's crisis-ridden economy, which, increasingly, Blacks, Latinos and women in the workforce are not being allowed to rise above. That is why, in assuming the mantle of the "tenth justice" of the Supreme Court, Bush argued that the bill made it "too easy for plaintiffs to prove discrimination." Such proof would not only result in victims being awarded back pay, but in juries awarding victims unlimited amounts in compensation for discrimination.

Inasmuch as the bill represented an inherent recognition of the historical and material roots of American racism and sexism, we can see the limitations of all bourgeois laws and legislation. For it is no secret of American civilization that the bourgeois democratic state sheds its "democratic" character when confronted with its contradictory racist foundation.

That is why it is not surprising that such retrenchment on civil rights comes at the time of the present imperialist crisis in the Middle East, and Bush's unconscionable support of white South African apartheid. American imperialism abroad has always returned home to roost on its own native racist ground.

Those who believe South African President de Klerk to have actually "reformed" that racist, totalitarian system and who failed to protest the red-carpet treatment Bush extended to him, even while Black South Africa was being drenched in blood, and those who rallied around Bush's imperialist foray into Panama and the Persian Gulf—are the same ones who fell silent in response to Bush's nomination of the conservative anti-woman judge from New Hampshire, David Souter. Only now, when it has become clear that Bush has no intention of halting his reactionary drive at home and abroad, is the liberal outcry heard.

In the final analysis, the limitations of all bourgeois laws and legislation make us see that it is only by making the revolutionary Black dimension ongoing, in theory and in practice, that such limitations to full freedom are finally overcome.

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# Bush-Congress can't repair crumbling economy

(continued from page 1)

deficit relief. All this massive piling up of debt has done is try to put off the day of reckoning for capitalism. The overriding fact of the present-day capitalist economy is the ever greater decline in the rate of profit and the ever greater increase in poverty, unemployment and stagnation.

The national unemployment rate of 5.7% means over 7 million out of work—of those who are counted. Millions of homeless and others who have given up trying to find a job, or who are forced to work only part-time are not counted. For Hispanic workers the figure is 8.7%, for Blacks 12.1%, for teenagers 15.5%. For Black teenagers the figures are far higher—30.6% for men and 26.9% for women. But in inner cities across the nation, the unemployed rate for Black youth is as high as 80 to 90%!

The economic state of the inner cities is spelled out in human terms from the burgeoning prison population to the ever-growing numbers of Black students who can no longer afford to stay in college. But it is spelled out as well in the new struggles that are taking place—from the sit-ins at Black campuses to fight impossible tuition increases, to the way in which the Delta Pride workers from Mississippi have caught the imagination of the Black workers in Chicago to whom they have appealed for help in their fight against what they call "slavery time" working conditions. (See article on Delta Pride, p.3.)

## CAPITALISM'S UNSOLVABLE CONTRADICTION

Marx's analysis of the logical and inescapable movement of capital proved it to have but one function—to reproduce itself regardless of the consequences to any society of human beings. One form of this development through monopolies—whereby one corporation absorbs others to control pricing—has been reflected in the kind of leveraged buyouts we have recently seen. But it is the decline in the rate of profit resulting from the increased investment in high-tech plants and equipment that employ fewer and fewer workers—the only source of surplus value—that has proved the contradiction that cannot be solved under capitalism.

A total of 520,000 manufacturing jobs have disappeared since 1989, with 115,000 lost in the past two months alone. Business payrolls fell by 101,000 last month, and 20,000 construction jobs were wiped out, raising the last four month construction job loss above the 100,000 mark.

In large measure, these deepening and multiplying economic and social crises are the consequences of eight years of Reaganomics. The S&L disaster is not the result of greed and mismanagement as much as it is of the deregulation policies of the Reagan administration. If the S&L controls in place in 1980 had been maintained, the S&L crisis may not have occurred. The same holds true of the airlines, transportation, the securities (junk bond) market, banking, manufacturing, mining and services.

It is Reaganomics—not only continued but now deepened by George Bush—that succeeded in unleashing the

## Debates on alienation in China today

(continued from page 8)

Dunayevskaya.

Many Chinese intellectuals found that the biggest political problem in China is single-party dictatorship. As Wang Ruoshui said: "The Cultural Revolution was not a question of a small number of people, it was a problem of the party. It was a mistake committed by the party." Other scholars were not brave enough to criticize the party openly and directly like Wang, but they eagerly did something to change the situation. They tried to use Marx's concept of alienation in a roundabout way to criticize the system.

