

# NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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## WORKSHOP TALKS

### HMO leeches

by Htun Lin

Working at the Kaiser HMO, I sense a major cultural change. Nobody seems to feel like they belong anymore as they walk around with frustrated expressions on their faces. The heart of the operation used to be the admissions office, driving the practical activity of the hospital. We had the sense that our reason for being here was to take in patients from emergency and assign them to the hospital.

Efficiency used to mean how quickly we could get a patient from emergency to a hospital bed staffed by qualified permanent medical staff. After ten years of restructuring, efficiency has taken on a whole new meaning. It now means how few nursing and allied staff can they get away with providing each day.

Because head count flexibility is paramount, we see a revolving door of temporary and casual staff provided by subcontractors and labor agencies. The heart of the operation now is the imperious staffing office. Everyone has to answer to them including the nursing supervisor who now is reduced to no more than an artful accountant and skillful juggler of nurse-to-patient ratios.

Her concrete nursing abilities are no longer primary. Her main job is to keep costs in line by restricting staffing levels within budgetary constraints, predetermined by the bean counters at headquarters. Taylorism has arrived in health care.

We know it is nothing personal against us health workers that makes our employer do this. I don't even think they are lying when they say their pharmaceutical and equipment costs went up with the explosion of high-tech. I think they are telling the truth when they say the large corporate subscribers of group health plans have been pressuring them to cut costs. Not only that, Kaiser feels compelled by cutthroat competition from the for-profit HMOs to abide by "market" stan-

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## BLACK/RED VIEW

### Sudan and oil

by John Alan

For over 18 years a brutal civil war has been fought in Sudan between the ruling Arabic speaking Muslims of the north and the indigenous Black Sudanese living in the south. The most recent economic reason for this conflict was the unilateral decision, of the ruling northern Sudanese government in Khartoum to sell concessions to Western and Asian oil corporations to drill for oil in Sudan.

Nature had placed Sudan's rich crude petroleum areas in southern Sudan. To validate its agreement with multinational oil corporations, the Khartoum regime sent in troops to clear and protect those areas from any opposition by southern Sudanese. According to a recent Amnesty International report, the Arabic Khartoum regime has used ground attacks, helicopter gunships and indiscriminate high-altitude bombardment to clear the local population from oil rich areas.

This massive displacement of the local population was followed in the last decade by the deployment of additional weaponry and forces, specifically drafted to protect the oil fields. The military tactics of the government's security force destroyed harvests and looted livestock as it occupied the area to prevent the return of the displaced population. This scorched earth policy has caused the death of more than 2 million people and has uprooted another 4.4 million, many of whom may die from famine.

There is a long list of multinational oil corporations now holding oil drilling concessions in Sudan. Among the major ones we find the Great Nile Petroleum and Oil Corporation (GNPOC) with a concession to drill for oil in two areas. GNPOC's main partner is the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), owned by the People's Republic of China. The CNPC owns a 40% share in this project. Other major shareholders are the Malaysian state-owned Petronas which has a 30% stake in Canada's Talisman Energy, and Sudapet, the national petroleum company of Sudan, which has a 5%

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## Profits soar in energy 'crisis'

by Ron Brokmeyer

On June 6, hundreds of trade unionists marched on a local Duke Energy power plant in Oakland, Cal., demanding a public takeover of California's power generation. This was only one of dozens of ongoing demonstrations in California by labor, environmental and consumer groups against a fake energy crisis in which power generation plants, many of which were sold off by California's own utilities, extorted exorbitant prices by withholding power. As if California were a Third World economy, the state's power grid operator regularly ordered rolling blackouts causing tremendous economic dislocation, chaos in traffic and elevators, and sometimes extreme hardship as with home care patients on respirators. The shutdowns lured California Governor Grey Davis into buying energy at outrageous prices.

Duke Energy is especially hated because it set a record by charging the State of California an astronomical \$3,880 per megawatt hour on the spot energy market. The spot energy market is a buy-it-as-you-need-it method and became the source for power for California utilities when they sold off their within-state power plants in order to deregulate.

Before energy prices spiked last year they were already at a historically high average price of \$50 per megawatt hour. The demonstration was also against the notorious Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) which fiddled while a mostly Texas-centered power cartel of giants like Enron, Reliant and Dynegy bled California dry. Their profits last year, even before this year's gouging, went up 42%, 55% and 210%, respectively.

