

NEWS & LETTERS

THEORY / PRACTICE

"Human power is its own end"—Karl Marx

Vol. 49 — No. 10

DECEMBER 2004

50¢

WORKSHOP TALKS

Bush offers us front half of cow

by Htun Lin

"The only part of the so-called national wealth that actually enters into collective possession of a modern nation is — the national debt." —Karl Marx

Bush's stated goal for his second term in office is to turn America into an "ownership society." What was only whispered during the election campaign—privatization of Social Security—has come squarely in the crosshairs of Bush's war against workers.

He claims he has "earned political capital, and I intend to spend it." What he is about to spend, in fact to squander, is what it took over half a century to accumulate since its creation under FDR's New Deal: a Social Security fund to protect workers' welfare and security in retirement.

Workers who are old enough to remember the Great Depression know only too well the devastation wreaked on workers' lives by capital's inherent chaos and disorder. Social Security was created as a social safety net for workers.

But Congress kept picking the lockbox to borrow funds to pay for budget deficits. Bush is about to take off with the box altogether to benefit the private sector. More to the point, his "privatization" scheme for Social Security is a ploy to profit the stock market.

When Bush says he wants workers to be part of an "ownership culture," it is not to invest in our future, but in the self-expansion of capital markets. What they want us to own is all that ails capital—to own all the risks and liabilities, the sickness and disease of capi-

Continued on page 3

BLACK/RED VIEW

The morals charade

by John Alan

Once George W. Bush was assured that he had been elected to serve a second term as President of the United States, he announced that his re-election brought him "great political capital." He did not tell the public about a major source of his "political capital," the mostly white born-again Christian conservatives.

The born-again white Protestants make up a quarter of the electorate, a bigger proportion of voters than Blacks and Hispanics combined. This majority of conservative white Protestants was able to give a victory to Bush in major swing states.

Bush has based his politics on unity with groups like Concerned Women of America, who fight against gay marriage and stem cell research, and others that would deny women the right to have an abortion. This ideology of moralism is Bush's "political capital." He and his cohorts are using it to reverse the movement for freedom, the generations of struggles by women and Black Americans to end sexism and racism.

MORALS SUITED TO RULING

Marx and Engels long ago discovered that morality didn't come from heaven as eternal principles, but on the contrary it has existed as a class morality that justified the domination and the economic interests of a ruling class. When an oppressed class becomes powerful enough, its morality reflects its indignation against this domination as it projects its own interests. For Marx the morality projected by the ruling class is rooted in the needs of production.

Unfortunately Bush's ideological moralism did infect the thinking of some Black Christian voters and helped to make the difference for Bush in the swing state of

Continued on page 8

After the death of Arafat

Is there a way forward for Palestine and Israel?

by Kevin A. Barry

After Yasir Arafat died on Nov. 11 in Paris, there were three memorial ceremonies, not one. In the first, an honor guard of French soldiers escorted his flag-draped coffin to the plane, as President Jacques Chirac stood by. Next came a full-dress funeral in Egypt, attended by heads of state from the Arab world, other major countries such as South Africa and Indonesia, and the foreign ministers of most European countries. As a sign of its hostility, the Bush administration sent only a low-ranking diplomat.

MASS OUTPOURING IN RAMALLAH

Then came the mass outpouring in Ramallah, where mourners briefly seized the coffin from Palestinian officials. The scene was described by Uri Avnery who was there as part of the Israeli peace group Gush Shalom. While he referred to Israeli misperceptions about Arafat, Avnery's remarks could also be applied to the U.S. media and political elites:

"The demonization of the Palestinian national leader, which has been the centerpiece of Israeli propaganda for decades, continues even after his death. It seems that 37 years as occupiers have bestialized our society and left it bereft even of common decency. Ministers and fishmongers, TV icons and university professors, 'leftists' and outright fascists tried to outdo each other in utter vulgarity.

"Never was the huge gap in the perceptions of the two peoples more striking than on the day of Arafat's funeral. While Israeli commentators and 'experts on Arab affairs'...described the late leader as a veritable monster, the epitome of cruelty, viciousness and corruption—a hundred thousand grief-stricken mourners in Ramallah exploded in a burst of emotions that nearly threw the funeral into pandemonium. If the Israeli army had not surrounded and isolated all Palestinian



Palestinian youths pummel construction site of Berlin Wall-type of barrier between their neighborhoods and Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

towns that day, more than a million people would have been there...No Arab leader—and very few world leaders—evoke such profound love and admiration among their people as this man."

ARAFAT'S LEGACY

On the one hand, Arafat's life and death embodied the claims of the Palestinian people to nationhood and therefore their own state. On the other hand, he represented the rankest opportunism and the politics of the gun. An exile, then a terrorist, later the head of a quasi-state, Arafat lived out the last three years of his life confined inside his bombed-out headquarters in Ramallah, menaced daily by Israeli tanks and missiles. Only as he was dying did the Israelis allow him to leave for Paris. In this sense, his life paralleled that of his

Continued on page 10

A new News & Letters in 2005

Next year, 2005, will mark the 50th anniversary of News & Letters which was founded at the height of McCarthyism and has remained the only Marxist-Humanist journal published in the U.S. Just as McCarthyism failed then to divert us from our goal of establishing News and Letters Committees as a new kind of organization, and its paper, News & Letters, as a unique combination of theory and practice, so today ever deeper retrogression of Bushism will not divert us from our goal of unfurling a fuller and more expansive banner of liberation next year.

Beginning in January 2005, N&L will be published on a new bimonthly basis, to allow both the time and the space needed for discussion of developments in the world of ideas at the same time that we deepen our dialog with all the forces of revolt. We also aim to increase our political-philosophic analyses of critical ongoing events at the same time that we expand our organizational activism into new areas and new publishing projects.

From our beginning, our principle has been never to separate the voices of revolt from the articulation of the philosophy of revolution Raya Dunayevskaya created as Marxist-Humanism. In the face of the deepening retrogression we confront today, we see the need to continue that principle by further deepening that unique relationship in which we have

attempted to break down the separation of workers and intellectuals, inside and outside, philosophy and revolution — and which we see demanding today the end to the separation of philosophy and organization.

We consider the new developments you will be seeing in N&L as all part of the attempt to close the gap between philosophy and organization that has characterized the entire radical movement.

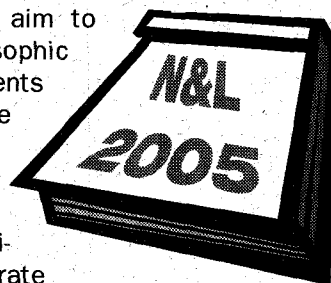
One indication of this attempt will be the new classes we are scheduling to begin in the new year on "Beyond Capitalism: Marx's Marxism as Ground for an Emancipatory Alternative," in which we invite you to participate with all our local committees.

For 50 years we have reached out to our readers for their support in all our work and it has been that support that has sustained us and kept us going and growing. We are more than ever asking for your support in our new development.

- Join us in the pages of News & Letters with your writing and in our classes in a News and Letters Committee nearest to you. See "How to Contact News and Letters Committees" on page 11.
- Make a donation to News & Letters.

Send your check to News & Letters, 36 South Wabash, Room 1440, Chicago IL 60603, USA. Or visit us at www.newsandletters.org/Appeal.htm.

- We need subscribers. You will receive News & Letters every other month for a year for only \$5. See the literature ad on page 7.



ON THE INSIDE

WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA •

The labor dimension in Marx Page 4

ESSAY • Marcuse's 'Ontology' Page 5

EDITORIAL • Bush's agenda Page 9

ONLINE: www.newsandletters.org

Seeking needed new beginnings

by Terry Moon

Women have been reacting to Bush's reelection and four more years of driving women back to the dark ages. Many have been demoralized, with some talking of retrenching, or the need to compete with the Republicans in projecting "our morals," to counter theirs. While many liberals are seriously considering moving further to the Right (or to Canada), some women still think the Democratic Party is the answer, while others may be driven to the politics of desperation. What is clear is that a great many women are harboring a fierce anger and looking for effective ways to fight back. Given that reality, the important question is: How do we make new beginnings in such retrogressive times?

Will grounding ourselves in women's revolutionary history unseparated from a revolutionary philosophy help us make this needed new beginning? I would like to explore this by discussing the category Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism, created at the beginning of the modern Women's Liberation Movement (WLM): "Woman as Reason as well as Revolutionary Force."



Silkscreen poster designed for News and Letters in the early 1970s by P. Tanzawa.

Colombia: a struggle against oppression

EVANSTON, ILL.—My organization, Organizacion Femenina Popular, began 30 years ago. It was the first public manifestation of women's struggle and brought to the fore many forms of abuse. Prior to this women were invisible. We struggle for women's rights and to have violence against women recognized as a violation of human rights. We also have violations of women's human rights in health care, education and housing. The culture of Colombia and the state itself are steeped in a history of machismo.

Once organized, we addressed the social issues in Magdalena Medio, an oil producing region and an important focus of social movement, particularly workers' rights. In the 1980s a lot of progress was made, but there was repression by the state against the organizers of these movements and the people in general. In that atmosphere the guerrillas appeared in the urban areas. In Magdalena Medio the people lived under the pressure of the state, then the guerrillas, and now the paramilitary.

WOMEN TARGETS FOR VIOLENCE

The guerrillas committed terrible acts of violence against women. Nevertheless the most horrific violations came with the paramilitary. The dispute for territories between armed entities makes women targets for atrocities.

In one area the paramilitaries came and evicted people but made the women stay to cook, clean, wash clothes and serve the men sexually. They brought in a code of behavior that mandates how a woman dresses, what time she is to be back home, and how she is to behave. Women are assaulted, murdered and disappeared, and, called prostitutes because they work in bars.

When women speak out against the regulations, they are publicly punished to show there is no way to fight against the paramilitary. Their hair is shaved off, their breasts are beaten and their hips are branded with marks of torture so they can no longer walk as they did before. In most cases they are raped. Most of this happens to the most impoverished women where the presence of the state has been practically nil.

STATE PROTECTS THE OIL

In Barancabermeja the forces of the state (the police and army) are present to protect the oil. All of the attacks by the paramilitary occur because the state has allowed them total control of those regions. The state doesn't care about impoverished areas that lack natural resources. The paramilitaries' control is extending to the whole country.

We are a grassroots organization. In the face of a paramilitary aggression, the women are the first to know and inform our headquarters. The women often arrive before the authorities. In many cases their presence has prevented a disappearance or murder.

We women oppose the war completely from a social, economic, political and civil rights perspective. In spite of the conflict, we still believe we have a beautiful country. But we must voice critique because information at the worldwide level is that Colombia is making great strides in human rights. It's not true.

—Martha Arias

The category Woman as Reason developed from its first articulation in 1969 where Dunayevskaya proclaimed the "newness" of the WLM as those who "not only refuse to stop short of total freedom, but refuse to wait for 'the day after' the revolution to obtain it." Dunayevskaya showed that the women's liberationists critiqued the Left not only on the question of male chauvinism, but of narrowing the concept of revolution, showing women's critique was from a revolutionary perspective. In 1969, as throughout her life, Dunayevskaya grounded "Woman as Reason" in Marx's philosophy and the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism.

CRITIQUE OF THE LEFT FROM THE LEFT

In the 1969-70 article where she first articulated Woman as Reason, Dunayevskaya scolded the Left for thinking a "preoccupation with male chauvinism is to the detriment of socialist politics." That attitude, she said, "leads, of necessity, to degrading the very concept of revolutionary socialism to a variety of reformism." In a scathing analysis she takes the Left apart for being so weighted down with the elitist concept "of the backwardness of the apolitical women" that they are "led inexorably to vulgarize Marx's greatest discovery: Historical Materialism." She concludes that though "Material conditions, it is true, determine consciousness, not vice versa.... History is a process, is dialectics. Every unit is invested with its opposite. The future is inherent in the present. The forces opposed to the existing society not only fight it, but gain the consciousness both about the significance of their fight and an intimation of a direction toward that future."

While here there is not space to trace out the entire development of this rich and complex category, these beginnings were deepened throughout Dunayevskaya's life. Naturally, she included revolutionary women who comprehended philosophy and grasped the power of dialectical thought, but she did not restrict the category to that. This is revealed in its expansiveness, including going back into history. This category was so important to her that in 1983 she added a paragraph to her work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, after publication. Immediately after writing "Social revolution does come first, provided it is not—indeed revolution cannot be—without Women's Liberation or behind women's backs, or by using them only as helpmates." She added:

"Quite the contrary. History proves a very different truth, whether we look at February 1917, where the women were the ones who initiated the revolution; whether we turn further back to the Persian Revolution of 1906-11, where the women created the very first women's soviet; or whether we look to our own age in the 1970s in Portugal, where Isabel do Carmo raised the totally new concept of apartidarismo [non-partyism]. It is precisely because women's liberationists are both revolutionary force and Reason that they are crucial. If we are to achieve success in the new revolutions, we have to see that the uprooting of the old is total from the start."

REVOLUTION: TOTAL FROM THE START

Important for our age of retrogression is that Dunayevskaya shows again and again that women's liberation reveals the need for revolution to be "total from the start." Over and over she shows this is rooted in Marxism, as revealed in her insistence that: "[T]here is no doubt of the fact, the profound fact, that Marx's whole new continent of thought that began with revolution—so total and deep a revolution as to begin with the Man/Woman relationship as the most basic one of all that needed total reorganization... When Marx stressed that that relationship needed uprooting in all class societies (indeed, I am ready to say in all previous societies), it is proof of how total was Marx's concept of tearing society up at its roots."

What was the crucial "missing link," to Dunayevskaya was "philosophy in relationship to revolutions both in theory and in fact. That is what is meant by dialectics of revolution." Because that was so, she challenged the women's movement to "turn to Marx—the whole of Marx," and, at one and the same time, challenged the Left "to see how very pivotal the Man/Woman relationship is as concept," and not "attempt to reduce Women's Liberation to an organizing idea."

As we face the brutality of Bush's continuing attacks on women's freedom, we need such a total philosophy if we are to fight him on our own ground of total liberation. Without such a total vision, we end up taking the ground of the Right and we compromise without ever revealing the totally new society based on new human relationships that we are for.

WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey

President Bush and his Republican Congress snuck into a \$388 billion budget measure an attack on women's freedom. The bill, passed Nov. 20, allows health care companies, hospitals and insurance companies to ignore Roe v. Wade, and limit access to abortion and even counseling that mentions abortion as a legal option. It expands the federal law that allows doctors to refuse abortion training. Even *The New York Times* recognized: "the Republican war on reproductive rights has entered an ominous new phase."

The number of women infected with HIV has risen in every area of the world over the past two years, reported the UN in their annual report issued for World AIDS Day, Dec. 1. Women make up nearly half of infected adults—with the largest increase in East Asia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Africa, where women account for nearly 60% of people infected. In the U.S., AIDS is among the top three causes of death among Black and Hispanic women aged 15 to 34. Dr. Peter Piot, director of the UN AIDS program in Geneva, pointed to the necessity for treatment and prevention to focus on women. Only a disproportionately small number of women are receiving anti-HIV drugs—mainly because they cannot afford them.

On the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Nov. 24, hundreds of women rallied in Kabul, Afghanistan. "Afghan women suffer from violence from the womb of their mothers until the end of their lives," said Shukria Barekzai, who runs a weekly women's newspaper. The situation of Afghan women improved following the collapse of the Taliban, but intimidation and violence continue.

Women in Jenin

Below we print excerpts from an interview with H.S.N., a Muslim Palestinian, who toured in October with "Jerusalem Women Speak: Three Women, Three Faiths, One Shared Vision," sponsored by Partners for Peace.