Using the concept of alienation developed by Marx to analyze so-called socialist China, these writers found that except for the private ownership of the means of production, all the phenomena of alienation still exist in China. The work process is still a physically exhausting and mentally debasing process. More than 80% of the people are still living in the countryside. Many peasants still work with traditional hand tools in the fields. If you went to the factory, you would be astonished by the dust, noise and poor light. People still work for bread but not for pleasure and fulfillment.

As to the second aspect of Marx's concept of alienation, the relation between workers and their product, the fruits of production are not distributed according to the quality and the quantity of the labor. If you were a relative of a high-ranking officer, you would get a better job and get satisfactory payment. Therefore, privilege counts a lot in the distribution of products.

As to the remaining aspect, alienated relations among people, the endless foolish ideological struggles initiated by the Chinese government in order to maintain its power made people suspect each other. The rigid hierarchical power structure and the unit ownership of personnel makes people crudely compete with each other to climb up. The bureaucratic administration soon developed from the people's servant into an alienated form: the people's masters. In a word, political alienation makes the relationship among people far from friendship.

In conclusion, it is easy to understand why the Chinese intellectuals discussed alienation under socialism: because they are living in so-called socialist China and it is clear that only when people identify alienation is it

## A worker's life in an era of endless recession

*Chicago, Ill.*—The frustration and anger that I and many other workers felt in the 1980s is growing as we enter the 1990s under Bush and his continuation of Reaganomics. More and more workers are having their already strained lives overturned by plant closings, war, low wages and no wages, too much overtime or not enough regular time and all the other miserable conditions of a capitalist system.

A situation that I am now experiencing myself is that I was unable to take any more abuse in my life working at a factory where overtime was mandatory and always forced upon us. I quit the job and moved to a physically easier but lower paying one. However I did not realize that my family had grown accustomed to the overtime pay. When that money was not coming any longer our monthly bills and the raising of our rent made the total outgo of our money higher than the incoming money. How could this happen? Both my wife and I are working. What are we to do? Consolidate our bills and pay a high interest rate loan for years? See a lawyer?

Another "logical" choice is for me to get another job in addition to the one I have. But that is what I was trying to get away from in the first place. Between my wife and me someone has to be home with the kids or they just might end up on the streets getting high or killing each other over drugs on a street corner.

Yes this is life in the good old U.S.A., the land of opportunity. Now the bourgeois media is telling us—among the pumping-us-up-for-war stories—that the gap between the rich and the poor is widening and that the U.S. is heading into a recession. Well, the gap story is no news to the working poor in this country and certainly no

news to the poor and Third World countries where this has always been a fact of life. The only reason that the bourgeoisie is concerned about a recession is that it will affect them more than it will affect us workers and poor: we are already at the bottom of the economic heap and never got out of the 1981-82 recession.

Yes, these are the harsh realities of existing under the Reagan-Bush era. My own experience of overwork and then underpay and the financial problem this can lead to, is making it very hard to think about other things. There are feelings of shame, not because I mismanaged our funds, although I have been told that it is my fault. Under capitalism it is always your fault—not the system's. The shame comes because I let myself get caught up in the capitalist trap of "buy now, pay later." This causes fighting between loved ones simply because who else can you vent your frustrations on? And there is the feeling, when you look into the faces of your children, that somehow you may have messed up their lives too.

But that's how capitalism works. When things are OK the rulers take the credit, and when it is not OK the people take the blame. This is the way of life for the working families of this world. When you are born into a poor working-class family you grow up with the choices of working in a factory, office or fast food restaurant, or joining up in the military and going off to war. If you survive the streets and war you are on your way to a life of working and never having quite enough money, or not working and having no money and finally dying in the same situation you were born in—a poor working class man or woman. Life in the 1990s or life in the dark ages.

—Martin Almora

ravenous capitalist behemoth over the whole past decade—sweeping through every market, laying it waste and in the process raping natural resources and polluting the entire environment.

## THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Inseparable from that drive has been the drive to destroy the labor movement. Its latest manifestation is the strike that has just erupted at the *New York Daily News*, the country's second-largest metropolitan daily paper, where the unionized workers had been working without contracts since March. Following an argument over whether a union member with a medical disability could sit down as he worked, members of the truck drivers' union left their jobs and were immediately locked out as part of a clearly "premeditated strategy" to provoke a full-scale walkout by all of the paper's unions. "They've declared an all-out war on the unions," summed up the paper's political reporter, when the strike widened to include editorial workers. "They don't

want negotiation. They want total capitulation." scabs are being flown in from other company plants the strike promises to become a true battleground, intensified by the experience of battling union-busting tactics of the same company in the *Chicago Tribune* strike.

Although the battles against the endless concessions that have been demanded in every industry across the land have proved more and more difficult to win, the struggles continue:

● Thus, the recent contracts negotiated between United Auto Workers and General Motors and Ford have been approved by a wide majority of the workers not because they really believe that they have job security for three years (the commitment is to refrain from laid-off, which is far from a job guarantee), as much because it is a better contract than the concessions granted in the past. Even so, the concessions in this contract granting management the right to "flexibility" in job assignments and elimination of job classifications will inevitably result in even more dehumanized speed-ups on the production line, as well as lay-offs and plant closings. The added company expenses for lay-offs and plant closings will be more than made up from the backs and sweat of the workers trying to meet even higher production demands.

● At the same time, the working class in the South and especially Black workers, are increasingly joining the ranks of unionized labor. Especially significant is the seven-month drive to unionize supermarket workers in the Tidewater region of eastern Virginia by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, the nation's second largest after the Teamsters, with 1.3 million members. The aim is to organize the 7,000 employees of the area's 52 Farm Fresh supermarkets and 43 stores of the smaller chains of Bonnie-Be-Lo and Marketplace Foods. This appears to be a serious and long range effort, with the union renting motel space until 1992 to accommodate the more than 50 organizers involved in the drive.

There is no question that it was the determination of the Pittston coal miners to resist a concession contract that resulted in creative new tactics, including more passive resistance, rallies that attracted workers throughout the U.S., picketing of corporate headquarters by miners' wives, and a sit-in at the major processing plant in Virginia that brought them the degree of victory they won after a two-year strike.

The utter sickness of the U.S. economy, which has compelled it to demand ever-greater concessions and plunge living standards to their lowest level since 1960, has made the struggles ever harder. That is precisely what the demands we never lose sight of: creativity and reason of the workers themselves.

As against today's retrogressive conditions, rank-and-file workers have their own thoughts and visions of what a new society should be. This vision has nothing in common with their union bureaucrats who are bound by repressive contracts designed to keep workers chained to exploitative production relations, dictated corporate managements that serve the needs of capital and are totally opposed to the human needs of workers and their families. Rank-and-file workers and especially the Black masses, are driven by their own notion of freedom, one that finds its fullest expression in a philosophy of revolution. It is that notion in which the future lies, a future that is not only totally opposed to what exists, but also knows what it is for.

possible to overcome it more quickly and efficiently. However, it is still very puzzling that the Chinese government so sharply opposed and so ruthlessly suppressed the discussion by force.

## III. Why the Chinese Government Suppressed the Discussion of Alienation Under Socialism

As previously mentioned, alienation still exists in China. But why did the government not allow people to discuss it? "Great" leader Deng Xiaoping's remarks in 1984 will help us to understand:

"At present certain comrades have gone beyond the scope of capitalism...asserting that there is alienation in socialism, that socialism in the course of its development has continually given birth to alien force...Such assertions will not only fail to help the people correctly to understand and carry out the reform necessary in socialist society for technology and social advancement, but will actually lead the people to criticize, doubt and negate socialism. They will cause the people to lose faith in socialism and communism and to believe that socialism is just as hopeless as capitalism; that being the case (they will ask): What is the meaning of building socialism?"