Since January California went from sporting a \$6 billion projected surplus to financial ruin. It is now brokering with skeptical bond underwriters, trying to float a \$13.4 billion bond issue. This loan is to be repaid through unprecedented energy price hikes. That burden of a more than 40% hike went into effect in June and falls on mostly residential customers. This is on top of a 9% increase in January. The energy cartel has stolen the surplus that was to go to improve long neglected essential services, especially public education in a state that now ranks 40th in spending per pupil.

At the same time California's two largest utilities, the bankrupt PG&E and Southern California Edison, were allowed by FERC to shield billions of dollars in profitable assets, which have been transferred to their parent companies. They left the local utilities saddled with \$14 billion in debt. Declaring emergency powers, Governor Davis set up a power authority and used the state's treasury to buy \$50 to \$75 million in power every day since January, at prices from 10 to even 60

times last year's wholesale electricity rates. Davis has also been trying to secretly negotiate long term contracts and bailouts of California's utilities by having the state buy their transmission lines.



Unionists, environmentalists, and consumer advocates protest disruptions and harm from electricity blackout rolling over California.

Only on June 18, after the State of California was bled dry, after public uproar and mass demonstrations throughout the state, did FERC move on its November, 2000 determination that California wholesale energy prices were not "just and reasonable" and institute "price mitigation." Up until then FERC did almost nothing though its responsibility is precisely to regulate wholesale energy prices to make them "just and reasonable." That regulatory responsibility goes back to the 1930s when, during the Roosevelt administration, the capitalists themselves recognized that reliable power at a reasonable price is the lifeblood of an industrial society. Over the whole year the projections were that rolling blackouts would result in \$16 billion in lost production and other damage.

### A CRISIS OF GREED

Problems started in May of 2000 when electricity prices skyrocketed from \$50 a megawatt hour to \$180. This was caused by a jump in the price of natural gas used in many California power plants. Natural gas prices went up to \$19 at the California border for the same amount of gas that cost \$5 in Texas. According to Texas regulators, only another dollar could be reasonably added for transportation. The difference is that Texas giant El Paso withheld 1 billion cubic feet a day of excess pipeline capacity to drive up natural gas prices and conspired to stop an additional pipeline that would have fed northern California from Canada. Gas prices dropped dramatically since El Paso Merchant Energy's contract expired May 31, 2001 and 30 com-

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## Asian youths fight racism in Britain

London—The pretensions of the main political parties to keep race out of the general election campaign last month were blown apart in Oldham by the forced entry onto the agenda of the day by those on the receiving end of the racist reality. For three nights in early June, Oldham, in Lancashire, Northern England was rocked by a spontaneous act of rebellion in which Asian youth fought running battles first with neo-Nazis, then with the Greater Manchester Police. The reverberations of the youth uprising continued with major confrontations in the city of Leeds days later and in the neighboring town of Burnley on June 23 and 24.

The action was sparked by gangs of far right thugs attacking houses and people on the street. A pregnant woman was kicked in the stomach. As the police were nowhere to be seen, "when it came to our doorstep people defended themselves" as one youth put it.

Ashid Ali, of the Oldham Bangladeshi Youth Association, declared, "We had a community here that had been boiling up and this was the spark that started the fire." When the police did arrive in force they 4

began arresting the Asian youth, who then turned their rage against the police.

Ateeq Siddique, an anti-racist activist in Bradford, Yorkshire added, "What's happening in Oldham isn't about so-called 'racial tensions.' It's about naked, violent racism: the racism of the far Right and the racism institutionalised within the police force."

The Commission for Racial Equality, in a 1994 study of unlawful segregation in housing by Oldham Borough Council, found that 71% of tenants on one rundown

estate were Asian, while on a nearby modern estate only one resident was Asian.

The high vote for the British National Party across Oldham represents, to quote one bourgeois paper, a "carnival of regression." Despite this, the aspiration to working class unity remains a core principle of socialism; but the problem in Oldham, and elsewhere, does not simply, as most of the Left argues, arise from the bosses' traditional tactic of divide and conquer; our class is already conquered and at present we are not even within striking distance of the bourgeoisie.

Another problem is that narrowing the fight against racism to the question of violence alone abandons the problem of a racist capitalist society itself. Instead, removed from the context of a racist society, racist attacks are portrayed as a problem of individual psychology. Racial violence can become a blanket term for any violence between people of different races—so that Blacks are seen to be as capable as whites of racist

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### ON THE INSIDE

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# AIDS reveals sickness of capitalism

by Maya Jhansi

On June 25-27, the first global summit to discuss the greatest disease catastrophe in human history was convened by the UN. At least 22 million people have died of AIDS in the last 20 years. Over 36 million live with the AIDS virus—25 million live on the continent of Africa. In Botswana, with the highest rate of AIDS in the world, 38.8% of people 18-49 years old, and nearly half of women in their 20s, are infected with HIV. An article in *The Nation* rightly called this reality global apartheid.