SAN FRANCISCO—In Jenin, we have lots of women whose husbands have been killed or are in prison and they are raising their children alone, which is not an easy life. Sometimes Israeli soldiers keep coming back to the house over and over, keep searching it.

In Jenin, before the occupation women worked, in Israeli factories for example, to support the family. Now they work on farms, harvesting olives, working at home knitting, pickling olives, preparing anything at all. We have many organizations training women. I attended a conference in Miftah (www.miftah.org) encouraging women to take part in politics. A number of women there volunteered to stand for elections.

Women are doing a great job in Palestine. They are the mothers, which is not easy, because our kids are suffering so much, not just from the killings and shelling. They need to feel security. We don't have parks, or electronic games, or any place where children can forget about their suffering. I wish I could take them to hear music, learn drawing, or just take them to a beach. This is forbidden to us. We don't have decent schools. Most classes have 50 students per class and they have to learn in morning and afternoon shifts. One time the Israelis took over my children's school and made it the headquarters of their operation in Jenin for a day. They smashed everything there.

The infrastructure is demolished and the whole city needs reconstruction. My husband is a doctor and he complains that every time there is an even mildly complicated case he has to transfer them to another city. And with the closures, you can't even transfer the patients from place to place.

I read of a woman suicide bomber. When she was about 20 her fiancé was killed by the Israelis. One day the Israeli special forces entered the house and shot both her brother and cousin. She was begging the Israelis to see to them, but she was just thrown to the ground. One Israeli put his boot on her head and squeezed. The other shot her brother in the head. That moment changed her life. It's not easy to witness such brutality and stay human. If you stop the brutality, the inhumanity, as well as end the occupation and humiliation and give the Palestinians back their rights according to the UN resolutions, I don't think there will be more women like her.

I can't imagine how Israelis are dealing with the inhumanity they are creating in themselves. I am very impressed with the Israeli pilots who refused (missions against civilians) which are just assassinations.

We have some democracy in Palestine, we can say things that can't be voiced in other parts of the Arab world. Dialogue between Palestinians is a healthy thing. We should not just smash the opposition as Israel wants the Palestinians to do. The view of the majority of Palestinians should rule, though the minorities should have a right to object and their objections should be respected. This is a democracy.

Locked out hotel workers return

SAN FRANCISCO—Several members of ILWU Local 10, San Francisco Labor Council, and UNITE-HERE Local 2 held a rally at shopper and tourist-bustling Union Square on Saturday, Nov. 20, to support workers locked out of 14 San Francisco hotels since Oct. 13. Local 2 Secretary-Treasurer Toh Thi Do explained that the main point of contention was health care. She said some 1,000 employees would have to pay ten times more for health insurance while their wages would only increase 5-20 cents per hour.

After the union voted to authorize a strike, four of the 14 hotels organized by Local 2 were targeted for a two-week walkout. Managers, representing chains such as Hyatt, Hilton, OMNI, and Four Seasons, responded by locking out 4,000 workers at the remaining ten hotels. Just before the rally the bosses declared the lockout over. Apparently they had finally begun to see the logic of Local 2 negotiators, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, and a growing list of sympathetic organizations. A 60-day cooling off period, during which contract talks will resume, began when workers returned to their jobs Nov. 23.

A spokeswoman for Rigoberta Menchu Tum read a solidarity statement to the crowd. The 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner was to deliver a keynote address to the American Anthropological Association at the S.F. Hilton, but she refused to cross the picket line.

Keith Shanklen of ILWU Local 10 read a statement of encouragement from Japanese postal and railroad workers. He had been with the Local 10 delegation that recently met with laborers in Japan. The delegation returned with picket signs written in Chinese and Korean supporting the locked out workers. Many hotel employees are Chinese and Korean immigrants.

After the rally roughly 300 marchers, led by dozens of hotel workers (mostly Asian women and Latinas), proceeded to some of the affected hotels and carried on energetic picket lines at each. The final picket line, sin-



gle file around the Hyatt Regency at Embarcadero Center, was greeted with cheers and raised fists from workers out of the myriad cafes and boutiques that ring the hotel building's street level.

—David Mizuno'Oto

If you have been reading News & Letters, you know that:

Each issue explores the philosophic and theoretical pathways for finding alternatives to capitalism, based on Marx's Marxism.

We have defended the right of self-determination of Bosnians and Kosovars targeted by global powers and Serbian nationalists alike.

We have condemned the brutalities of political Islam, especially from September 11, 2001, as well as Bush's stifling of freedom at home and abroad from that moment onward.

We continue to hear and publish voices of workers, from the U.S. to China.

N&L opposes Bush's war occupation of Iraq—and support women's liberations, unionists, Kurds and others against fundamentalist and Ba'athist attacks in Iraq.

Don't miss the new bimonthly News & Letters in 2005!

Begin or renew your subscription for just \$5!

WORKSHOP TALKS

Continued from page 1

tal's anti-human ventures, especially its militarization and permanent wars.

Subsidizing the stock market by piling on more national debt is socialism for capitalists against the interests of workers who are being asked to dig ourselves and our children deeper into debt.

In northern California 30,000 grocery workers are facing huge cuts in health care benefits because employers say they have to match Wal-Mart's standard of exploitation. Wal-Mart's advantage comes both from importing goods from China's slave-wage industries and getting even more unpaid labor from their workers here by making them work off the clock.

EVERYDAY THIEVERY

But this "primitive" mode of accumulation in our "post-modern" economy using the most vulgar form of thievery is not just a Wal-Mart phenomenon, since it has become labor policy practiced by businesses large and small ("Forced to work off the clock widespread in Economy," *New York Times*, Nov. 19, 2004).

Bush's ownership scheme and investment scam is exploiting our natural instincts and desire to create our very own "nest eggs," but transforms it towards the expansion of capital, not human needs. They want us to feed a system that perfects our own demise. All value in the stock market comes out of our own hides.

When politicians say they want to "grow" the economy, they mean at our expense. Once capital deems the price of our labor is not low enough, it will move operations offshore, in spite of all the sacrifices our own union leaders already urged us to accept. They want us to own capital's future of permanent social insecurity where each worker assumes the cost of competition.

Workers create everything, but all we really own is our labor power, which once sold, we relinquish ownership. As much as existing society praises the virtues of ownership, we can't even own the most private of all properties—our own labor. As Marx put it, our "conscious life activity" has been alienated from us.

Capital's riches come about at the cost of our own pauperization. It is the ultimate form of taxation without representation. What is there to invest when one doesn't even own one's livelihood? Asking an unemployed worker to "invest" in his own future is like asking for blood out of a turnip. Bush accomplishes this by also making workers own his permanent wars and pay for his quagmires in places like Iraq.

HOBSON'S CHOICE

In war, we are compelled to obey the draft when the commander-in-chief is unable to recruit all the volunteers he needs. Or we "volunteer" when our own economic needs leave us little choice. In the factory, we risk our limbs to dangerous machines speeded up. On the battlefield, we often lose not just our limbs, but our lives as well, or our minds.

Capital's inherent man-made disasters will be resolved only by transcending this current inhuman system where all powers expended by us human beings go towards the endowment of capital and its self-expansion. Only by reclaiming, through workers' own free association, our working lives will we ever achieve a society where the supreme value is the human being as an end in itself.

Biased Quebecor rules

MEMPHIS, TENN.—They have a rule at the Quebecor publishing plant that we have to call in sick two hours before our shift starts. If we don't we get written up. But they only have to tell us in the last 30 minutes of the shift that we have to hold over and work overtime.

If they have a two-hour range on us to call in, we should have a two-hour range on them. Maybe you've talked to your wife and made plans already and they come out in the last 30 minutes and say you have to hold over. If you don't, it's a "refusal" and you get written up for that. It's not fair to do that to us.

There was a fire on first shift in the baling room where they recycle all the paper (see October N&L). They wouldn't let anyone leave the building. They allow people to smoke in the press room where you have paper, flammable liquids, and all kinds of chemicals. One time we had a fire there that came from cigarettes. If they know it's a safety hazard, why do they let it happen?

Favoritism is a problem in this "right-to-work" state. If a union worker put in for a job and a guy that they liked put in for the same job and if they had the same qualifications, or the union guy was more qualified for the job, they might give the job to the union guy to keep the peace. They tried favoritism against a Black guy. He put in for a job and he'd been here longer and knew more about the job than the other guy. They moved the white guy up.

The Black man knew that wasn't right and went to human resources. After they looked at his qualifications, they had to move the white guy down and him up. They had done that out of favoritism, or it might have been racism, I don't know.

When you have solidarity it's one for all and all for one. Most of the people will sign things, and we do have strong members who step out, but others are scared to step out. The people say they want this and they want that, but when we asked them to stand out and help us support the union they don't always come.

If 30 or 40 employees helped us demonstrate at one time, what would the company do? They'd have a fit. But some workers don't see that. They say, well if I stand out they're going to give me a hassle and I'll lose my job. But as long as you do your job, they can't hassle you.

They did fire one union activist before her 90-day probation period was up, saying she didn't get along with the crew. She had no write-ups, no problems whatsoever. Another girl, she's white, started working at the same time and has had six write-ups, but they haven't fired her.

When my son grows up and goes to work here, it's worth it to fight for him to have a better place to go to work, where he's going to come home without losing a finger, or slipping and hurting his back, or having to deal with people hassling him. I look at it that way.

—Quebecor worker, Covington, Tenn.

Brazil's Landless Workers Movement

NEW YORK—Vanderly Scarabeli and Wanusa Pereira dos Santos, leaders of the Brazilian Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) gave an open meeting on Nov. 11 at NYU Law School. The Landless Workers Movement, as the organization is known in English, celebrated its 20th year of occupying land and advocating for land reform in a country that, while possessing the ninth largest economy, ranks among the most unequal. A tiny landowning elite controls the vast majority of the land.

The following day, also in New York, an all day meeting of the North American solidarity group Friends of the MST (www.mstbrazil.org) resolved to support the MST's upcoming events.

Scarabeli spoke about their concrete experiences in reorganizing agricultural production. They have helped organize 300,000 families, about 1.7 million people, on 15 million acres of once unproductive land. Additionally they have organized 103 agriculture cooperatives and over 400 associations, which help facilitate such things as equipment sharing.

The MST faces questions about how to move forward in light of the hesitancy the administration of President Luis Inacio "Lula" da Silva has shown in enacting the meaningful land reform promised during its election campaign. Santos spoke about their political struggles within this new context.

Within the very contradictory ruling Workers Party (PT), she said, there are progressive sectors which want to break with current conditions, and parts that want to preserve the status quo. The MST has been working for a national coordination of social movements, now that external pressure has somewhat subsided, to allow them to increase pressure on the government.

There have been efforts to divide Lula and the PT from the MST, which included a media campaign exhorting the president for his support of the movement. However, Santos stressed, Lula is of the section of the PT that supports their aims and is someone who would not use the police to deal with landless workers.

She asserted that Lula claims there is no money for land settlements because most of the government's budget goes towards paying off international debt. The MST opposes paying this debt.

To increase the pressure for land reform and the struggle against agribusiness, the MST plans to hold a 300 km (186 mile) march early next year, which, they

hope, by adding 10,000 people per day, will finish in the capital 100,000 strong. They're asking people outside Brazil for support, by financial donation, participating in the march, or planning acts of solidarity.

To highlight the global nature of this struggle, Santos spoke about the international network of peasant and farmer organizations called Via Campesina (www.viacampesina.org), with member organizations in 76 countries, who hold their next congress in 2005.

Over the years, many MST members have been killed during occupations of private lands. Five more members were murdered Nov. 21 in a conflict over land they claimed the state owned. Police arrested three men and have questioned a local landowner, who claims the disputed land for himself.

For this supporter, the importance of this movement is that it goes beyond the issue of land use, important as that issue is. In their struggle to change the relations of production, they raise questions about what we should produce, what kind of labor we should perform, and what kind of human relations we should strive to create. The landless workers movement directly poses the question of whether an alternative to capitalism—not simply to neoliberal development—is possible.

The premise of the presentation was that an alternative to neoliberal globalization is not only possible, but it exists in the Brazilian movement. Typical of how the Western Left often views such struggles, the American woman who introduced the talk made it seem that the MST has found the solution. Consequently there is never as much discussion as is needed about the deeper obstacles that the movement faces, especially the economic ones, which result from capital's law of value.

It would be interesting to hear whether those involved think the results of their struggle constitute a solution or just a stop-gap measure of achievable resistance within this society. Our movements here would do better to ask these theoretical questions, not simply resting on the possibility of another world, but asking how we can bring that other world into existence.

Without facing the contradictions involved in creating an alternative to capitalism, without asking the questions that address the foundation of this global mode of production, and without engaging in dialogue with those struggling everywhere for a new world, thought about alternatives to capitalism will remain abstract and progress restricted.

—Joshua Skolnik

FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note

Bill J. Harrell's "Marx and Critical Thought" was published in the May 1976 issue of *Paunch*, a scholarly journal edited by Arthur Efron. Efron submitted Harrell's study to several persons for their commentary, including Raya Dunayevskaya. We reproduce Dunayevskaya's critique of the essay in its entirety. Dunayevskaya's critique discusses such major figures as Hannah Arendt and the thinkers of the Frankfurt School. It dispels misconceptions about Marx's views on labor under capitalism and is a contribution toward our upcoming discussions on "Beyond Capitalism: Marx's Marxism as Ground for a Liberatory Alternative."

This essay was excerpted in the November 1976 issue of *News & Letters* as "Workers self-emancipation crucial to Marx" and published in full in 1977 in *New Essays*. These can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 5631 and 6973, respectively.

Time is the place of human development—Marx

Marx's Humanism—and that is what Marx named his discovery of a new continent of thought: "a new Humanism"(1)—is either a revolutionary philosophy of liberation or it is nothing at all. Just as a revolutionary philosophy of liberation is not just a "philosophy" (much less Harrell's concept of "sociology"), but a struggle for actuality, the actuality of freedom, so the uprooting of the exploitative system, existing reality, is a great deal more than freedom from economic exploitation, rooted though it is in that necessity. Rather, the process of liberation—"the negation of the negation"—creates what Marx called "new forces, new passions."(2)

Having uprooted the exploitative class structure of society, the Subject (the proletariat) has achieved a whole new human dimension. Because "the individual is the social entity,"(3) the contradiction between the individual and society is transcended. Even when this was still expressed in the abstract philosophic language of Hegel, instead of Marx's analysis of concrete class struggles and historic revolutions, the dialectics of liberation were unambiguous: "Individuality purified of all that interferes with its Universalism, i.e., freedom."(4)

Harrell is right when he says labor is "central to Marxian critical analysis" (my emphasis)—and totally wrong when he speaks of it as "ultimate end," as if it were not Marx's specific description of capitalism and capitalism only, but of any society. All that did was permit Harrell to impose on Marx's "ambiguous" conception some sort of kinship with today's state-capitalist societies that call themselves Communist. Though Harrell feels compelled to qualify that allegedly theoretical affinity, holding that the "totalitarian result" "clearly violates its [Marx's] spirit," he never lets go of his perverse definition:

Perhaps the most succinct way in which one could summarize Marxian political-economy is: a theory of the development of workers' control as the prerequisite for a society based upon work.

1. Lest this be identified only with the young Marx of the famous 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, consider also Volume III of *Capital* (p. 954) where he defines freedom as "development of human power, which is its own end, the true realm of freedom."
2. *Capital*, Vol. I, (p. 835) contains a paragraph on "new forces and new passions," and (p. 837) "negation of the negation." (Charles H. Kerr edition is used throughout.)
3. Again, lest only the 1844 *Manuscripts* be thought of when identifying individual and social, consider the expression in *The Communist Manifesto*: "the free development of each is the condition for free development of all."
4. Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, par. 481.
5. *The German Ideology*, p. 69.