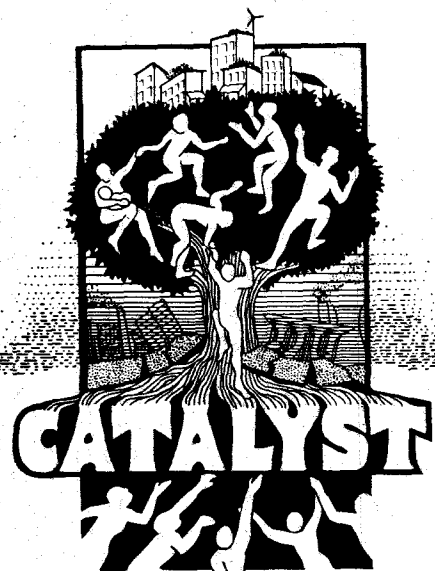
According to this twisted logic, whether there is alienation under socialism or not, people should not discuss it, because the discussion will damage the power of the ruling class, a group who took power by chance and privilege. But the inner logic of the development of society does not follow the intention of any people or class. The critique of the discussion of alienation under socialism itself became "alienated" from the expectation of the dictators. The critique by the party did not conceal the alienation in China. On the contrary the critique broadened the appeal of the theory of alienation and made more people use it to look at society to see the alienation more clearly and systematically.

The critique of the discussion of alienation under socialism indicates that the Chinese government is afraid of Marxism although it is claimed that it will persist in Marxism. In reality the Chinese government had repudiated Marxism. The facts also show that Marxism is still a very powerful force to the people in the so-called socialist country to fight for the overcoming of alienation. In the end, Marxism will help people to overthrow the dictatorial government to pave the path of the overcoming of alienation.



# Thousands at environmental conference

Champaign, Ill.—On October 5-7, over 7,000 youth from every region of the country and abroad gathered for the Catalyst National Student Environmental Conference at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. Hundreds of organizations were represented, from local and national environmental groups, to feminist, anti-racism and anti-war groups, to multi-issue revolutionary groups, as well as our own Marxist-Humanist youth committee. Conference organizers assured a somewhat large audience through the booking of several big-name environmentalists such as Ralph Nader, Robert Redford, Helen Caldicott, Cesar



Chavez and Jesse Jackson. However, even these big names cannot explain the massive outpouring of youth that shocked even the conference organizers.

The conference was organized by the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC), a national environmental concerns group with a fairly liberal agenda they're calling a "Corporate Accountability Campaign." Despite the immediately obvious limitations to this program, it shows a remarkably rapid shift to the left from the "personal responsibility" campaign which was so popular among liberal environmentalists during the 20th anniversary of Earth Day this past spring.

Besides the huge plenary sessions which filled Assembly Hall, dozens of workshops were planned in advance covering such varied topics as "environmental justice," "environmental philosophy and action," eco-feminism, the media, and the "war at home" as well as the war in the Middle East, plus many others.

I attended two of the at least five workshops held on the crisis in the Middle East. Over 300 participants filled the workshops I attended. Many had organized anti-war rallies on their campuses and were planning more for the future. Unfortunately, much of the discussion became limited to empirical analysis of the "causes of the conflict." However, when I raised the issue of mass struggle against oppression both in the Middle East and at home, I got a lot of good response, and the discussions took a positive turn. About 30 people even got together after the evening concert to draft an anti-war statement which we wanted the conference as a whole to endorse.

## Russian/U.S. youth act to resist war

The international scope of the youth movement against war and militarism was demonstrated on Oct. 7 when several hundred people protested the draft outside the Defense Ministry in Moscow. Speakers at the rally, which was held without official permission, were cheered when they criticized both the U.S. and the Soviet Union for stockpiling weapons.

One of the largest and most spirited contingents at the demonstration was the Moscow Committee for Youth Solidarity, who wore leather jackets covered with hand painted peace slogans and held signs stating, "We Don't Want to Kill, We Don't Want to Fight," and "Communist Party Army, Whom Do You Fight For?"

Thousands of youth throughout the USSR who ignored their draft orders last year lend credence to these statements. Many youth refuse induction because of the Russian chauvinism rampant in the military that perpetuates brutal and sometimes deadly hazing of ethnic minorities.

This youth rebellion against Gorbachev's military is paralleled by recent demonstrations in the U.S. against Bush's drive to war in the Middle East. Marine Corporal Jeffrey Patterson is facing a general court martial for sitting down on an aircraft hangar floor rather than board a plane to Saudi Arabia. Patterson said he was awakened to the imperialist nature of the U.S. military by its racism and sexism which he discovered while stationed in Okinawa, South Korea and the Philippines.

He said, "exploitation and prostitution were rampant around our bases and neo-colonialist condensation were the approved attitude toward our hosts."

—Jim Guthrie

What was most striking about the conference was the sheer number of people who, because they were looking for a way out of the polluting, repressive, and wasteful system of capitalism, were drawn to our table to engage us in detailed discussions of Marx, Fanon, Biko, and Luxemburg, as well as Dunayevskaya and the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism.