It's so strange that people refer to the AIDS pandemic as a "ravage of nature" or the act of a vengeful god. In fact it is nothing but dirty capitalist politics—the disease may not be, but the pandemic is. Why did it take so long for the world's leaders (not all of them, none from the "developed" world) to finally get together to discuss it?

## LIMITATIONS OF THE UN

So what came out of this conference? A watered down Declaration of Commitment that bowed to pressures by Islamic fundamentalists and the Vatican to drop gays, drug users and prostitutes from being singled out as especially vulnerable groups. They also fought inclusion of wording about the right of women to control their sexual lives, but lost.

The Declaration highlights prevention over treatment, setting up deadlines for governments to bring down the rate of infection, but virtually ignoring the millions without access to life-saving drugs. So far, the only positive effect of the conference was that the U.S. felt pressured to drop its lawsuit against Brazil for manufacturing and distributing for free some U.S. patented AIDS drugs.

Like the disease itself, this crisis is so manifold and nefarious that our response can't be filtered down to one or another program. In fact, this issue has rekindled an important dimension of the anti-globalization movement. ACT-UP, which had dwindled into inactivity in the last decade, has remobilized itself into a smaller but more diverse group calling for the cancelling of Third World debts and access to AIDS drugs for all people.

They led a rally in New York before the conference that suggests a new opening for a more comprehensive response to the epidemic than the UN is unlikely to provide on its own. However, this dimension of the anti-globalization movement, like all the others, needs to go deeper into the issues, to uncover a truly viable opposition to this insanely inhuman world. Nothing shows this better than the impact of AIDS on women.

## Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Shouting "We're not gonna take it!" and carrying signs that read "scabs go home," striking nurses, June 15, surrounded vans filled with scabs attempting to take their jobs at Brockton (Massachusetts) Hospital. The nurses have been on strike against understaffing and mandatory overtime since May 25, after working without a contract since September. The strikers are receiving support from people around the state in their fight for safe patient care and working conditions. They are seeking a hospital commitment to hire and retain the staff needed to take care of patients safely, rather than forcing nurses to work overtime when they are ill or tired.

\* \* \*

The first recipients of the Millennium Peace Prize for Women have been announced by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the London human rights organization, International Alert. They include:

\* Flora Brovina, the Kosovar Albanian pediatrician and feminist sentenced by Serbs to 12 years in prison, and subsequently released under international pressure, for operating a women's clinic and opposing Serb atrocities in Kosovo.

\* Asma Jahangir and Hina Jilani, Pakistani sisters whose lives have been threatened for defending women's and human rights.

\* Veneranda Nzambazamariya, who helped women recover from the traumas of the 1994 massacres in Rwanda.

\* Leitana Negan Women's Development Agency, a West Papua organization working for peace among splintered communities.

\* Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres, a Colombian group organizing massive women's peace demonstrations. (See story on Colombia on page 9.)

—Information from *Sister Namibia*

\* \* \*

A recent study revealed that wage discrimination is still alive and well in the U.S. The National Organization for Women reported that certain wage differences between men and women, whites and people of color, can only be attributed to discrimination. Women working full time currently average only 72% of men's salaries—a decrease from previous years. Black women are paid 65% of white men's salaries, and Latin women 52%. The wage gap has changed less than a penny per year since 1963.

Nearly half of the world's 36 million people infected with HIV are women—and the number is growing. Women now make up 60% of new infections. In sub-Saharan Africa, teen-age girls are five times more likely to be infected than boys. In the U.S. a 2001 Kaiser Foundation Report found that women make up a growing number of new HIV infections, and that women of color are "hardest hit." Although Black women are only 13% of U.S. females over age 13, they account for 63% of the AIDS cases among women in that age group.

The response of the UN is inadequate. While UNAIDS signed an agreement with the UN Development Fund for Women to fight the gender inequity that facilitates the spread of AIDS, it had only a very few sessions on women and AIDS at the global conference.

To make matters worse, UNAIDS singled out men as the focus for World Aids Day both this year and last. Their logic is telling. In their statement about the World AIDS Day campaign, they argue that, "All over the world, women find themselves at special risk of HIV infection because of their lack of power to determine where, when and how sex takes place. What is less recognized, however, is that the cultural beliefs and expectations that make this the case also heighten men's own vulnerability."

## SEXISM AND AIDS

How can they use patriarchy and violence against women as an excuse to focus on men? Not only do they argue that men are more affected by AIDS, but they believe that only through mobilizing men will any of the problems implicated in the spread of AIDS be stopped. This displays a blatant disregard for women's self-determination.