The Hobgoblin

A Journal of Marxist-Humanism

New issue

Marx Reloaded \$5

"This special issue is published with the hope that we can ignite fresh interest in Marx's *Capital* and deliver the blow to the bourgeoisie for which the book was written."

Published by the
London Corresponding Committee

Use literature ad on page 7

Marx's concept of 'labor'

Far from looking toward "a society based upon work" as an "ultimate end," Marx was so appalled by labor that he, at first, called for "the abolition of labor."(5) What convinced him otherwise, that is to say, had him concretize the concept, and call, instead, for "the emancipation of labor" was the laborer, his class struggles, his daily resistance at the point of production, where the instrumentality, machinery, dead labor dominated living labor. The revolt of the laborer against his exploiter, the capitalist, was also directed against the ideology, the false consciousness, which represented him as what he is not.

Marx's critique of classical political economy's great discovery that labor was the source of all value was that labor was treated only as "source, not as Subject," the "gravedigger" of the system resting on alienated labor. Naturally, workers' control of production would change that mode of labor, but for that to be the absolute opposite of capitalistic reification of labor, transformation of man into thing, labor has to become self-activity, development not only of production, but the self-development of man/woman,(6) the human dimension.

Over 100 years before Hannah Arendt discovered the difference between labor and work, and profoundly misread Marx (and Harrell read

Arendt as an improvement on Marx's concept) Marx had spent a lifetime developing the concept of the duality of labor. It is "about"(7) the only category Marx takes credit for creating.

This is no empty concern with who was the "first." Rather, my point is the dialectics, which so escape Harrell who is busy piling up "failures" of Marx as if he were the first in this century...to be burying Marx...

Instead of rushing to declare labor and freedom "ambiguous in conception and unclear in its implications," ought Harrell not at least have asked himself:

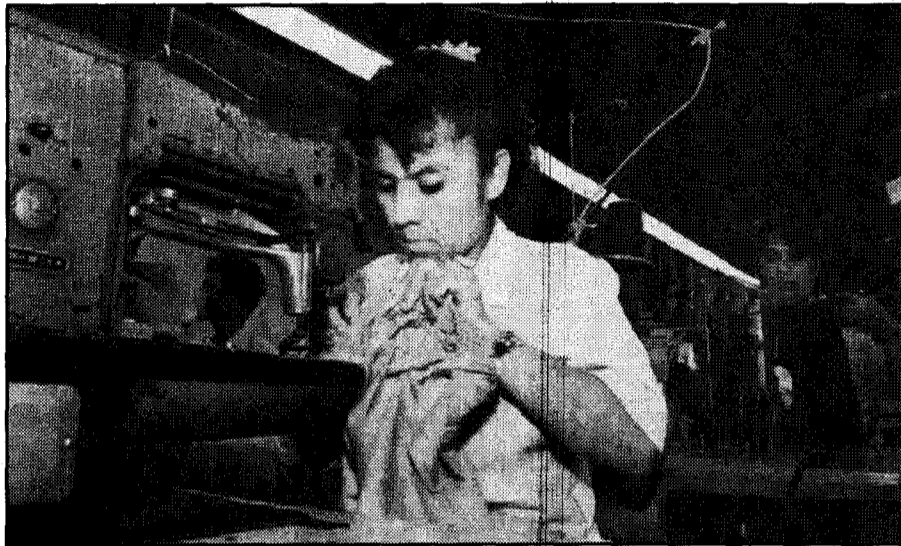
"Though I deny Marx is any such genius as his adherents claim him to be, how does it happen that a genius credited with discovering a whole new continent of thought, lays claim to originality in but a single category, the duality in labor? What is so crucial in Marx's concept of alienated labor (whether or not 'lifted' from Hegel's theory of alienation), that has, in Marx's hands, led 1) to break with other socialists, revolutionaries, so that, on the one hand stands Marx and his evaluation of the class struggles, and, on the other hand, all others, from the anarchist Proudhon to Marx's adherent, Lassalle (whom Marx called "first workers' dictator"). 2) A century before "Third World" as concept was developed, why did Marx himself move from the concept of China as "vegetating in the teeth of barbarism" to such "embrace"(8) of the Taiping Revolution as to necessitate a second, deeper look at labor as work of artisans? Moreover, 3) the concepts of labor and of freedom and of "becoming"(9) were so deepened that, if anything moved Marx from being an "economist" to being a "sociologist" that surely is clearest seen in the *Grundrisse* which I, Harrell, have dismissed as if it simply proved there was no difference between the young and the mature Marx? Finally, 4) in

6. In the same *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts* where Marx wrote, "The secret of the relationship of man to man finds its unambiguous definitive, open, obvious expression in the relationship of man to woman," he attacked not only capitalist private property but also "quite vulgar and unthinking communism" which thought all evils would be done away with once private property was abolished instead of going on to "second negation" and going on to self-development of mankind, putting all his stress on the fact that it must not be only a "to have," but a "to be": "Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that in place of all physical and spiritual senses, there is the sense of possession, which is the simple alienation of all these senses. . . . Each of his human relations to the world—seeing, hearing, smell, taste, feeling, thought, perception, experience, wishing, activity, loving. . . . To such absolute poverty has human essence had to be reduced in order to give birth to its inner wealth."

7. The only other category Marx claimed credit for is the split in the category of capital into constant capital and variable capital, but since capital was treated not as a thing but a relationship of production of capitalist to laborer, and since constant capital was but another name for dead labor and variable capital for living labor, the latter is the only element that underwent a variation in magnitude because of all the millions of commodities exchanged daily, this alone was living and could be and was exploited to produce all surplus values as well as its own exchange-value, wages. They all ended with the split in the category labor, thus: concrete and abstract; labor/labor power; living labor/dead labor; constant/variable capital; fetishism of commodities.

Capital, Marx claims originality for the concept of duality of labor, a split sharpened as "concrete and abstract labor." Marx feels an urgency to work out a totally new section, "The Fetishism of Commodities," which, to this day, has served schools of thought as different as Existentialism in France and the Frankfurt School in Germany (not to mention political economists and sociologists and other specialized "sciences" Marx as revolutionary has rejected), but I, Harrell, concerned with the "inadequacy of Marxian thought as a critical sociology" fail to examine.

Now then, since I had to ask the questions for Harrell, but Harrell himself spent not a single word on them, limiting himself to some isolated quotations from Marx, let us take a look at Marx's thought, as a totality, no matter in what abbreviated form allotted space demands. Great as the Marx quotations were that Harrell chose, they are no substitute for the singularity of that split in the category, labor. Because it is original



with Marx, and "is the pivot on which a clear comprehension of political economy turns,"(10) Marx raises it in the very first chapter of Volume I of *Capital*, no matter how many new discoveries of economic laws (none of which are "iron"),(11) leading to the discernment

of "the law of motion of capitalism," to its collapse; and no matter how broad the historical developments, philosophic insights and literary allusions Marx traces through in the four volumes—he does not stray far from the duality of labor as pivot since, indeed, it is not only pivot for comprehension of political economy, but is ground for revolution—the dialectical development from the revolution in philosophy to philosophy of revolution to actuality.

None before Marx had split the category, labor, but it is this, just this, which discloses the perversity of capitalism whose mode of production, with its factory clock, pounds all the many varieties of concrete labor into one abstract mass of "socially-necessary labor-time."(12) Marx, having followed the worker from the market place, where the worker, though "free," had sold himself, or rather his ability to labor, labor power, as a commodity, proceeded to the workshop. The center point of Marx's *Capital* is the analysis of "The Labor Process and the Process of Producing Surplus-Value." There he traces the laborer as he is turned into an appendage of a machine. This dead labor (labor congealed into the form of machine) dominates living labor, after which "it," as commodity, be he employed or unemployed, is traced back into the market. There—and this there is not only in the market place but includes the whole of bourgeois culture—"The Fetishism of Commodities" reigns supreme not only over capital/labor, but also over independent intellectuals, including the discoverers of labor as the source of

Continued on page 11

8. Read especially the articles he wrote for *The New York Daily Tribune*, reproduced now in *The American Journalism of Marx and Engels*. (N.Y.: The American Library.) And if you cannot read the massive *Grundrisse*, at least read those parts reproduced in abbreviated form, *Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations* (N.Y.: International Publishers). Marx also brought the question of Taiping into a footnote in *Capital* itself, which the American edition omitted.
9. *Grundrisse*: "When the narrow bourgeois form has been peeled away, what is wealth, if not the universality of needs, capacities, enjoyments, productive powers, etc. of individuals, produced in universal exchange? . . . What is this, if not a situation where man does not reproduce himself in any determined form, but produces his totality. Where he does not seek to remain something formed by the past, but is in the absolute movement of becoming?"
10. *Capital*, Vol. 1, p. 48.
11. Harrell encloses "iron laws" in quotation marks as if they summed up Marx's own attitude. In fact, he directed one of his latest works against such expressions used by Lassalle whose famous expression was "iron law of wages": "If I abolish wage labor, then naturally I abolish its laws also, whether they are 'iron' or sponge" (*Critique of the Gotha Program*)...
12. Contrast this view of time by factory clock and world market to Marx's concept, quoted at the top of my commentary, which maintains that time is the "place of human development." The same totally different world relates to all the criticisms piled on "immiseration" as against Marx's insistence that, be the worker's payment "high or low," capital ("value big with value") "vampire-like" sucks him dry of "free individuality." (See the whole of Part VII, "Accumulation of Capital," and the penultimate chapter, "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation," *Capital* I.)

ESSAY

A fresh look at Marcuse's 'Ontology'

by Russell Rockwell

Raya Dunayevskaya, to a greater extent than any other commentator, forcefully argued that Hegel's Subjective Logic (Volume Two of *Science of Logic*) addressed issues relevant for confronting the myriad social crises underlying the capitalist world regime. It is at our own peril if we fail to try to come to terms with that *Logic*, especially its final section on "The Idea." This is because the problem Hegel addresses there is the dialectical relationship between what is possible in terms of freedom, on both the individual and social levels, and what is actual, that is, the actual thought of the time and the actual history in the making.

Hegel's discussion ranges from the most abstract level—the unity or difference between cognition and life—to the most concrete—the unity or difference between philosophy/theory and social practices. Hegel, in the end of his system in the *Logic*, demonstrates that there is no impenetrable barrier between individual realization of knowledge and freedom, on the one hand, and the supra-individual—the social—on the other. In fact, in the last sections of the *Logic* Hegel very explicitly describes precisely how the individual grasps the social and molds it such that it is the basis of the very possibility of each individual's freedom.

The German-born philosopher Herbert Marcuse was among the few Marxists, besides Dunayevskaya, who believed Hegel's *Logic* was indispensable for developing the dialectic in thought for achieving freedom by overcoming capitalism. We can discover in two of Marcuse's readings of Hegel's texts separated by almost a decade that Marcuse approached and then retreated from the idea that insufficient development of dialectical philosophy was the missing link in revolutions against capitalism. But dialectical philosophy, Dunayevskaya believed, made Hegel a contemporary in revolutionary struggles, and where revolutionaries ignored or even rejected such philosophy, successful revolutions were impossible.

TWO BOOKS, TWO DECADES

Marcuse published two books on Hegel in the years 1932 and 1941. (The span between those years was the period of Marcuse's closest, most direct collaboration with other members of the so-called Frankfurt School of Critical Theory.) At least among Marxists, his 1941 *Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory*, written during his exile in New York City, has received far more attention than his 1932 *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*. One factor contributing to this was that only in 1987 did *Hegel's Ontology* appear in English translation whereas *Reason and Revolution* appeared in English in 1941.

The translator Seyla Benhabib's substantial introduction to *Hegel's Ontology* indicates that the work has relevance for development of the Hegelian foundations of Marxism. She writes that though the Hegelian foundation of Marxism is not directly addressed in the work, that topic constitutes an "oblique intention" of *Hegel's Ontology*. On the other hand, Georg Lukács, in an earlier period, wrote in *The Destruction of Reason*, that in *Hegel's Ontology* Marcuse attempted to appropriate Hegel's *Logic* for an "irrationalist" tradition, and in doing so severed the Hegel-Marx relationship.

Douglas Kellner, while not as strident, does not see the connection of *Hegel's Ontology* to Marxism. In his major 1984 work, *Herbert Marcuse and The Crisis of Marxism* (which appeared a few years before the English translation of *Hegel's Ontology*) he wrote that "Marcuse's systematic interpretation of the basic categories of Hegel's ontology [in *Hegel's Ontology*] is probably of primary interest today to Hegel scholars" (p. 76, emphasis added).

To be precise, Kellner indicated that the relevance of *Hegel's Ontology* for the development of social theory is restricted to a section on "The movement of essence in its 'two-dimensionality,'" arguing only that it shows that Marcuse's later concept of "one-dimensional thought," which he developed in *One-Dimensional Man* (1965), reflects a reading of Hegel's distinction between "appearance" and "essence." It is important to recall with respect to this claim that the concepts of appearance and essence are most fully developed in the first part of Hegel's *Logic*, which Hegel called the Objective Logic, not the Subjective Logic, which Dunayevskaya found most relevant for discovering the missing link for successful revolutions against capitalism.

Since *Reason and Revolution*, written in English ten years after *Hegel's Ontology*, was directly and explicitly about Hegel's relationship to Marxist social theory, it is important to ask what in *Hegel's Ontology* did Marcuse not carry forward to *Reason and Revolution*?

WHAT'S IN LOGIC'S FINAL SECTION?

While we will touch on Chapter 3 on the Absolute Idea, we will focus on the Chapter 2 subsections, "The Idea of the True" and "The Idea of the Good." Hegel uses the terms "theoretical Idea" and "practical Idea" interchangeably with the terms "Idea of the True" and "Idea of the Good," respectively.

In fact, Hegel's intricate definition of the Absolute Idea (quoted in part in the section following this one) is issued as the last paragraph of The Idea of Cognition (Chapter 2), but is concisely restated in opening Chap-

ter 3, titled "The Absolute Idea." There Hegel calls the absolute idea an "identity of the theoretical and practical idea." He writes:

Each of these by itself is still one-sided, possessing the Idea itself only as a sought-for beyond and an unattained goal...the absolute Idea...contains **with-in itself** the highest degree of opposition...possesses *personality*...but...not exclusive individuality, but explicitly *universality* and *cognition* (*Science of Logic*, 1969, p. 824, emphasis added).

This passage suggests that Hegel's Absolute Idea—the dialectic of the Idea of the True and the Idea of the Good— theorizes the overcoming of the domination of the individual by the social as the negation of an existing set of conditions oppressive of the individual.

MARCUSE'S MISREADING

Traditionally commentators have derived Marcuse's position on this subject from interpretations of *Reason and Revolution*. In exploring this issue, we can identify a key element in that text, which others seemed to have missed. Marcuse writes:

Hegel expressly declares that the practical idea, the realization of 'the Good' that alters external reality, is 'higher than the Idea of Cognition, ... for it has not only the dignity of the universal but also of the simply actual.' (p. 162-163)

Hegel's full sentence **actually reads**, "the Idea of the Good is higher than the Idea of Cognition **already considered**" (my emphasis). What is The Idea of Cognition that Hegel had "already considered"? That would be "The Idea of the True." Therefore clearly Hegel was saying that the Idea of the Good was "higher than" the Idea



Hegel

of the True, **not higher than** the Idea of Cognition generally. **Both** (idea of the true and idea of the good) were **moments** of the Idea of Cognition. The **philosophic content** of Marcuse's error was that, in Hegel, the Idea of Cognition (dialectic of the true and the good) denotes a **mode of inquiry**, or knowledge-seeking. The absolute Idea, in contrast, is personality (an actual person) and universality, in other words, a society or set of social relations, the basis of which is individual personality that recognizes its own possibility in the knowledge and freedom of everyone else.