What became clear to me, from the overwhelming interest and depth of the ongoing discussion at our table and in the workshops, was that there is a revolutionary undercurrent emerging in the youth movement that doesn't separate environmental activism from searching for a pathway to the total uprooting of the exploitative conditions of life under capitalism and the creation of a completely new society. This stands in sharp contrast to the conference organizers, who worked hard throughout the conference trying to control the group and force the masses there to conform to their self-limiting view of a solution to the global crisis we face.

—Participant

## Why post-Marx Marxists didn't become continuators of Marx's Marxism

(continued from page 4)

position tendency, not a new form of organization, became especially troublesome once Hitler reached power. It is for this reason that I'm pausing on the years 1934-38 before turning to the concrete for us, 1986-87....

Whereas the 1985-86 Executive Session<sup>4</sup> says correctly that even the Absolute Method—that the process rather than the conclusion is the key—the Absolute Method is a pathway to the Absolute Idea which cannot be substituted for by anything.<sup>5</sup> The whole truth is that the key to the Absolute Method, which remains the final pathway to that Idea, is that the dialectic of both is a single dialectic of both the objective and subjective situation. It is that alone which permits you to propose steps for the specific year, to pinpoint what is needed as tasks for that year. Otherwise you could start 1986-87 as if it wasn't a question of pinpointing the new; that it was necessary to start all over again from your Particular, as if that was both origin and present urgency.

Or take the one reference at the Executive Session 1985-86 to what I listed as the Dialectic of the Party.<sup>6</sup> For heaven's sake, what way of hiding the really new and making it appear as if it is the 1987 answer to 1902-03? Believe me, I am not writing a new *What Is to Be Done* and taking that ground to answer the "opposite" to the elitist party. In a fundamental way the one who did the best rejection to 1902-03—and that for 12 long years—is Lenin. Why [then] didn't he listen to his own critique, especially when the 1905 Russian Revolution showed so new a form of organization from spontaneity to Soviets that it changed his very principle as to who brings socialism to whom, the intellectuals or the proletariat.

Lenin didn't generalize his whole 12-year critique but turned back to *What Is to Be Done*, let it be reprinted. All "Leninists" including Trotsky, then declared that 1903 form a Universal. This is what we have rejected and this concept of the elitist party will be totally uprooted in the new book on the Dialectic of Organization.

**III. Organization, Organization, Organization—1844, 1867-75-83, on the one hand, and the present concept of the book-to-be, "Dialectics of Organization: Philosophy, the 'Party,' and Forms of Organization Born Out of Spontaneity."**

Organization, be it of thought or of various forms of organization—committees, League, International Workingman's Association—be it in Marx's time or in ours, [is inseparable from] what Marx called "principles," i.e., philosophy of revolution. In his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, [he] said that cannot be abandoned when one unites with another for action. In extending, elaborating this question of "principle," Marx for the first time ventured to concretize his vision of the new society the day after the conquest of workers' power, stressing that only when the divisions between country and city, between manual and mental labor will vanish, that is to say work will be an entirely new activity, not the duality of labor in capitalism but that unity of mental and manual which is the prime necessity of life.

Now then, what is new with 1986 as against 1985? 1985 after all summed up the body of ideas especially as concretized through the 1980s. In the 1980s we reached not just a new stage of Marxist-Humanist development, but what finally was resulting from treading the paths no one had tried before, the last three syllogisms in the whole of Hegel's *Encyclopedia of Philosophic Sciences* that were being made so urgent by the actual new passions and new forces from below that we saw it in our age and which produced globally Marxist-Humanism,

4. This refers to Dunayevskaya's speech to the Executive Session of the 1985 Convention of News and Letters Committees, entitled "The Self-Thinking Idea in a new concept of and relation to the dialectics of leadership, as well as the Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty." See *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, Vol. XII, microfilm #10376-84.

5. In her marginalia to this document, Dunayevskaya wrote "When I said Absolute Method is not Absolute Idea, it was not meant to say any other method can substitute for that."

6. This refers to the title of the planned book by Dunayevskaya, which she subsequently changed by the end of 1986 to "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: The 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born Out of Spontaneity."

7. 1902-03 are the years in which Lenin wrote *What Is to Be Done*.