This disregard for women's self-determination is at the core of everything. The conditions that have led to the increased rate of AIDS in women include their lack of power and control over their own bodies, their susceptibility to violence and rape, and their inability to force a man to use a condom.

Indeed, as African feminists have pointed out, the threat and fear of AIDS has made matters worse for African women. The fear of AIDS is one cause of the continued and sometimes increased practice of female genital mutilation. Many see it as a protection against AIDS. In fact, it increases women's chances of getting AIDS when they do have intercourse because of cutting and trauma in the area. In addition, younger and younger girls are being pushed into prostitution and marriage, both of which put young girls at risk of contracting AIDS.

The feeble declarations of the UN will do very little, in the end, to fight this deadly reality. This is something women have learned since the much touted Beijing women's conference in 1995. At that time, a lot of similar declarations were made, but women, especially when it comes to AIDS, are worse off now. It's fine that the global summit brought worldwide attention to the AIDS pandemic, but until the inhuman logic of an inhuman world is challenged at its root, we will not be able to eradicate this plague. Without that, the priorities of the medical world, of drug companies, governments and leaders will remain as they are. The virtual holocaust that Africa faces (5-7 million expected to die by 2010 in South Africa alone) makes this absolutely unacceptable. There is no time to waste.

## Central Park rally against sexism

New York—Women rallied in Central Park June 9 to say "we are still outraged" a year after 56 women were assaulted in the park by a crowd of men following the Puerto Rican Day Parade. The women passers-by were doused with water, stripped and sexually molested, while the police refused to respond to pleas for help.

The Street Harassment Project put out a call for the commemorative rally. Puerto Rican and other Latina groups joined with other feminists to put on the event. Speakers included Maria Tricoche, a Vieques activist, who said, "This has nothing to do with the Puerto Rican Parade. It goes back to Adam and Eve, when Eve got the blame because Adam was stupid enough to eat the apple. The same attitude toward women appears in every class, race and country; only the degree differs."

Another speaker was Brigitte Moore of the Black Grrrl Revolution, Inc., in Brooklyn. She read her poem *z* in the October 2000 issue of *Ms.* magazine. It speaks of "bringing feminism to the hood" in opposition to "forms of Black nationalism that degrade women." "Some women say I overreacted in my outrage against the Central Park assaults," she said. "They blame the incident on alcohol and heat. These people wouldn't excuse a lynching or cross-burning because of alcohol and heat. I protest all forms of patriarchy and misogyny, just as I protest racism."

NOW-NYC called on women and men to "stand up



News & Letters

# DEFEAT

## 'Operation Save America'

### in Wichita!

July 13-21 "Operation Save America," formerly "Operation Rescue," plans to shut down abortion clinics and target abortion providers in their homes in Wichita, Kansas. Dr. Tiller, one of only five late term abortion providers in the U.S., was shot by these fanatics in 1993. They plan to go to his house in Wichita. Feminist and pro-choice religious groups in Wichita are organizing to defend women and abortion providers, but they need the help of feminists all over the country. Ten years ago when Operation Rescue attacked Wichita, they were successful in shutting down many clinics for weeks. This can't happen again! In Chicago a broad coalition is forming to send buses to Wichita. Call Refuse and Resist: 312-683-5194 (Chicago) or 212-713-5657 (national).

## Women on Waves

On June 11, a privately financed Dutch medical ship, "Women on Waves," set sail from Rotterdam to its first port of call, Dublin. According to Rebecca Gobarts, a gynecologist who heads the project, no surgical abortions will be performed on the first trip. On request, contraceptives like IUDs as well as the RU-486 pill will be available. The ship then goes on to other Irish ports.

Abortion is illegal in Ireland. According to the Irish Family Planning Association, last year 6,300 Irish women traveled to England to end unwanted pregnancies.

Stops in other countries where women have difficulties finding legal or safe abortions are planned "only where local women's groups invite and cooperate with the ship's team." Plans for the project include consultation and follow-up care. A spokesperson for the project said the ship "of course is not the solution to the abortion problem. The Project is a gesture of solidarity and a means to make the suffering of women more visible."

It is also hoped that much discussion will be provoked with offers of support to women who want to change the laws. Every year 20 million abortions are performed under illegal, unsafe conditions, resulting in a death rate of 80,000 women.

—Sheila G.

for your sisters when we are being harassed or grabbed at or disrespected in public or private places." NOW also demanded city and federal investigations of police conduct during the incident last year.