This is a good place to read from Hegel's last paragraph of the Idea of the Good, the subsection that immediately precedes the *Logic's* final chapter on the Absolute Idea. Right here, on the threshold of the Absolute Idea, where for the first (and in fact only) occasion he actually defines the Absolute Idea, Hegel at times almost seems to be describing a process of social revolution. Hegel begins by describing the dialectic of the newly liberated individual (as in the French Revolution) as it begins to come to terms with the reality that, no matter how great the individual and its rights and liberties are, the totality of these diverse rights and liberties call forth a supra-individual context that is just as real and cannot be ignored. Hegel writes:

When external actuality is altered by the activity of the objective notion and its determination therewith sublated, by that very fact the merely phenomenal reality, the external determinability and worthlessness, are removed from that actuality... (p. 823).

The "external reality" (feudalism's suppression of individuality and freedom) was modified by the French Revolution's assertion of individual rights. The objective world (political, economic, social, and cultural) is changed, but more importantly **how** it functioned and reproduced itself (its very determination) has been overcome. While far from complete, the **logic** of this new beginning suggests that the individual is no longer formed by external and alien forces but rather, as Marx put it later, is "its own end."

Following from this Hegel next describes a series of negations in which the notion of individual freedom is "no longer merely in the active subject, but as equally an immediate actuality." In other words, the social totality is conducive to individual freedom, rather than its barrier as under feudalism. Hegel concludes:

[W]hereas in questing cognition [knowledge-seeking] 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 (p. 823).

The objectivity of the social world, which is a result of the series of negations Hegel describes, is the freedom and the knowledge (of this world) of all individuals.

WHERE ONTOLOGY GOT IT RIGHT

In contrast with the mistaken reading of the Idea of Cognition, which led to using an ellipsis to incorrectly elevate the Idea of the Good over the Idea of Cognition in *Reason and Revolution*, we turn to Marcuse's earlier work, *Hegel's Ontology*. In *Hegel's Ontology* Marcuse asks, "Is there a higher truth of life which does not suffer from the deficiency of cognition? Indeed this is the "practical idea" of action, the Idea of the good." Yet Marcuse follows Hegel's text closely enough to conclude that the practical Idea is not ultimately higher than cognition (rather it is itself a mode of cognition). In *Hegel's*

Ontology, Marcuse writes:

So long as the "good" to be realized through the practical Idea is considered a "subjective purpose" alone which is not implicitly contained in objective actuality but which first must be embedded in it, then action is just as deficient as knowledge, but in the opposite sense (p. 169).

Finally Marcuse sums up Hegel's overall assessment of the idea of the true and the idea of the good thus far by dividing Hegel's Idea of Cognition into "pure" and, apparently, "unpure" moments. This conclusion which appears earlier in Marcuse's philosophical development is nonetheless superior to Marcuse's later version in *Reason and Revolution*. The earlier *Hegel's Ontology* states:



Dunayevskaya

Pure cognition [Idea of the True] views its world as the other which is implicitly true, thereby misunderstanding the subjectivity of objectivity, whereas action [Idea of the Good] treats the world as empty receptacle for the actualization of its subjective purposes, thereby misunderstanding the objectivity of subjectivity (p. 169).

Finally, Marcuse quotes from the following passage from the *Logic* which contains the heart of Hegel's argument:

[E]xternal reality for the will [characteristic of the practical Idea or action] does not receive the form of a true being; the Idea of the good can therefore find its integration only in the Idea of the true [theory or the theoretical Idea] (*Logic*, p. 821).

As just discussed, remarkably enough Marcuse did **not** incorporate **this** development in *Hegel's Ontology* into his presentation of the Idea of the Good in *Reason and Revolution*.

More significantly, Marcuse does not note in **either** *Reason and Revolution* or *Hegel's Ontology* the next sentence in Hegel's *Logic*:

But it [the practical idea] makes this transition [to an identity of the true and the good] through **itself** (p. 821, emphasis added).

In other words, a new society, a post-capitalist one, free of social domination, includes a movement from below that "takes over" the idea of freedom as its own.

There are several more examples of Marcuse's deeper and more extensive discussion of the last section of Hegel's *Logic* in *Hegel's Ontology*, more extensive than in *Reason and Revolution*. It is clearly motivated by the question of how Hegel's *Logic* might contribute to social change. For Marcuse this did indeed mean the abolition of capitalism. Though still analyzing the chapter on the Idea of Cognition, Marcuse describes Hegel's Absolute Idea in the *Logic* where it is developed as the dialectic of the theoretical and practical ideas to be "an action that knows and a knowledge that acts" (p. 170).

However only when Marcuse is some way into a careful analysis of the Absolute Idea chapter itself does he explain that cognition by itself cannot reach its truth (and we know from what's described above that this is equally true of both the theoretical and practical ideas). Marcuse explains that each idea (the practical and the theoretical) presupposes a pre-found world upon which it is dependent—each exists by a negativity it has not grasped to be its own. Marcuse concludes in *Hegel's Ontology*: "the Idea of the good can therefore find its integration only in the Idea of the true [theory]." (He didn't even mention it again in his analysis of Hegel in *Reason and Revolution*.)

This means that development of dialectical philosophy is essential for abolishing the oppressive society and establishing freedom. In fact, in the past several decades we have seen a tremendous diversity of new subjects of revolution and creative revolutionary movements, none of which have nevertheless succeeded in abolishing capitalism. Many of these movements have turned into their very opposites. It is clearly time to focus on the possibility that the concrete missing link for attainment of true social liberation is development of dialectical philosophy itself. Development of dialectical philosophy is the key to the success of present and future social movements.

Perhaps most significantly, Marcuse, neither in *Reason and Revolution* nor in *Hegel's Ontology*, noted Hegel's own conclusion on this issue: the practical idea makes the transition (to an integration of the good and the true) **through itself**.

The sequence of Marcuse's subtly changing interpretations of Hegel's philosophy summarized here contained strong implications for revolutionaries who are oriented and motivated by dialectical thought. Unfortunately, for Marcuse (and many of his followers) they pointed a path away from dialectics of philosophy and action as the ground for social revolution.

In *The Power of Negativity* Dunayevskaya wrote that with the Subjective Logic we reach, "that which in philosophic terms is oldest, most written about, and purely intellectualistic; and, from a Marxist point of view, least written about, most 'feared' as idealistic, unreal, 'pure' thought—in a word, a closed ontology. And yet it is [the Subjective Logic] that develops the categories of Freedom and, therefore, should mean the objective and subjective means whereby a new society is born."

BUSH'S MANDATE AND LOOMING SOCIAL CRISES

The moralists won the election. It was razor thin, but they won. It is very retrogressive. They want to take back every right from women and gays that the Civil Rights Movement had accomplished. We can't underestimate the power of the fundamentalists. There will be a new fight now, especially on the question of abortion. Their stand on stem cell research harkens back to the Middle Ages. Not since then has there been such opposition to science itself. Bush said he has "political capital," which he wants to spend. But we are going to pay the interest on it.

**Black writer
California**

Right after the runoff election in Ukraine, the network news reported evidence of fraud because Yushenko won big in the exit polls but lost the vote tally. The same networks on Nov. 2 reported that exit polls showed Bush behind, but concluded that those exit polls had to just be wrong.

**Wondering
Madison, Wisconsin**

I have had many discussions with both the staff and residents of a senior establishment here and am amazed at how many are anti-war and anti-Bush in what is supposed to be Republican country. A number of WWII veterans have expressed their disgust at the U.S. aggression in Iraq. I can't help wondering if it was the exit polls and not the official count that was accurate. Computer voting that leaves no paper trail for recounts is a chilling reality. One wonders what it will take for the American people to take to the streets in mass in the face of election fraud the very way it is happening in Ukraine today.

**Observer
Southern California**

It didn't take long for people to start comparing a map of the red states and the blue states after the Nov. 2 election with a map of the slave states and the free states at the time of the Civil War and find they matched almost perfectly. I know it may seem too facile an analysis if left simply at that, since the city/suburban political divisions have to be considered. But it was a fast graphic "analysis" that explains a lot of what was happening on Nov. 2.

**No cartographer
Chicago**

When I heard that the major reason the Black vote—small though it was, to be sure—was double what it was in the last election, I was stupefied. When I heard it was mainly older, church-going Blacks that went for Bush it made me feel worse, because that is exactly the population that came of age during the Civil Rights Movement, and should understand discrimination more than any other group in the country. It made me think about the way Marx wrote of the difference between the religion of the oppressed and of the oppressor—that is, when it can be revolutionary and when it's not. I wish John Alan would write a column about that.

**Erica Rae
Chicago**

Editor's note: He did, see page 1.

As a bisexual woman who is politically active in the Chicagoland LGBTQI movement, I find the next four years of

AN URGENT APPEAL

I'm writing to you because the organization you've supported in the past, the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, is in a critical condition. RAWA needs funds, and needs them badly. Their biggest and most important project, Magalia Hospital, is struggling and I'm not sure we can keep it open next year.

It costs about \$20,000 each month to run the hospital, pay for doctors' and nurses' salaries, buy supplies like bandages or surgical instruments, even keep the water and heat running in the building. Magalia treats 300 to 350 people each



George Bush's presidency a frightening prospect for my community. While enough voters were "scared straight" enough by the prospect of gay marriage to vote for Bush and thereby assure his election, I doubt that a Constitutional amendment banning it will ever pass. But, as some of my gay and bisexual sisters have said, the clock could be turned back on so many things—from domestic partnerships, to employment and housing discrimination—it is all the more reason to keep fighting Bush's tyranny.

**Bi Gal
Chicago**

The most perfect "summary statement" on Bush's victory was summed up in one sentence he spoke the day after the election: "This campaign has earned me political capital and I intend to use it." He has begun to do just that with the realignment of his Cabinet. The system we live under, capitalism, is exactly what produced those like George Bush and his chief "architect" (his own words) Karl Rove. To me, the most frightening harbinger of things to come was made by one commentator who observed that while Bush cannot run again and it's unlikely Dick Cheney would undertake the demands of a presidential campaign, Karl Rove is at the top of his game and his career is on course and going strong.

**Plenty worried
Illinois**

That over half the voters voted on the basis of religious fundamentalism, racism and opposition to abortion and gay marriage shows that we are not so far from a theocratic state. It has never been clearer that how bad things are with the war and the economy and environment is not enough to change many people's minds.

**Sheila
Los Angeles**

The front page of *The New York Times* on Nov. 23 carried an article with the headline: "Americans Show Clear Concerns on Bush Agenda, Caution Joins Optimism, Poll Finds Reservations About Social Security and Tax Changes." It indicated, at the very least, that Americans are not enthralled by the Bush administration's agenda despite the Nov. 2 vote. One of the many limitations in U.S. democracy is that the voter essentially pulls a lever for A or B and has no way to indicate reservations about either of the two.

**E.M.
New York**

The "moral values" question can't be separated from racism. They've skillfully downplayed overt expressions of racism, which helped lure some Black and Latino voters to identify with this "morality." Let's not forget that the "morality" being pushed in the 1960s was one of defending segregation forever. There are a number of people in the South who are aware that the Bible has been used historically to justify slavery and is being used today to justify homophobia and patriarchal sexism. The fact that one of the Republican strategies was suppressing Black votes shows how important they know the Black vote to be.

**Environmentalist
Memphis**

I appreciated the message Michael Moore sent out on the internet after Nov. 2 to let everyone know that "if there was

day, women who might not get care elsewhere.

Over the past years, we've all had our attention focused on some very serious problems right here at home. But we can't forget our sisters in Afghanistan, who are still struggling to go to school, to be free and to provide for their families daily. A gift of \$50 would provide a monthly visit to the hospital for five women and their children. Please help Afghan women today by contributing whatever you can. Contact us at www.afghanwomensmission.org/help_us/donate.php.

**Sonali Kolhatkar,
Co-Director,
Afghan Women's Mission**

READERS' VIEWS

one group who really came through on Nov. 2 it was the young people of America. Their turnout was historic and record-setting. And few in the media are willing to report the fact," he wrote.

He drew attention to the students at Boulder High School in Colorado who took over their school by staging a sit-in two days after the election, to protest the election and put Bush on notice that they weren't going to allow the draft to come back. I have to agree with him that "it was the most uplifting moment of the week." Hooray for the Youth.

**Octogenarian
Michigan**

Four more years of "Leave no Child Behind" under the "educational" policies of the Bush administration will sentence the entire next generation to being left behind. Children who were preschoolers in 2000 will have spent eight years by then, their entire elementary and junior high school lives, being "instructed" to perform on tests that assess nothing more than rote learning and quantified measurement instead of critical thought or complex problem solving. That does not develop thoughtful, creative human beings. Even if reforms come after another election, the critical period of development for these children will be over and we will truly have lost an entire generation.

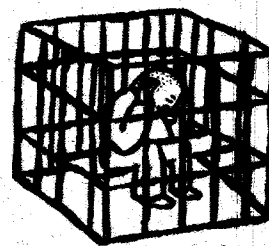
**Educational researcher
Illinois**

The affinity between capitalism and fundamentalism is what the Lead-Editorial in the November issue dealt with in discussing "faith" and certainty. It is an alliance capital has engaged in since 1980. In the Lead, Olga Domanski says that Bush is using the Christian Right. But aren't they using each other? That there is a reach for fascism here is a reality we have to face if no meaningful alternative is found in light of a global economic collapse. Can the Left project a meaningful total view that does not reduce everything to economism? The Left does not understand the need for a total philosophy that speaks to the whole person in their everyday alienation.

**R.B.
Oakland**

THE INJUSTICE SYSTEM

Over Thanksgiving weekend I visited with Albert Woodfox and Herman Wallace at Angola State Penitentiary in Louisiana. I also read George Jackson's classic *Soledad Brother*, written in 1967-70 during his solitary confinement in the California prison system. The two experiences highlighted the American injustice system as well as affirming the Black Panther Party as an intellectual, practical and inevitable product of racist society. Woodfox and Wallace are former Black Panthers whose activism in prison got them placed in the solitary confinement in which they still live 33 years later.



I arrived on Thanksgiving evening in time to attend an alternative celebration organized by a Native American / African-American coalition, where the performances were reminders of the Native American genocide on which the U.S. was founded. The continuing confinement of Wallace and Woodfox is a recent manifestation of the historic and violent struggle for justice in the U.S. Over the weekend I met with several others working to free them. What the weekend clarified for me was the extent of the challenges we face for the broad-based struggle that must be waged against an extreme form of tyranny indigenous to this country.

**Beth Shaw
Chicago**

DEBATES OVER IRAQ WAR

In his essay on "Resistance or retrogression?" (November *N&L*), Peter Hudis was really very restrained in his sharp critique of Arundhati Roy and Naomi Klein who say they support the fundamentalists as long as they oppose the U.S. If they come to power there will be no opening to freedom except as an opposition to them and they are ruthless in dealing with any who oppose them. The course of the revolutions from Algeria to Iran shows that. It is completely irresponsible for Roy and Klein to equivocate. If the Islamist insurgents win, all other opposition will be exterminated. Yassar Mohammed's life wouldn't be worth a dime. Nor would the workers who refused to let them use their factories.

**Urszula Wislanka
Bay Area**

Peter Hudis' essay incisively reveals the Left's current fetish of power, possible evidence of a new version of the old Left authoritarianism sans the USSR or China. Where were Walden Bello and James Petras, Naomi Klein and Arundhati Roy last year when the Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq and the Union of Unemployed were calling for solidarity? Few came out to show support for those indigenous struggles. People in the anti-war movement were voting with their feet by not supporting these forces. Now suddenly some well-armed militias "deserve" our uncritical support and the claim is made that not to lend them support implies dictating to Iraqis how they should resist. It shows how important it is that Marxism-Humanism upholds the idea of freedom even when its forces are not as great as those of retrogression. There are no pragmatic shortcuts to world revolution.