## Youth in Revolt

by Tom Parsons

On Sept. 26, students seized control of two university buildings at the predominantly Black and working class University of the District of Columbia demanding the resignation of 10 of 15 trustees for jeopardizing the quality of their education. Other demands endorsed by the faculty included making sure that the university complies with regional standards set by a regional accreditation board, extended library hours, child care for students' children, and an amnesty for students and faculty members participating in the protest.

\* \* \*

After leaving a larger protest against Thatcher's poll tax, 2,500 youth set out to march on the Brixton Prison in South London. Nine youths were injured and 91 arrested when the crowd stormed police barricades to the prison where a number arrested at the massive poll tax protest in March are being held.

whether it was East Europe or Africa, Asia or Latin America....

One thing Philosophy and Revolution didn't do is that the philosophic ambivalence of Lenin projected there was so fully on revolution that the ambivalence part was left undeveloped. That is to say, in rejecting the vanguard party to lead, we acted as if it was all only political, a politics we rejected, but it had no philosophic root; Lenin simply couldn't get to the question of party at all in his *State and Revolution*. That certainly wasn't true of Marx in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* when he spoke against unifying two parties for action (in this case, Lassalleans and Eisenachists); that was for Marx no reason for not concretizing and making<sup>7</sup> that the indispensable ground for a unified party building.

Whatever will be the "answer," i.e., the "conclusion" of Dialectics of Organization, we cannot now know. It is high time, however, to dwell on the many "firsts" we established with the break from Johnsonism<sup>8</sup> and the establishment of News and Letters Committees:

a) At the very first convention we established the uniqueness of the Black Dimension and voted Charles Denby to be co-editor with Johnny Zupan; Denby had not been anything but a columnist in *Correspondence*.

b) The first publication [of News and Letters Committees] was the mimeographed pamphlet which contained the first English translations of Lenin's *Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic* and my 1953 "Letters on the Absolute Idea."<sup>9</sup>

c) That first convention assigned me to finish what had been Marxism and State-Capitalism and became *Marxism and Freedom*. Crucial to that transformation of Marxism and State-Capitalism into *Marxism and Freedom* was the singling out of the new in the American character represented by Abolitionism, both as past and as ongoing, in the new pages for freedom being written in East Europe, Montgomery Alabama and the two-way road between Africa and the U.S.

d) For the first time ever, we adopted a Constitution with decentralized committees for News & Letters both as paper and as organization.

e) Again for the first time ever, women as proletarians had been so crucial in our development that we had no less than three columns—Angela Terrano's "The Working Day," one by Jerry Kegg, and Ethel Dunbar's "Way of the World."

f) Youth was made into a revolutionary category.

... Now then, only after you have absorbed and know that the only proof of absorbing is projecting what philosophy is, the philosophy of Marx's Marxism, the dialectic of second negativity, and that it is indispensable for revolution-in-permanence, which necessitates organizational responsibility, and with it, organization, only then can you possibly see what leadership is for Marxist-Humanists (i.e., for News and Letters Committees). No other organizational experience could possibly have taught it. It is true that here too discontinuity is incomplete without linking it to continuity, and that we have not come out of the clear blue sky.

Whether Bolshevism or the 1960s was your first organization...the point now is this body of ideas called Marxist-Humanism as it developed from the 1950s and what is projected in 1986-87. The new book will make it clear how it is necessary to tread uncharted paths in organization, as I found it necessary to do in philosophy. I have long ago stopped shedding tears over Lenin's attitude that the only ones to depend upon were the thin layer of Bolsheviks. Instead, the new book will show that, though he did see it in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* the philosophy of revolution, beginning with the need to smash the bourgeois state, he stopped short of the principle Marx said must not be abandoned in party building.

8. J.R. Johnson was the pseudonym of C.L.R. James, who along with Dunayevskaya was co-leader of the Johnson-Forest Tendency and Correspondence Committees. Following the split between James and Dunayevskaya early in 1955, Dunayevskaya founded News and Letters Committees.

9. Dunayevskaya's 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" are available in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two historic-philosophic writings by Raya Dunayevskaya*. See ad, p. 7.

## Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Deepening its imperialistic intrusion into the Persian Gulf, the Bush administration announced on Oct. 25 that 100,000 more troops would be added to a force which already totals nearly 240,000. At 340,000, this nuclear-armed ground, air, and naval force would begin to approach in size the 500,000 troops the U.S. had in Vietnam in the 1960s. There has also been much open talk of a military strike at Iraq in November or December, with casualty estimates running into the tens of thousands.

For its part, Iraq's murderous regime continues to dig in, laying minefields, threatening to use chemical weapons, and giving contradictory signals about whether it might eventually withdraw from most of Kuwait. But for the U.S., which shed no tears after Iraq's chemical gas attacks on 200,000 Kurds or over Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and a "security Zone" in Lebanon, control of the world's oil supply by pro-U.S. regimes, not Iraqi aggression, is the issue in this conflict.

The massive U.S. military build-up is one of the fruits of the Bush-Gorbachev rapprochement of 1989-90. It has ramifications globally, but especially in the Middle East. The most obvious of these is the new superpower pressure for an Arab-Israeli settlement, but it has also virtually given Lebanon over to Syria, which already has 40,000 troops there, and which has sent troops as well to Saudi Arabia as part of the U.S.-led "multi-national" forces.

At least 800 people were killed in early October in Beirut in a battle where Syrian forces defeated neo-fascist Christian forces under the command of Gen. Michel Aoun. An implacable enemy of the PLO, Syria's ruler

Hafez Assad may make the huge Palestinian community in Lebanon his next target, as he has done on previous occasions, to murderous effect. This time, however Assad has the open backing of both the U.S. and Russia. And Assad is a ruler who rivals even Saddam Hussein in both ambition and brutality.

Buttressed by 240,000 U.S. troops, the Saudi rulers have also been throwing their weight around. Their most brutal action so far has been the expulsion order handed down to no less than 500,000 Yemenis in the kingdom, simply because the government of Yemen has dared to remain neutral in the conflict.

There are also deep conflicts within the U.S.-led alliance. The King of Saudi Arabia appears to want a quick resolution, to prevent the destabilizing effect of non-Muslim troops in the country during the most important Muslim holiday, Ramadan, which begins in March. Other factions among the Saudi rulers seem to want a compromise with Iraq. Russia, Japan and West Europe apparently want Bush to be more cautious. There is also much dissension in Syria and Egypt over government decisions to back the U.S. against Iraq.

In the U.S. itself there is deep dissent, not only from establishment figures like Zbigniew Brzezinski, who have recommended caution, and from anti-war demonstrations, but also among U.S. troops in the field. The latter has been less publicized due to military controls and media self-censorship, but one U.S. reporter (*New York Times*, Oct. 18, 1990) was startled when a young soldier told him: "Tell George Bush to get off the golf course and come out here in the desert and drink some hot water with us." Another stated: "I had to come out here to find out

what the Army really thinks I'm worth—nothing. Why is it that when the U.S. economy goes bad we always go to war?"

These troops, overwhelmingly working class, Black and Latino, will be among those doing the dying, alongside thousands more Arab youth, if it comes to all-out war in the Arabian desert.

Tens of thousands of refugees from Kuwait and Iraq are still waiting to return to their home countries. Neither the United Nations, spouting human rights rhetoric, nor their own governments, plagued by growing unemployment at home, have done a great deal to help.

Most of the refugees are workers from Asia. While some comprised a part of the managerial sector, most were recruited to attend to Kuwait's kitchens and bedrooms, construction projects and daily labors from fighters to garage attendants.

While most remitted to their countries a sum of wages equaling much more than could be earned at home, they are leaving the Middle East with nothing, and returning to destitute conditions.

The majority of the 96,000 Sri Lankans in Kuwait had worked as housemaids. The government has talked about retraining them to work in the garment industry, but in the meantime, many of the women have gone into steep debt repayments to meet the loans they took out to go to Kuwait in the first place.

Despite the daily threat of war and death in Kuwait many Bangladeshis, Filipinos, and others have decided to stay—and many others are migrating to the Middle East for the first time—because conditions at home have become so intolerable.



### El Salvador militarism

On Oct. 18, the U.S. and Russia issued a unprecedented joint statement on the civil war in El Salvador, calling for the rightist government and the Left guerrillas of the Faribundo Marti Liberation front (FMLN), to "refrain from military actions" and to "intensify their negotiations with a view toward reaching political agreements and a cease-fire as soon as possible." Salvadoran military spokesman Col. Mauricio Vargas exulted, calling the statement "great news." Gorbachev indicated he would pressure Cuba to cut off support to the FMLN.