**Anti-war activist
New York**

CENSORSHIP, AD-STYLE

South End Press, an independent book publisher, has learned that any advertisements promoting Mumia Abu-Jamal have been banned on Chicago's public transit system. This action was discovered when the Press investigated a report that a Chicago police officer had torn down a paid advertisement on Chicago's Red Line for the award-winning journalist's new book *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party*. This is not the first time Viacom (which manages the ads on the Chicago transit system) has acted to prevent even the mention of Mumia Abu-Jamal. In 2002 they censored a video by Public Enemy because the song included the line "Free Mumia." Further investigations into the ban are underway. Anyone who witnessed the removal of posters for *We Want Freedom* is encouraged to contact the Press by phone at 617-547-4002 or by email at southend@southendpress.org.

**Mumia supporter
Chicago**

NON-PARTYISM

The piece by Raya Dunayevskaya excerpted in the November *N&L* was so striking on the question of "apartidarismo" (non-partyism) that I looked up to reread where she had returned to it two years later in a 1977 thesis. There she said it was the one historic new beginning to come out of the Portuguese Revolution. She called for the masses to recognize that self-emancipation was their task alone and to "make sure that 'apartidarismo' in throwing out the 'party to lead' proceeds to so totally new a relationship of practice to theory as to forge a unity of philosophy and revolution." Our task today is no less.

**Computer analyst
Tennessee**

FIGHTING WAR FROM INSIDE

Htun Lin's point in his Workshop Talks column in the November issue, on the significance of the mutiny of U.S. soldiers in Iraq, is well taken. How much more unrest is stirring within the armed forces? We don't know where it could lead. To dismiss it because the soldiers didn't put out a statement opposing the occupation but "just" rejected a suicide mission would be like the leftists Raya Dunayevskaya wrote of in the Portuguese Revolution, who underestimated the Armed Forces Movement because of its narrow beginnings. I would like to see the current anti-war movement make a greater effort to connect to the resistance by soldiers. His column connecting that to the unrest of workers in production is a very good start.



**Anti-war activist
Memphis**

I question whether the soldiers were challenging the war in Iraq, the way the Workshop Talks column implies in the November N&L. They were opposing working conditions. They were protesting not getting the tools to get their job done. Maybe you could say they are implicitly challenging the way the war is being carried out, but I didn't get the sense they were challenging the war per se. Different soldiers are saying different things. Many are saying they have done their duty. And other soldiers are opposed to the war.

**Mitch
Oakland, Cal.**

Any opposition to military orders is serious. The military is not a free speech area. There are thousands now who are refusing to show up, which forces the U.S. to call in anybody on whom they have any claim, like in the reserves.

**War protester
California**

I recently found a used copy of Karl Liebknecht's book on *Militarism and Anti-militarism*, written in 1907, and found his comments even more appropriate for today than when he wrote them. There seem to be anti-war break-outs here and there in this country and in the military but not enough yet to threaten the powers that be. Too many still get caught up in religious patriotism, as if they are stuck at a certain level of awareness but not enough to really question authority. How do we break through this backwardness? If I understand what you have been saying about Hegel's philosophy, the first negation is not enough and we have to go beyond mere opposition. That is the hard part.

**Long time socialist
Wisconsin**

TOILING IN BANGLADESH

It was good to have an article like "Toiling in Bangladesh" in N&L because it shows a human voice of those who make the things we buy at Wal-Mart. I noted that the article criticized the group who brought these workers here for focusing on a consumer relationship. But what that group did was really important. We can draw conclusions different from theirs. There are a number of people coming to the U.S. who are looking for the kind of solidarity that is reflected in N&L. The concreteness of that kind of solidarity goes beyond the limited expression that the organizers of this event might have articulated.

**Supporter
California**

WHILE DARFUR BURNS

Your article on "the Left fiddling while Darfur burns" (October N&L) provides additional information on what is stifling the process of ending the genocide there. It gives a clear example of the Left's inability to maintain a connection with the people who could make a revolutionary thrust. From the out-

side it wasn't hard to see why the so-called international community (I'd call them the industrial elites) were so hesitant to come to an agreement on the nature of the atrocities being committed. When the financial interest of one or more of the five permanent members of the UN security council is involved in any area of the world in crisis, a resolution is slow in coming.

What's troubling is the kind of analysis of the problem you pointed to by so-called Leftists, like Stephen Gowens who opposes efforts of any outside powers to stop the fighting since "the only effective protection against these attacks is to put an end to the imperialism that prompts them." Of course putting an end to imperialism would stop some of these kinds of attacks on helpless people, but the situation in Darfur demands a resolution notwithstanding the demise of imperialism. It's precisely due to the inability of the Black Africans of Darfur to protect themselves from the superior military power of the Arabic North Sudanese regime that the world has no choice but to mount a forceful intervention to prevent the total destruction of an indigenous people.

**Angry Observer
Crescent City, California**

WHO SUPPORTS N&L?

What made me want to hear more about Marxist-Humanism was knowing just enough Marx to see that capitalism was at its own dead end. It is knowing of all the lives being lost today and the daily horrors that capitalism has brought about that pushes people to get involved.

**Secretary
Los Angeles**

It was good to read a Marxist publication that openly denounced the USSR

and Stalinist thought. As an anarchist I am more than willing to work with other revolutionaries of different stripes, but it's hard to work with "revolutionaries" who spend their time stumping for other despotic governments and institutions. So it is refreshing to have come into contact with you. The anti-capitalist and revolutionary movements need to move beyond the sectarianism we have imposed on ourselves. Anarchism, Marxism, Council Communism, whatever we call our ideologies, we must be willing to work together against the capitalist and imperialist state before we can worry about arguing what will happen "after the revolution."

**New reader
Lawrence, Kansas**

I first read a copy of your paper in the office of one of my teachers. I think your position on Marxism is true because I'm also a Marxist here and try to think about humanism which I believe to also be your goal. As Marxists, we need practice to develop that goal, and for that we need proper theory and love for people.

**University student
Bangladesh**

News & Letters has helped me to understand that there are great and numerous tragedies being committed against my fellow human beings. I didn't really think about or relate to the human tragedies that were going on all over the world until you put it right in front of my face every month. I knew there were problems in my country but you made me aware that this is a global problem and has to be dealt with globally by all of us fighting to put a stop to it together.

**Prisoner
Tennessee Colony, Texas**



SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

BOOKS

By RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

- The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$24.95
- Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today** 2000 edition. Foreword by Joel Kovel.....\$24.95
- NEW! Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao** 30th Anniversary issue, 2003.....\$24.95
- Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution** 1991 edition. New author's introduction. Foreword by Adrienne Rich.....\$12.95
- Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future** (1996 edition).....\$15.95
- The Marxist-Humanist Theory of State-Capitalism: Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya**.....\$8.50
- The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya** Contains "Presentation on Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy of June 1, 1987," and 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes".....\$3 paperback, \$10 hardcover

By CHARLES DENBY

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

By KEVIN ANDERSON

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

PAMPHLETS

- NEW! 40th anniversary edition of American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard, and**
- Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles: Race, Philosophy & the Needed American Revolution** Each \$8, Special: Both for \$15, including postage.

- NEW! Marxist-Humanist Writings on The Middle East** Selected writings by Raya Dunayevskaya 1961-1982 and News & Letters 1988-2002.....\$5
- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Achilles Heel of Western 'Civilization'** (Expanded edition).....\$5
- Kosova: Writings from News & Letters, 1998-1999**.....\$3.50
- Explorations in Dialectical and Critical Theory** From Hegel to Derrida and from Marx to Mészáros.....\$5
- NEW! Marx's Concept of Intrinsic Value** by Andrew Kliman.....\$2
- Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis** Includes critiques of Ernest Mandel and Tony Cliff.....\$2
- The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.** by Andy Phillips and Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$2
- 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.: A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$1.50
- Myriad Global Crises of the 1980s and the Nuclear World since World War II** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$2
- Theory and Practice, by Rosa Luxemburg** First English translation.....\$2
- Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions** by Raya Dunayevskaya.....\$1.25
- Voices from within the Prison Walls** by D. A. Sheldon. Prisoners' views of (in)justice system and organizing from within.....\$8 For pamphlet plus donor copy for a prisoner.....\$16
- The Revolutionary Journalism of Felix Martin (Isaac Woods)**.....\$8
- Working Women for Freedom** by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes.....\$2
- Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya**.....\$2
- News and Letters Committees Constitution**.....37¢ postage

- Marxist-Humanist Literature Catalog for 2000-01** A full list of publications (includes many not listed here) available from News and Letters Committees.....60¢ postage

ARCHIVES

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

NEWSPAPER

- News & Letters subscription** Unique combination of worker and intellectual published 6 times a year. (Request information about gift subscriptions.).....\$5/year

- Bound Volumes of News & Letters** 1970-77, 1977-84, 1984-87, 1987-94, 1994-99.....\$30 each N&L is also available on microfilm from Pro Quest, 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. N&L as well as other Marxist-Humanist literature is available on audio tape.

Mail orders to:

News & Letters, 36 S. Wabash, Room 1440, Chicago, IL 60603, Phone (312) 236-0799

Enclosed find \$_____ for the literature checked. Please add \$2 postage for each pamphlet, \$4 postage for books. Illinois residents add 7% sales tax.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

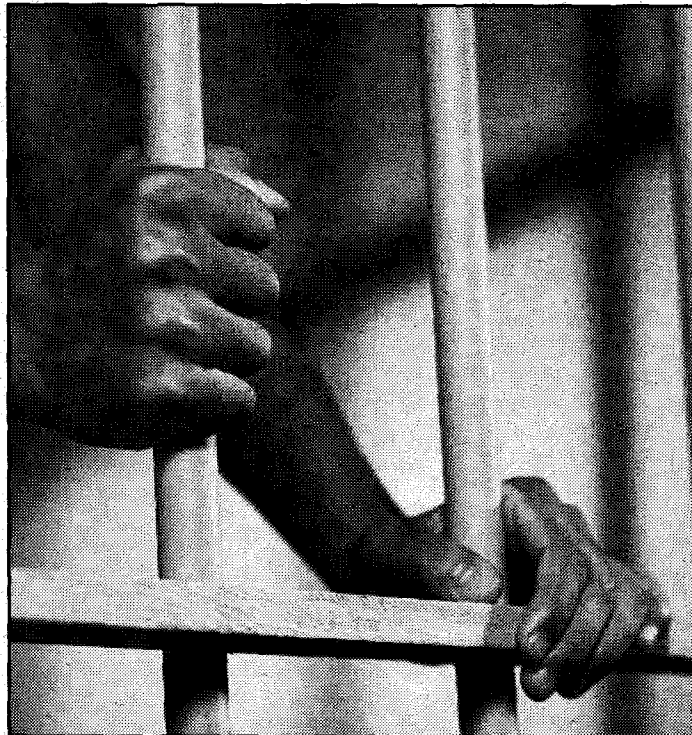
Tax dollars pay for prison coverup

by C.C. Simmons

Two years ago, the Texas state prison system was finally released from 29 years of federal court oversight. The longest running civil rights class action lawsuit in the history of the U.S. came to an end when Texas prison officials and the attorneys for the prisoner-plaintiff class grudgingly agreed that the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) was thereafter capable of running their 150,000-prisoner system without violating the U.S. Constitution. Or so they said.

Well before the end of federal court oversight and in anticipation of the new era of self-rule, the TDCJ contracted for the services of the American Correctional Association (ACA) of Lanham, Md. The ACA is a non-governmental private agency that offers to confer a veneer of respectability on those client correctional institutions that comply with the association's myriad volumes of public standards. After payment of the obligatory and substantial fees, the ACA's audit teams visit client prisons and, finding at least the appearance of compliance, the ACA declares the prison to be accredited.

Accreditations do not come cheap. The state of Texas has delivered hundreds of thousands of dollars to the ACA in exchange for a few cursory walk-through



audits of selected Texas prisons and, thereafter, the award of the lurid Certificates of Accreditation—suitable for framing, of course.

SECRET AUDITS

First, the results of the ACA's prison audits are secret. Although the audit fees are paid with public funds, the general public is not allowed to know what the audit team found, nor which ACA standards were met and which were not. If deficiencies are discovered, the taxpayers are not informed.

In a recent exchange of emails between a concerned Texas citizen and Robert Verdeyen, ACA's Director for Standards and Accreditation, Verdeyen wrote: "There is a confidentiality clause in every contract that we sign with our client agencies. We are not permitted to disclose any audit report without the express written authorization of the client agency."

The Texas taxpayers are thus denied access to

the very same information that their tax dollars were spent to purchase.

PRISONERS IGNORED

Second, the ACA's auditors rarely solicit comments from prisoners. During a typical audit, the ACA team moves briskly through a prison while surrounded by a phalanx of officials and guards. The ostensible purpose of this arrangement is to shield the auditors from unruly prisoners. The more likely purpose is, however, to obstruct the prisoners from interacting with the auditors and reporting the unadorned truth about prison conditions.

On those rare occasions when auditors are permitted to interview prisoners, only the prisoners' favorable comments are reported.

Early in 2004, for example, four ACA auditors visited the Eastham State Prison, a decrepit 2,300-man maximum security facility in Lovelady, Texas. When asked about the prisoners' recurring written complaints of substandard food and health care at Eastham, the ACA's Verdeyen responded: "The four auditors were able to interview 111 inmates. Some interviews were brief, others were more involved. Inmates were interviewed individually and in groups at various locations. No complaints were voiced about medical or food service. Inmates were satisfied with services from those areas."

Is Verdeyen so naive that he expects the Texas taxpayers to believe that not one of the 111 interviewees had a single complaint about prison food or health care?

QUESTIONABLE PAYMENTS TO THE ACA

Third, a number of unexplained irregularities appear in the record of payments to the ACA. A detailed report recently obtained from the Texas State Comptroller of Public Accounts shows each and every payment made by the state to the ACA over the past few years. Among the many questionable payments, the following are particularly troubling:

- On Jan. 5, 1998, the TDCJ made five separate payments of \$2,305.75 to the ACA, all on the same day.
- On April 24, 2001, the TDCJ made five separate payments to the ACA, each for \$3,973.75, all on the same day.
- On Aug. 28, 2001, the TDCJ made four separate payments to the ACA, each for \$3,842, all on the same day.
- On Oct. 8, 2002, the TDCJ made four separate payments to the ACA, all for \$3,973.75, all on the same day. On the following day, the TDCJ made two more payments to the ACA: the first was for \$55,930 while the second was for \$37,995.

In these six separate payments made over a two-day period, the TDCJ paid the ACA more than \$108,000.

- On Nov. 27, 2002, the TDCJ made 40 separate payments to the ACA, each for \$21.55, all on the same day. Further on Nov. 27, the TDCJ made 10 separate payments to the ACA, each for \$150, all on the same day.

In December 2003, many of these questionable payments were brought to the attention of ACA Director Verdeyen with a request for an explanation. Verdeyen did not reply and later denied receiving the inquiry.

As the state of Texas agonizes over budget cuts, shrinking revenue, the elimination of school lunches for needy children, and an end to the meals-on-wheels program for home-bound senior citizens, hundreds of thousands of dollars continue to flow to the ACA.

Isn't it time for state officials to launch a full-scale investigation of the TDCJ-ACA relationship. Why haven't state legislators done so?

Trauma at L.A.'s King-Drew Hospital

LOS ANGELES—The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted Nov. 23 on the recommendation of Thomas Garthwaite, chief administrator of L.A. County Health Services, to close the King-Drew Hospital trauma center in the Watts-Willowbrook-Compton area whose residents are Black and Latino.

Trauma treatment differs from emergency care. It means life or death to the patient, often due to loss of blood, wounds to vital organs from auto accidents or gunshot wounds, or the patient stops breathing. As every second counts, proximity is important.

The crisis has been building up through years of neglect by high level county administrators and the Board of Supervisors. Recently, according to the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, "When Dr. Thomas Garthwaite declared that King-Drew had to be 'decompressed' to ensure saving the hospital, confusion and chaos ensued. The one way for King-Drew to be saved was to close its trauma center," Garthwaite recommended. The community came out strongly in opposition.

MASS STREET PROTEST

There was an organized mass street demonstration Nov. 15 followed by hours of hearings before the board and Dr. Garthwaite. It was attended by over a thousand people, mostly Black but also many Latinos and whites, and some Asians, all urging to keep the trauma center open. Among the protesters were a coalition of many community organizations including members of Union Local 660 representing L.A. county workers, California Nurses Association, California Women's Law Center, Friends of King-Drew (a group of doctors and community leaders), ACORN and Metropolitan Alliance (grassroots organizations), NAACP, many, many individual members of the community, staff and students from King-Drew Hospital and medical center, as well as numerous religious leaders and government representatives including Rep. Maxine Waters, Mervyn Dymally, Jesse Jackson, Yolanda King (daughter of Martin Luther King), and Mayor James Hahn.

The public comments overwhelmingly refuted the Board of Supervisors and Dr. Garthwaite's position, as well as the negative mass media publicity which exaggerated recent King-Drew deaths as medical incompetence. A hospital staff member said the problem is administrative, that the trauma center is functioning well. Another said, "They're trying to balance the budget on our backs." An NAACP member said the board and Dr. Garthwaite did not fill vacant slots of doctors and nurses, and now they want to blame the staff. A doctor testified that in hospitals located in L.A. County, 6,000 patients die yearly due to medical errors. Another person stated that King-Drew has 21 doctors per 100,000 population compared to a west side hospital with 200 doctors per 100,000 population.

LITTLE CHANCE OF REOPENING

Los Angeles City Councilman Martin Ludlow said that "the Board of Supervisors would like to make us believe this is a South Los Angeles problem, but you and I know we've got a regional health care problem." The historical record that once a unit is "temporarily closed" it never reopens is refuting the Board of Supervisors' claim that they are "temporarily closing" the trauma center in order to save the rest of King-Drew Hospital. Diverting funds that now operate a functioning trauma center under "suspension" begs a question—where will you get the funds later to re-open the trauma center in today's debt-filled economic crises?

The nurses have been working for over a year without a contract and the Department of Health Services has been hiring temporary nurses rather than filling the many empty permanent slots. According to Dr. Garthwaite, the threat of closing the entire hospital stems from loss of federal accreditation, translating into loss of millions in federal funds. Loss of accreditation also resulted from a critical shortage of janitors which occurred after the board contracted out janitorial services.

A Black woman legal assistant stated that the county would like to get out of the health care business. The Board of Supervisors recently voted to subsidize a new trauma center at the private California Hospital in downtown Los Angeles. This enhances the gentrification process ongoing in downtown, which is pushing longtime low income tenants out in the streets.

—Basho

BLACK/REDVIEW

Continued from page 1

Ohio. Bush doubled his support among Black Ohioans from 9% in 2000 to 16% in 2004 according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington think tank specializing in issues of interest to Black Americans. That increase of about 50,000 votes came from Black Christian conservatives.

Some have asked, "What happened to the Black vote in Ohio?" Obviously some Black Christians had accepted uncritically the ideological moralism of the Bush administration and no longer retain even a semblance of independence in their thinking. According to Cynthia Tucker in an editorial in *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*: "There was at least one thing about which blue states and red states, Black Americans and white Americans, Northerners and Southerners could agree: gays and lesbians should be denied the right to full citizenship. Constitutional amendments to ban same-sex unions appeared on the ballot of 11 states and passed easily—from Michigan, Ohio and Oregon to Georgia, Mississippi and Arkansas."

BIGOTS WIN

Tucker calls this a "triumph of bigotry" and shows how in the 19th century the Bible was used to justify slavery under the system of slave production in the very states that now voted for Bush in a bastion of redness of the old Confederacy. Today "family values" mean forcing poor people off welfare and into jobs that do not offer either a living wage or health care—but which benefit business hugely. How can this be moral?

Black workers are disproportionately feeling the brunt of the failed U.S. economy, especially the decline in manufacturing. In his first four years Bush oversaw an economy whose performance was one of the worst of any president in U.S. history. Many economists fear that was an omen for an even worse second term when Bush feels he also has "political capital" to go further with his economic policies to drive the country even more into debt and starve the government of any funds for the health and welfare of its citizens.

The poor and minorities are subjected to a cruel and inhuman criminal justice system and an economic draft for Bush's military adventures abroad. The Iraq war, which is well known to have been sold to the American people with lies, also caused the deaths of many innocent civilians.

This immoral economy proves to the vast majority of Black workers that political emancipation is not enough, even as they retain a sense that attacking anyone's civil rights is not moral. The striving for civil rights among gays came on the heels of the Black Civil Rights Movement. Unlike the conservative Black preachers who joined the anti-gay bandwagon, the overwhelming majority of Blacks did not.

The continuing degeneration of the conditions of life and labor under capitalism demands full human emancipation in our every day working lives to overcome immoral capitalism. Without that we will not know a morality that affirms our humanity.

NEWS & LETTERS

Vol. 49, No. 10

DECEMBER 2004

News & Letters (ISSN 0028-8969) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except bi-monthly January-February and August-September through 2004. Subscriptions are for \$5 a year (bulk order or 5 or more, 25¢ each) from *News & Letters*, 36 S. Wabash, Room 1440, Chicago, IL 60603. Telephone (312) 236-0799. Fax (312) 236-0725. Periodical Class postage paid at Chicago, Illinois. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *News & Letters*, 36 S. Wabash, Room 1440, Chicago, IL 60603. Articles may be reprinted verbatim if credited to "News & Letters."

Raya Dunayevskaya

Chairwoman, National Editorial Board (1955-1987)

Charles Denby

Editor (1955-1983)

Olga Domanski, Peter Wermuth, Co-National Organizers, News and Letters Committees. Jim Mills, Managing Editor. Felix Martin, Labor Editor (1983-1999).

News & Letters is printed in a union shop.

759-C

EDITORIAL

Bush agenda: the clock is ticking

The clock is ticking. George W. Bush and his ultra-conservative allies in Congress are in a hurry to consolidate their powers and institutionalize a regime of religious ideology and unrestrained capital accumulation. Why the rush? Ahead are social and economic crises which, in fact, are already underway, making the razor-close presidential election the most hotly debated in a generation or more. The Bush agenda now means not just more of the same, but faster and harder.

High up on the Bush agenda is the grab for the hard-earned national pension fund, also known as Social Security. With the help of the new, larger Republican majority in Congress, the administration is pondering how to put a happy face on what would be a bonanza for financial capitalists. While critics rightly point to that, including moderate conservatives, less understood is capitalism's objective need for a hearty injection of funds into investments, so foundering is the economy. Bush and his team are not as worried as the public about the \$1-2 trillion it will take to honor legal obligations to retirees while diverting new earnings into the markets. What's left of Social Security will be a shell. Even the Bush administration predicts benefits will be reduced.

OCEAN OF DEBT BORN BY WORKERS

The humongous sum for the Social Security makeover will jack up the obscene deficit already in place, thanks to the 2001 and 2004 tax cuts. Besides larding the bank accounts of the rich, they flushed more dollars into investment markets. The promise of achieving a balanced budget depends on eliminating more so-called discretionary spending: transportation, law enforcement, veterans, agriculture, housing, health research, space exploration and national parks. Ending these could never fund the Social Security makeover, much less bridge the budget deficit.

The same Big Lie is behind social tax reform, in particular enthusiasm among ultraconservatives for implementing a flat tax. While the tax burden will shift further away from the rich with a single tax rate, the

'Moolaadé'

Filmmaker, writer and director, Osmane Sembene's *Moolaadé*—which means "refuge"—has great beauty, color, and humor. His hero, Collé Gallo Ardo Sy, cleverly used the tradition, *Moolaadé*, to keep the elders in a Burkino Faso village from carrying out that other tradition—"purification" (female genital mutilation)—on four little girls. Conflict between the two customs, "purification" and *Moolaadé*, undergirds the story.

Collé, who has already lost two daughters to FGM, was unable to give birth because of her own mutilation. She was sliced from navel to pubis in order to extract her only living daughter, now about 14, and has refused to allow her "purification." In addition, Collé has given refuge to four of the village children who ran away from the ritual cutting. Two others drown themselves rather than face the agony of circumcision. One of the four is lured by her mother to death in the purification hut. Collé stares down the village elders, her husband, his brother, and the powerful cult of women who do the surgeries. Clearly, her life is on the line, and she is prepared to give it. Cold, but matter-of-fact terror permeated the story.

A vital factor was the radios that the tribal women had purchased with their own meager savings. "Outside influence" via the broadcasters was held responsible for the women's rebellion, thus all radios in the town were confiscated and burned. This added "fuel" to the women's rebellion at the film's climax.

Untruths about FGM were exposed. When tribal leaders claimed FGM to be a requirement of Islam, Collé countered with a contrary statement by an important Islamic leader that she had heard—of course—on her radio. In the film the men claimed they would never marry an un-purified woman and, since women are not allowed to support themselves except by prostitution, most girls are avid to have it done. I appreciated this because after 15 years of studying FGM I realize that all "reasons" are reducible to the fact that FGM is traditional.

Sembene, who embraced Marxism 60 years ago, spoke at the filming about the real heroes that change the world. They are often women, they are not viewed in public statues, people do not remember their names, but the changes they demand are permanent. He said all his films and books are about freedom.

The movie was not realistic. Those toiling to eradicate FGM know it cannot be done in a single village. Men get wives from another village. Any girl not "purified" will not be eligible when men come seeking wives. Women and men from several villages have to concur that FGM is a bad thing, then sign an omni-village pact that they will stop doing it. This takes a tremendous amount of political savvy, work, and courage. In addition, circumcisers have to be shown an alternative living. Without their consent, the practice goes underground or is enforced on babies.

Nevertheless, I would not have missed this movie. The cultural knowledge, the beauty of the people, the importance of the issues raised, and the sheer entertainment were superb.

—January

desired effect will be to wash more dollars into investments. Furthermore the minimum hourly wage, frozen at a paltry \$5.15 buys two-thirds of what the minimum wage could buy in 1968. Such is the huge contribution by the working poor to capitalism at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries, never to be paid back. They more than anyone are hurt from the cost of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which do not figure into the rosy predictions of a balanced budget by the end of the decade.

The part of the national wealth which is not made of sweated labor, our natural resources ensconced in forests, seas and skies, has been marked for appropriation by capital. In the works now are draining oil reserves and felling timberlands in Alaska, while curbs on industrial air pollution are to be slackened along with reins on the profits of the polluters. And barriers to storing nuclear waste in Yucca Mountain, Colo., are coming down along with ramping up nuclear energy production.

CONGRESSIONAL CO-CRIMINALS

Bush's accomplices in Congress have already shown they are up to the task of carrying out his agenda. In its post-election session, the current Congress passed a spending bill with a host of sleepers, most egregious being a new curb on abortion that brings women, especially the poor, a step closer to earlier times of repression or death from unwanted pregnancies. This is but the curtain raiser on a raft of judicial appointments to the Supreme Court, and fights over them, as justices retire or die during Bush's second term. Sen. Arlen Specter was subjected to a loyalty test by the Christian Right when, as a condition of chairing the Judiciary Committee, he had to pledge to bag his longstanding position and not contest anti-abortion nominees. This was but a proxy for the litmus test the Bush administration will do on future candidates for federal benches, in other words, making certain of their commitment to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and every pro-choice right that's challenged before the courts.

If the Specter affair seemed totalitarian, it is a preview for where the ultra-rightwing is willing to take this so-called representative democracy. Since the seating of Congresses at the beginning of the country, the voice of the minority party has always been protected through devices such as the filibuster. More than a procedural tactic to put into check the majority's legislative program, it permits the minority to publicly speak its position. Republicans in the upcoming 104th Congress have unveiled plans to abuse their 55-45 majority over Democrats plus one independent and eliminate the filibuster. The name applied to this move, the "nuclear option," aptly described the gravity of neutering the opposition, loyal as it may be.

And it should be no surprise in a "democracy" with one stolen election and another being contested in the courts that House Republicans voided their own chamber rules and lifted the ban on seating indicted members. This will allow Majority Leader Tom DeLay to retain his seat even as an indicted for vote-buying and using his position and federal money to interfere with the Texas legislature. This only lends a cynical edge to the drive by the Republicans to achieve a single party state.

In light of this aggregation of power, Bush's cabinet appointments are ominous. To the post of secretary of homeland security, Bush appointed Bernard Kerik. The choice of a career cop with a portfolio of repression, including administering New York City's jail houses of

horror, looks inward at domestic "enemies" more than future 9/11s. White House counsel Alberto Gonzales, the nominee to replace top cop John Ashcroft, credentialled himself as author of a policy of torture against internees in the U.S.'s detention camps, a policy ready to take root in police stations and squad cars across the land.

NEXT GENERATION OF REACTIONARIES

Waiting to take their Senate seats are a collection of rogues as sinister as any fascist ideologues of the 20th century. Tom Coburn of Oklahoma has suggested that Blacks are genetically disposed toward shorter life spans. In Florida's primaries, Mel Martinez called his Republican opponent "the new darling of homosexual extremists" for his support for a hate crimes bill and stem cell research. Jim DeMint of South Carolina holds that homosexuals and pregnant women with live-in boyfriends

should be banned from teaching in public schools. John Thune's campaign in South Dakota featured racist imagery of Native Americans and illegally threatened Native voters. And Louisiana's David Vitter has been called "a polite David Duke."

Not all is assured in carrying out the Bush agenda. None other than Newt Gingrich has spoken out against killing the filibuster procedure. And within the ruling brain trusts, there is dissent, most publicly by Francis Fukuyama, over the exercise of absolute power by the world's hyperpower. The fear is that the international political fabric and domestic social stability, as frayed as they are, will be torn beyond repair, and beyond control. And the nation's working class is on the brink of getting an economic haircut as contending blocs in capital make plans to stop backing the U.S.'s debt burden.

CAPITALISM'S TIME IS UP

We can hardly rely on the bourgeoisie's internal contradictions to base our need to create an alternative to their crises. A vote for Kerry last month most likely was a vote against Bush and his Iraq occupation. A plurality of people believe the war was a mistake. More and more military families are seething over their role as grist for Rice's imperial vision and Rumsfeld's military rebuilding. Seniors and their families are about to get the bill for the Medicaid prescription bill and they won't be happy. Nothing says "no future" to young people more than the Bush agenda.

Many are ready to reach for an alternative to this inhuman and dehumanizing system. A society where we reclaim the "envisioned self," as South African revolutionary Stephen Biko put it, is ours if we put our minds to it. For that reason, *News & Letters* will reconstitute itself in 2005, its 50th anniversary, to put our shoulder to the wheel of envisioning a new, human society. We invite you to be a part of putting our minds to that goal, with your participation in classes on "Beyond Capitalism: Marx's Marxism as Ground for a Liberatory Alternative," and by subscribing to, reading, and writing for *News & Letters*.

Crackdown on jailhouse lawyers

SHELTON, WASH.—Inside the Intensive Management Unit we are limited to four hours per week to do legal research on the computer. The computer program is called Versus Law. It is a system that is much less adequate than what the state attorneys general have at their disposal.

For example, the states have the Westlaw and Lexis Nexis systems with access to all informational databases in the 50 states. This includes access to the lower federal courts, intermediate federal courts, and the Supreme Court.