Even though the U.S. Congress has twice voted this year to cut aid to the Salvadoran military, this has not been agreed to by Bush. In any case, the military has vast stockpiles of weapons. Far from curbing the ferocity of the military or the death squads, these new developments seem only to have emboldened them. The military is hardly even going through the motions of investigating the murders of six prominent Jesuits, their cook and her teenage daughter, during a rebel offensive one year ago. In addition, according to even an establishment paper like the *New York Times* (Oct. 23, 1990), "military officers are...privately discussing plans to round up and kill leftist civilians."

### Protests shake up Japan's 'stability'

Protests in Japan have recently cracked the facade of "stability" there. In early October, low paid and highly exploited laborers in Osaka battled with police for five nights in their neighborhood of Airin.

They described how police conspire with criminal bosses to exploit the workers through extortion, gambling and control of job assignments. In Airin, police can spy on the residents through television cameras mounted on high poles. One part-time construction worker stated, "The police treat us like garbage." Airin marked the most serious riot in Japan in 20 years.

A relatively small yet significant anti-war movement, including many students, has been protesting the growing Japanese intervention in the Persian Gulf. They have especially criticized the attempt to use the Persian Gulf build-up as a means to subvert the Japanese post-WW II constitution which prohibits deployment of forces for anything other than self-

defense on Japanese soil.

And on the eve of Nelson Mandela's visit to Japan in late October, a group of Japanese protesters called for the resignation of the Justice [sic] Minister, Sei-rok Kajiyama, for his racist remarks equating foreign prostitutes in Tokyo with Afro-Americans "where the black came in and drove out the whites."

### Islamic win in Pakistan

Elections in Pakistan on Oct. 24 gave an overwhelming victory to the conservative, military-backed Islamic Democratic Alliance, led by Nawaz Sharif, over the left-of-center Pakistan Peoples Party, led by Benazir Bhutto. Bhutto and her supporters have charged massive fraud and voter intimidation, a charge confirmed anonymously by some Western diplomats.

Bhutto, Pakistan's first woman Prime Minister, was swept into office in 1988 on a program of reform. Her party, founded by her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, drew votes from the urban poor and the peasantry, especially in the impoverished southern province, Sind. Many Bhutto's supporters wanted her to uproot the legacy over a decade of oppressive military rule under General Zia ul-Haq. Zia had executed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and installed such "Islamic" practices as flogging prisoners as well as the reactionary Hadood laws, which make one man's testimony in court equal to that of two women.

Once in power, Bhutto disappointed her supporters by not really challenging the military-conservative establishment. Women's groups began to criticize her publicly in 1989 for never having repealed the Hadood laws. On the other hand, she did dismiss the military's hand-picked intelligence chief last year, an act which may have sealed her fate.

The military watched and waited. Suddenly, on Aug. 6, while the rest of the world focused on Iraq and Kuwait, a "constitutional coup" was staged. Without a vote in parliament or even a hearing in Pakistan's usually only ceremonial president dismissed Bhutto for "corruption," installed a new Prime Minister of his (and the military's) choosing and scheduled new elections. The U.S. said nothing.

Pakistan is the third largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid (after Israel and Egypt), and continues as the base for the U.S.-backed Afghan rebels. On Aug. 14, the new government agreed to support Bush's military build-up in Saudi Arabia. Since then, they have kept Bhutto tied up in court on corruption charges. Now they will seek to put her in prison.

### Youth fight French cops

Rioting by North African youth broke out in October in Vaulx-en-Velin, France, a working class suburb of Lyon, after a youth riding on a motorcycle died in a crash with a police car. The police car had suddenly cut off the motorcycle. For four days, hundreds of angry youth fought police with rocks, set fires and looted stores in their neighborhood. One 19-year-old told reporters: "The cause of the explosion wasn't that someone died in an accident. The reason was we had it up here with the cops."

French police routinely harass North Africans. A number have been killed by police under highly dubious circumstances. Most of France's two million North Africans live in poverty, holding the dirtiest and most undesirable jobs. Adding to the tension is the rise of the neo-fascist National Front, which many police support. The National Front openly calls for the deportation of all immigrants.

### Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today; Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* and *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* spell out the philosophic

ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time. In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our *Constitution* states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees*.