Their system allows status flags to show up if a case has been overruled by other decisions. Along with trained paralegals with the proper education to assist the attorneys general, they have access to photocopying services, notaries public, and the "good old boy" club whose members look out for each other.

A prisoner, on the other hand, has to go through a giant obstacle course to fight for his innocence. He has to expose violations of procedural or evidentiary errors, and any other prejudices which the criminal injustice system has placed on them. Many prisoners lack the educational skills to fully understand the governmental process. Many are still trying to learn how to read and write effectively.

There are very few prisoners in here who actually have a firm understanding of the legal process in order to file post-conviction remedies such as writs of *habeas corpus*, personal restraint petitions, direct appeals,

discretionary reviews, writs of *mandamus*, writs of *certiorari*, and other matters such as civil rights violations (42 U.S.C. § 1983) suits, and so on.

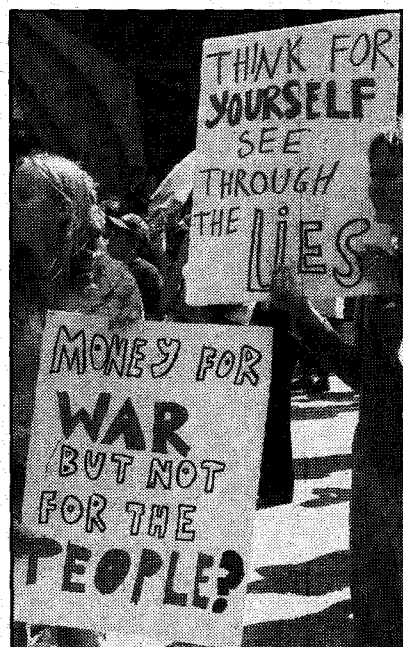
The older convict generation who fought for our rights, and presented to the courts a picture of life from inside the U.S. prison system, are now dying off. A new, younger generation is taking the place of the older one who had to endure harsh, often dangerous, conditions.

This generation of older cons, whom I mostly respect, caused a drastic change from within the prison system. They created a new class of citizen within the corporate justice system in which all the legal publishing companies learned that they could market off the expense of our lives from within these walls.

The era of the prison litigator is dying due to a new breed of politicians who have this lock-em-up, throw-away-the-key mentality. This narrow-thinking group has a lot of dirt under its own rug and is just trying to sway us away from the big picture. These politicians make so-called budget cuts to slowly take away educational programs, legal and research books, and so on.

Instead of a maturing civilized society, we are going backwards inside these walls to the days when prison conditions were much harsher. Only now it seems the younger generation has been numbed in their way of thinking. They have forgotten about the founding generation of prison reformers who made it possible for us to have what we take for granted.

—Michael T. Donery (political P.O.W.)



Before the election, Chicagoans rally against threat of a Bush victory.

News & Letters / Jim Mills

After Arafat — a way forward for Palestine and Israel?

Continued from page 1

people, themselves penned up under Israeli occupation ever since Israel took control of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem during the 1967 War.

George Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon kept saying that Arafat had been sidelined since his confinement. Physically this may have been true, and their mistreatment of the frail 75-year-old may indeed have hastened his death. But now they have to contend with something perhaps more challenging, not Arafat the man but Arafat the symbol of an oppressed people, a people whose very existence is an open wound for the whole Middle East and thus for the global political-economic order.

Truly Arafat was the founder of a new nation. As the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish wrote: "He was not victorious in his military battles, whether in exile or at home. But he was victorious in the fight to defend the existence of the nation." Arafat could be compared to those national revolutionaries who founded or refounded their nations during the anti-imperialist struggles of the 20th century. These would include the likes of Eamon De Valera and Michael Collins of Ireland, Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru of India, Sun Yat-sen of China, or Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt.

As with those leaders, Arafat's political legacy is a mixed one that includes courage and selflessness, as well as authoritarianism and class compromise. For all its revolutionary rhetoric, even at the height of its guerrilla phase in the 1960s and 1970s, the political program of Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization was essentially conservative. Factories were to remain in the hands of private capitalists, trade unions were to be linked to the state, and women's rights were hardly a major part of the nationalist agenda.

In the Palestinian case, the pressure to avoid class or gender "divisiveness," found even in the more democratic national movements, was intensified by two things: 1) The movement had a militaristic, secretive structure, which included the use of the gun in internal disputes. 2) For decades, the long-exiled leadership of Arafat and company cultivated close relations with some very oppressive Arab rulers. Its rhetoric of Arab unity excluded any serious critique of internal Arab culture or politics, blaming everything negative on Israel.

In 1969, Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir could write in the *London Sunday Times*, "There is no Palestinian people." Since then, the whole world has been forced to recognize their existence. However, as other long-suffering peoples like the Kurds know well, global recognition is not the same thing as self-rule, let alone being allowed to form one's own state.

THE COLLAPSE OF OSLO

The First Intifada, begun in 1987, was a major step in that direction. Spearheaded by a new generation of Palestinians in the occupied territories, this was not an isolated terrorist movement, but a highly organized mass uprising that made the occupied territories ungovernable. The result was the 1993 Oslo accords, the first official recognition by Israel and the U.S. of the need for a Palestinian state. The Palestinian movement under Arafat also recognized Israel's right to exist as a state. In addition Arafat's recognition meant that the nearly solid wall of Arab rejection of Israel now began to crumble.

The road since Oslo has been harsh. Even under the more progressive Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak, let alone the utterly reactionary Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel slowed the formation of a Palestinian state. They refused to divide Jerusalem, and equally seriously, continued to expand the Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories. For its part, the U.S. continued to arm Israel to the teeth, tacitly agreeing to its (undisclosed) acquisition of nuclear weapons.

On the Palestinian side, rejectionists from the fundamentalist Hamas and Islamic Jihad immediately rejected Oslo from the start. While the far greater responsibility for the collapse of Oslo certainly lies on the Israeli side, Arafat for his part could never bring himself to state openly that the millions of Palestinian refugees from 1948 would not be able to return to Israel proper, but at most to a new Palestinian state in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and Gaza. This ambiguity concerning Israel's right to exist as an independent

pro-U.S. and pro-Israeli direction by invading Iraq in 2003.

On the ground, the suffering on both sides has become unbearable. Even on the Israeli side, economic conditions have deteriorated to the point where 22% live below the official poverty rate. Now serving as finance minister, Netanyahu has provoked three general strikes, most recently in September, by what his critics call a policy of "swinish capitalism." On the Palestinian side, economic conditions are catastrophic. Half live below the poverty line, the economy has shrunk by 23% since 1999, and the official unemployment rate in Gaza is 26%.

PALESTINIANS AFTER ARAFAT

Arafat's immediate successors, like the colorless 69-year-old bureaucrat Mohammad Abbas, may be more open to compromise than was Arafat at an individual level. But will Abbas, who has almost no mass following, be able to convince the many rejectionist factions to go along, as Arafat might have done?

Today the Palestinians seem bent on achieving a type of unity that will give the new leadership credibility as it represents them to the world. This has led even Hamas to scale back its attacks for the time being. The immensely popular 45-year-old Marwan Barghouti is particularly worth watching. A leader of the First Intifada who grew up under the occupation and was thus not part of Arafat's inner circle, he is also fluent in Hebrew. He accepted the Oslo accords for a time, but during the Second Intifada, he apparently played some role in organizing Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade suicide attacks on Israeli civilians. No

fundamentalist, however, Barghouti has never given up on the possibility of a two-state solution.

In terms of internal Palestinian politics, one early test will be whether anything can be done about corrupt warlords in the security forces like Yasir Arafat's cousin Musa Arafat who has carried out assassinations and extortion in Gaza. Anger at such warlordism was behind the conflict in Gaza last summer, when younger activists challenged Yasir Arafat's leadership. Another test will be how to respond to Hamas's demands, if Gaza is returned, for control over education, for women to be veiled, and for imams at mosques to be appointed by religious rather than governmental authorities.

Should serious negotiations begin, Barghouti is the type of person who might be able to convince Hamas and other militant groups to call a ceasefire, as he did in 2003. In that period, Sharon responded by doing nothing in return, thus scuttling that truce. Sharon and Bush are saying that Abbas needs to take control in January and then curb terrorism before any concessions can be made. Should they maintain such a stance, while the wall, the lockdown, and the assassinations continue, there is no hope for peace.



Thousands attend the funeral of Yasser Arafat in Ramallah in the West Bank, Nov. 12.

Jewish state helped to break apart the July 2000 Camp David negotiations, as much as did Barak's failure to agree to a division of Jerusalem. Two months later, the Second Intifada was born, sparked by the war criminal Sharon's provocative visit to the area of the Al Aksa mosque, the most important Muslim religious site in Jerusalem.

THE ERA OF SHARON

Since his election as prime minister in 2001, Sharon, a vehement opponent of the Oslo accords, has dominated Israeli politics. As the Second Intifada became less a mass movement than a series of terrorist attacks, Sharon responded with a type of force previously thought to be unimaginable. There were hundreds of assassinations of Palestinian leaders, including the religious leader of Hamas, the elderly Sheik Ahmed Yassin. Whole cities were attacked with U.S.-supplied planes and missiles. A separation wall was constructed, going way beyond the 1967 line into Palestinian lands.

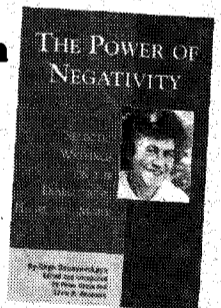
If Sharon was utterly open about his aggressive designs, Arafat played both sides, publicly condemning but sometimes quietly backing armed attacks on Israeli civilians. Since 2000, some 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis have been killed. Sharon's only concession has been a grudging promise to withdraw from Gaza in 2005, the better to dominate the West Bank.

Every week brings new reports of Israeli atrocities. In November, as reported by the mainstream newspaper *Yediot Aharonot*, Israeli soldiers took "trophy" videos of themselves exulting over the bodies or body parts of dead Palestinians. In October alone, some 165 Palestinians were killed, most in Gaza. It was also revealed that a "Chechen Unit," composed of Russian immigrants, had been encouraged to use "Russian" methods. In another case in October, an Israeli captain wounded and then "finished off" a 13-year-old Palestinian girl after it was discovered that she had been carrying books, not bombs as she approached an Israeli checkpoint.

The grand illusion of Bush and Sharon is that with Arafat gone, they can now find "reasonable" Palestinian leaders who will accept a rump state in Gaza, those parts of the West Bank unoccupied by settlers, and this without any of Jerusalem. That is as great a mirage as was Bush's dream of reconfiguring the Arab world in a

THE POWER OF NEGATIVITY

Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx



"The historic tendency, the whole movement from primitive accumulation through capitalis[m] to the expropriators being expropriated, now is not just a negation of the negation 'in general' but the specifically self-developing subject, in its logical, philosophical, historical and individual development."

—Dunayevskaya letter to Herbert Marcuse

Marxist-Humanist Writings on the Middle East

Selected Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya 1961-1982 and from *News & Letters* 1988-2002

"World War II had totally changed the objective situation. The creation of the state of Israel changed it still further for the Middle East. Two realities, thereupon, were new: the existence of Israel, and with that success, the creation of another national consciousness—the Palestinian people. Their right to self-determination can no more be decided from above, be it via the many Arab kingdoms and emirates, or the PLO claiming sole spokesman-ship—much less through a UN command. Let the Palestinian people speak for themselves."

—from "The UN Resolution on Zionism—and The Ideological Obfuscation Also on The Left," January 24, 1976

"It was precisely for that aim of annexing the West Bank that the latest imperialist venture into Lebanon was taken. It is not just the PLO that [Menachem] Begin-[Gen. Ariel] Sharon are out to destroy, but the very idea of Palestinian national self-determination. The whole talk of so-called autonomy in the Camp David Peace Treaty was a sham and a snare. This is clearly not the time for any 'half-way houses.' The Begin-Sharon government must be overthrown!"

—from "Down with The Perpetrators of Palestinian Slaughter: Need for Total Uprooting," September 19, 1982

Indonesian human rights activist assassinated

Editor's note—TAPOL is an organization of activists concerned with human rights issues in Indonesia. The group is based in London.

TAPOL is deeply shocked to learn that Indonesia's foremost human rights activist, Munir, died as the result of foul play. The findings of an autopsy by the Dutch Forensic Institute made public today revealed that a lethal dose of arsenic was present in his body. This confirms the fears of many of his colleagues that he was assassinated.

Munir, who was 38 years old, died on a flight from Indonesia to The Netherlands on Sept. 7. When he boarded the plane after a stopover in Singapore, he appeared to be in good health but during the flight, he became seriously ill and vomited repeatedly. A doctor on the plane tried to help him in his agony, but he died shortly before the plane arrived at its destination.

Munir was a fearless fighter for human rights who took up numerous causes in many parts of Indonesia from Aceh to Papua during the closing years of the Suharto dictatorship. In



Munir

the dying days of the dictatorship, Munir was instrumental in highlighting the disappearance of dozens of activists, many of whom were recovered thanks to his efforts. This led to the founding of KONTRAS, the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence.

Several years earlier, Munir took up the issue of workers' rights in East Java where he lived with his family, and soon became active in the Legal Aid Institute, initially in his native East Java and later at its head office in Jakarta. In 2000, he played a leading role in investigating human rights violations in East Timor in September 1999, shortly after the East Timorese voted overwhelmingly for independence.

On many occasions, Munir fearlessly exposed the role of the powerful Indonesian Armed Forces in acts of repression, incurring their wrath on many occasions. Some senior officers may well have seen Munir as their most dangerous foe.

During the many years we have campaigned for human rights, this is the first time, to our knowledge, that an Indonesian human rights activist has been murdered in this way though

many others have suffered horrific fates in the course of their work. That this should have occurred several years after the collapse of the Suharto regime makes the tragedy even more chilling.

TAPOL wishes to convey its deepest sympathy to Munir's wife and children for whom this revelation must have come as a terrible shock.

TAPOL calls on the Indonesian government to order a thoroughgoing investigation to discover the perpetrator or perpetrators of this wicked crime and for the attorney general, Abdurrahman Saleh, to bring criminal charges against the suspects without delay.

Contact TAPOL, 111 Northwood Rd., Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR7 8HW, UK, or tapol@gn.apc.org.

Nov. 11, 2004

QUEERNOTES

by Suzanne Rose

SIERRA LEONE—On Sept. 28 Fanny Ann Eddy, founder of the Sierra Leone Lesbian and Gay Association, was found murdered in the organization's office. Her neck was broken; she was stabbed and raped repeatedly. Fanny was part of the delegation that went to the United Nations Human Rights Commission with Human Rights Watch last spring in Geneva. Their purpose was to advocate for the failed Resolution on Sexual Orientation and Human Rights. She leaves behind a nine-year-old son.

INDIANAPOLIS—The Indiana Court of Appeals has ruled that lesbian partners who agree to conceive a child through artificial insemination are both the legal parents of any child born to them. "No legitimate reason exists to provide the children born to lesbian parents through the use of reproductive technology with less security and protection than that given to children born to heterosexual parents through artificial insemination," Judge Ezra H. Friedlander wrote the ruling.

NEW YORK—Toys R Us has been ordered by New York's top court to pay the legal fees incurred by three transsexuals who sued the company over harassment and discrimination claims. The three women charged they were verbally harassed and threatened with baseball bats during two separate shopping visits to a Brooklyn store in December of 2000. The women sought \$300,000 in damages. A jury agreed they were harassed but awarded them only \$1 each in June, 2002. The outcome was considered a "moral victory." Later in 2002 a trial judge awarded their lawyers \$193,551, which the company appealed.

WORLDWIDE—The number of people infected with the AIDS virus worldwide has reached an all-time high of almost 40 million, and the infection rate is also the highest ever, according to an annual report released by the United Nations and the World Health Organization. AIDS-related deaths will reach an estimated 3.1 million this year, the highest death toll in the 23-year history of the disease. The most dramatic increases were occurring in Asia and Eastern Europe, with infection rates highest among women.

Marx's concept of 'labor'

Continued from page 4

all value.(13) This is no accident, says Marx, as only "freely associated men" can strip the fetishism from commodities.

Obviously, Harrell thinks he is the exception and can give a more "substantive" view of freedom whose thought, as it moved to materialist "political economy," was "so wrong as to be irrelevant" and became "progressively narrower"....

On the way to his conclusion of the know-it-all, be-it-all "sensual needs," Harrell arms himself with what he conceives as support from "Critical Thought." (Incidentally, while that is what the Frankfurt School called itself and also what it directed toward Marx, it is not what Marx named his new continent of thought. So opposed was he to labels that, outside of "the new Humanism" as the dialectic unity of the material and the ideal, he never tried pasting labels upon his total outlook. Historical Materialism was Engels' expression; Dialectical Materialism was Plekhanov's. And, while the Frankfurt School tried to leave their designation "open" enough to "include" Marxism, it is they, not revolutionary Marxism, that narrowed itself to "Critical.")

Unfortunately, though his sympathy lies in their direction, Harrell hardly presents a total picture of them, whether in relation to Marx, or "as such." First, he fails to show the division **within**: what they were in the 1930s and early 1940s, and what they became in the postwar years hardly makes them a unified outlook—not totalitarian, need it be added—but nevertheless motivated by Marxism, independent, and separate from both the German Social Democracy and the Russian "state socialism." Secondly, he acts as if the present "school"—the Habermas "school" is altogether removed from both Marxism and the original Critical school—speaks with a like voice.

The most telling mix-up relates to the one—Herbert Marcuse—Harrell so admires as to credit one of his works, *Eros and Civilization*, as being nothing short of "one of the most important works in social philosophy since Marx." We do not see the Herbert Marcuse of *Reason and Revolution*, from which work Harrell could have learned a great deal about both Marx and Hegel. He makes no note of the open departures from Marxism since then.(14) And, though he analyzes more of Marcuse's works as against none of Adorno's and little of Horkheimer, the founders of Frankfurt School, the truth is that his preoccupation is just *Eros and Civilization*. Or, more precisely put, sensuality sans history, applicable to "all" cultures, as **substitute**, not just for Marx's "economics" or "sociology"—**but passions**, striving to reconstruct exploitative capitalism on humanist beginnings. Instead, Harrell redefines needs as "timeless erotic needs." That, of course, is Harrell's

13. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx explained why it was he considered intellectuals "petty bourgeois" like "shopkeepers," though in "their education and individual position they may be separated from them as widely as heaven from earth. What makes them representatives of the petty bourgeoisie is the fact that in their minds they do not go beyond the limits which the latter do not go beyond in life, that they are consequently driven theoretically to the same tasks and solutions to which material interests and social position practically drive the latter."

14. Marcuse surely makes no secret of this, with the sole exception that the 1960 new preface to *Reason and Revolution*, originally published in 1941, is presented as if the author had not undergone some very fundamental changes that were quite discontinuous. We have been friendly enemies for many years, and I believe the first serious change is seen in his re-examination of Marxism that he wrote as Preface, in 1957, to my *Marxism and Freedom*. (It has been recently reproduced in the 4th English edition of my work.)

privilege, but it certainly wasn't Marx's perspective, and I doubt it is Marcuse's.

Harrell may argue that that was precisely his point, a critique of Marx which showed that "in the effort to avoid considering" just such sensual human needs and restricting "his analysis to the negative or given historical trends, the critical perspective is crippled." The trouble is that thereby Harrell rejects more than Marx and/or "critical thought" as he rushes, helter skelter, to conclude: **"There must not only be the negation of the negation but negation through the identification of positive possibilities."**

Language is no stranger to reductionism, but this violates simple common sense which I am sure Harrell has plenty of. But so anxious was he to drive the nail into his accusation of just how far "Marxian theory fell short of its liberating purpose" that he violated even the simple linguistic meaning of two negatives equalling a positive.

Before Harrell, to friend and foe alike, negation of negation meant a positive, not just a positive "possibility," but a positive, a **new** positive. Marx took seriously the Hegelian dialectic which, at the very apex of second negativity, affirmed "the most important part of rational cognition" to be "to hold fast to the positive in the negative..."(15) As Marx opposed blueprinting the future, he allowed but one intimation of "the future," and that because it was so rooted in the concrete, in the present. He spelled it out as "permanent revolution."(16) That "negation of negation" would assure not stopping at first negation—the overthrow of the exploitative system—but would recognize and develop **"the wealth of human needs"** so that "there arises positive Humanism, beginning from itself."(17)

As for Harrell's dramatic climax, that the inclusion of "sensual needs" into "socio-historical categories" would assure the conquest of "unhappy consciousness"—"unhappy consciousness" resolves itself through the discovery of the sensual in the form of its particularity—I wish him happiness. But let him not forget that the "unhappy consciousness" is only a quite early stage in Hegel's *Phenomenology*, and in Marx's new continent of thought and in critical thought to the present; there is a long, long road still ahead.

15. Hegel, *Science of Logic*, Vol. II, p. 476. In the new one volume translation by A. V. Miller, the quotation appears on p. 834 (N.Y.: Humanities Press).

16. The idea of permanent revolution was first developed by Marx after the defeat of the 1848 revolutions, in his 1850 Address to the Communist League. It has been developed, first, by Trotsky who, however, while holding to the concept of world revolution, nevertheless introduced a duality into it by glossing over the revolutionary role of the peasantry. Then, in the hands of Mao as "uninterrupted revolution," it not only violated the Hegelian concept of negation of negation by "declaring" it "non-existent," but Marx's concept of proletarian revolution which got lowered to "cultural revolution." There are all kinds of ways of decapitating the dialectic since the first revisionist, Bernstein, found its revolutionary nature burdensome up until the present Russian chief philosopher, Kedrov, who tried to force a separation between Lenin's *Philosophic Notebooks*, and the Hegelian concept of negativity. See "Why Hegel? Why Now?" in my current work, *Philosophy and Revolution*.

17. The East European revolts, beginning with the East German uprising on June 17, 1953, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, through the 1968 Czechoslovak call for "socialism with a human face" which the Russian tanks rolled over, has been quite a philosophic development of thought of the 1844 Humanist Essays on the historic stage of today. A collection, an international symposium, *Socialist Humanism*, edited by Erich Fromm, includes quite a few of these philosophers speaking for themselves (N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965).

How to contact	
NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES	
CHICAGO	FLINT, MI
36 South Wabash, Rm. 1440 Chicago, IL 60603 Phone 312 236 0799 Fax 312 236 0725	P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502
MEETINGS Call for Information	NEW YORK
DETROIT	P.O. Box 250657 Columbia University Station New York, NY 10025 212 663 3631
P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227	MEETINGS Sundays, 7:00 p.m. 39 West 14th St., Room 205 (Identity House, Manhattan)
MEETINGS Sundays 2 p.m. Write for information	OAKLAND
LOS ANGELES	P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448 banandl@yahoo.com
MEETINGS Sundays 6:00 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)	MEETINGS Contact for information
INTERNET	MEMPHIS & MISSISSIPPI
Email nandl@igc.org banandl@yahoo.com (Oakland)	1910 Madison Ave, PMB 59 Memphis, TN 38104
WORLD WIDE WEB www.newsandletters.org	INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS
BRITISH	BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX http://members.aol.com/THEHOBGOBL/masthead
IRANIAN	Anjoman Azadi, 36 S. Wabash #1440, Chicago IL 60603 anjomanazadi@aol.com , www.anjomanazadi.org

OUR LIFE AND TIMES U.S. races to control Iraq before elections

by Kevin A. Barry

The end of the massive U.S. effort to secure the Iraqi city of Falluja proved to be just the beginning of another offensive, as a campaign to pacify the Sunni areas south of Baghdad began even before the dust had settled on the rubble of Falluja. In addition, the northern city of Mosul flared up in the wake of the offensive as many of the insurgents sought by the U.S. in Falluja slipped out of the city and made their way north to launch a deadly series of attacks on Iraqi police and national guard troops there.

The Falluja offensive's aim was to wrest control of the city away from the loose alliance of Baathists, mujahadeen volunteers and organized criminals that had made the city a focal point of the ongoing insurgency against the U.S. and its appointed Iraqi regime. The attack was carried out by means of intense aerial bombardment and fierce house-to-house fighting.

Among the tactics employed by the Marines were the refusal to allow men to flee the city while sending their families to travel on without them, and the denial of access to a caravan of trucks carrying aid organized by the Red Crescent organization. These incidents, along with an on-camera summary execution of a wounded rebel, resulted in widespread indignation throughout the Arab world and beyond.

Few of the city's inhabitants have returned from the shelters they were able to find in the weeks leading up to the offensive, and many of those who eventually do

return are sure to find that their homes have been destroyed in the fighting. Sporadic fighting continues in Falluja and a Marine intelligence report leaked to the press casts doubts on the U.S.'s ability to hold the city without a large influx of troops.

The U.S. is under extreme pressure to gain control of the predominantly Sunni areas of the country in which the insurgency holds sway before the scheduled national elections on Jan. 30. To ensure an appearance of legitimacy for the outcome of the elections, the U.S. has to suppress the resistance there so that voting can take place. Intimidation by insurgents plus widespread Sunni apathy towards the Iraqi government threaten to make turnout in these areas negligible.

The election plan nearly suffered a major setback when a large number of secular and Sunni-based parties released a declaration stating that they wanted the polling to be postponed for several months. This statement was even informally endorsed by the party of Iyad Allawi, the authoritarian U.S.-appointed prime

minister. The political forces behind the statement fear the violence in the Sunni areas, but even more so the possibility that the votes of the majority Shia population of Iraq will effectively marginalize them and their constituencies. The challenge to the Jan. 30 date fell apart the day after it was announced when the two Kurdish parties withdrew their objections. These political complications in addition to the military challenge of the insurgency form an enormous challenge to the Bush administration's goals in Iraq.

—Kevin Michaels

Ukraine uprising

The November-December uprising surpassed anything seen in Ukraine since the 1920s. The Nov. 21 elections were blatantly rigged by the regime of Leonid Kuchma, who has not hesitated in the past to assassinate his critics. The regime has drawn its support from a new and corrupt business oligarchy, from remnants of the old totalitarian apparatus, and from the neo-Stalinist Russian regime of Vladimir Putin.

As with his friend Bush's Iraq war, Putin overreached by interfering in Ukraine's elections to back pro-Kuchma candidate Viktor Yanukovich. This has given the democratic movement a nationalist coloration. If it succeeds in bringing to power Viktor Yushchenko, the true winner, this would humiliate Putin, and perhaps undermine his power at home.

Beginning the night of Nov. 21, when the fraudulent results were announced, tens and then hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians, most of them youth, took over the center of Kiev. They have camped out day and night ever since to support Yushchenko and more broadly, a democratic regime. The student organization Pora (It Is Time!) has given the camp a meticulous organization, complete with tents, food and medicine, and barricades, all within a framework of disciplined nonviolence.

Pora models itself on Otpor, which helped organize the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic in 2000, and on Kmara, which played a similar role in Georgia last year. As in those countries, it is at most a political, not a social revolution that is on the agenda, since the democratic movement in no way opposes the capitalist order. This is why these movements have received funding from Western foundations.

As in most peoples' movements of this sort, winning over the rank and file of the repressive apparatus has been a key element in the struggle. The movement quieted club-wielding goons sent to menace the demonstrators through dialogue. When pro-democracy youth marched on the presidential palace, they found three tanks blocking the way. Yulia Tymoshenko, the democratic movement's most forceful orator, jumped onto a tank and led the crowd in a chant of "Soldiers, join us!" The tanks parted and a delegation marched straight into the palace to tell Kuchma his time was up.

Kuchma and Putin have tried every trick to derail the movement, including threats to organize an irredentist movement among Russian-speakers in industrialized eastern Ukraine. All of these efforts have fizzled or backfired. People are losing their fear. TV reporters, led by a sign interpreter who protested the fraud on Nov. 21, have forced government TV to cease its totally one-sided coverage.

During their hour of need, the Ukrainian people have found their staunchest allies in Poland. A demonstration was held in Warsaw, and Lech Walesa visited Ukraine to show his solidarity. The European Union has come out strongly against any attempt to crush the movement. Bush has shown his true colors by tepidly supporting democracy, all the while stressing that he does not want to offend Putin, a key ally in the "war on terror," or Kuchma, who has sent 1,600 troops to Iraq. Yushchenko has promised to withdraw those troops.

Protests in Chile



Santiago, Chile saw its most massive demonstrations in the past 15 years, Nov. 19-21, at the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) summit. About 60,000 marched, Nov. 19, and the entire weekend was full of workshops in opposition to the summit.

APEC, which was formed 15 years ago to help further neo-liberal restructuring, is itself a lightning rod for resentment against reforms that have caused great suffering in South America. But the presence of Bush at the summit drew the greatest ire from Chileans, who see him as the U.S. president who has pursued the most imperialist politics towards Latin America.

The Chilean president, Ricardo Lagos, considered a leftist, deftly played a complicated game of pandering to Bush and other world leaders (Hu Jintao of China, Putin of Russia, and Koizumi of Japan were also present) while also insisting that those leaders have "the obligation to listen" to protesters.

Lagos indeed has an affinity with some protesters. His government worked closely with the activities organized over the weekend by the Foro Social Chileno (FSC), which was headed by such reformist organizations as ATTAC, and repressed events organized by the Coordinadora Anti-APEC, a more radical grouping.

The FSC march, Nov. 19 was accorded a permit, streets were closed, and few police were present, while the Coordinadora request for a march permit was denied. When it took place without the permit, police came out in force, broke it up, and arrested over 100.

This subtlety was, of course, left out of Lagos's concluding remarks to the summit, where he spoke directly to the issue of the weekend's protests. He alluded to the FSC-sponsored events by saying, "thank you for marching, and the form in which you marched."

—Mitch Weerth

Darfur genocide

New fighting broke out in Sudan's Darfur region in November, as the Sudan Liberation Movement launched a small-scale attack on a government outpost in Tawila, killing 15 police. The government then bombed the village, killing 25 civilians.

Since the Sudanese military and the janjaweed militia began their "ethnic cleansing" of Darfur in January, the UN estimates that 1.6 million non-Arabs termed "Africans" have been driven from their homes and 70,000 have been killed or died of hunger/disease. Hundreds of thousands more face starvation, stranded in inaccessible areas during the rainy season. As in Bosnia in the 1990s, these attacks have included the wholesale execution of adult males and rape on a mass scale of women and girls.

As in Bosnia as well, the UN has tried to blame "both sides" for what is a campaign of genocide by government forces. Many Arab and Third World governments have tacitly or openly defended the racist regime against Western critics. In contrast, students at the University of Khartoum have courageously demonstrated against their government's campaign of terror.

General strike in Italy

For the fifth time since 2001, when far-right Silvio Berlusconi became Prime Minister, Italian workers staged a nationwide general strike on Nov. 30. The four-hour stoppage involved more than ten million workers and 70 street demonstrations.

The strike was called by all of Italy's major union federations to protest a government budget that would mean 75,000 layoffs of state workers, tax cuts for the rich and upper middle classes, and nothing for poorer people or regions. Even some employers associations have denounced the budget.

Berlusconi is notoriously corrupt and is being tried for bribing judges. In response, his parliamentary majority has passed a law curbing such prosecutions. Judges and prosecutors across Italy held a half-day strike on Nov. 25 to defend their hard-won independence from direct political control.

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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