Mindful that some Puerto Rican groups considered the feminist protests to be anti-Puerto Rican, the Street Harassment Project flyer said, "Assaults and harassment of women are about sexism itself, not any one group of men. Therefore, the focus on the Puerto Rican Day Parade is an evasion of the truth of omnipresent sexism, as well as an excuse to further oppress the Puerto Rican community." Sure enough, this year's Puerto Rican Day Parade June 10 became an excuse for police to "lock down" the parades and parts of the Bronx where celebrations took place after the parade. Police beat and pepper sprayed the crowd that evening, arresting 42 people and injuring others.

Both Puerto Rican and feminist groups condemned using last year's assaults as an excuse to repress Puerto Ricans.

Many speakers at the rally called on men to confront other men when they see harassment taking place, because "silence is approval." There were also testimonials from women who had been deeply hurt by verbal and physical attacks from strangers in the street. All of the groups at the rally urged people to get involved in this issue.

—Anne Jaclard

# V&V Supremo strikers face scabs

Chicago—Imagine yourself as a new worker in the U. S. thinking that you have come to a rich country where you might make the money needed for yourself and your family that's with you, and send some money to your family in your home country. You take a test and pay money to obtain a special driver's license to drive a truck in Illinois.

You then get a job at V&V Supremo in Chicago and make all of \$8.50 per hour. The bare minimum livable wage (poverty level) is now about \$8.15. If that same worker got a job in the V&V production facility (cheese and other dairy products) or in the warehouse, that person would make \$6.25.

One worker's check stub showed raises over a two-year period that brought his wage to \$6.75. This is well below the official poverty line! The only thing that brings these workers' earnings to a reasonable level is that they might work 35 hours or more overtime in a week.

Chicago covers a very large area. There are stores that carry Supremo cheese all over. The quota for each driver is to service 28 stores per day. Electronic surveillance monitors the time spent in each store. The driver is not to spend more than 12 minutes at each site delivering product, collecting payments from the stores, taking back returns, and even selling new products for the company.

The production workers are supposed to mix the cheese; pour the cheese into molds; press the molds into the final shape (with whatever minor cleaning is necessary) at a rate of five molds per minute (12 seconds each). After performing this maneuver at least 2,100 times a day at below poverty wages (overtime nearly doubles that number), this individual is supposed to return home and perform his or her duties as the perfect genteel bourgeois citizen—bringing up the next generation of happy and successful citizens.

The workers have chosen to organize themselves into Teamsters Local 703. They are asking for reasonable pay and working conditions, and medical benefits. The owner, Gilberto Villaseñon, has hired replacement workers, extra security thugs to intimidate the workers, security to follow (and "protect") the replacement drivers (whose quotas are a fraction of the regular drivers), and undoubtedly some high-priced lawyers to protect his dictatorial rule at V&V.

Paying the workers a fair livable wage is not likely to put him and his in-laws and cousins who manage his enterprise into a soup line. But recognizing the union will reduce his dictatorship. Protecting that is very expensive.

—Dennis Dixon

# Day labor rally at BBJ Linen

Chicago—On June 19—or "Juneteenth," the day in 1865 that the last group of slaves in Texas found out that slavery had been officially abolished—day laborers and activists from a wide coalition of unions and immigrant rights organizations, advocates for the homeless, student groups and youth involved in Union Summer protested at BBJ Linen, a sweatshop that launders and rents out the finest linens for the parties that the wealthy host.

Those struggling for the rights of day laborers were employing a new method of struggle by targeting companies that hire day laborers instead of solely focusing on the agencies that contract them out.

Close to 200—mostly Black and Latino—turned out on BBJ Linen's parking lot and set up a stage complete with microphone to demand justice for the day laborers. BBJ hires day laborers almost exclusively, many of whom have been there for years with absolutely no benefits. These workers have never received a raise, unless you count minimum wage increases, which is all BBJ pays.

Conditions are so bad that 50 workers walked off the job in early June. Two of the five women workers who were fired for this action, after being targeted as its leaders, spoke to the crowd in Spanish. One of the women had been at BBJ for over four years. The crowd demanded their immediate reinstatement along with the other three fired workers. Other demands included a wage increase which would be retroactive and an end to threats of being fired or deported for questioning conditions and wages or for union organizing.

A recently fired man in his seventies who had been at BBJ for years spoke to the crowd in Spanish. "I'm here to demand justice. I was fired because they said I'm old and too slow and not worth anything. They said I couldn't work fast enough. I asked if they realized that they'd be old some day." He also demanded justice for the other fired workers and for those still at BBJ.

The highlight of the demonstration came when the shift changed and the doors opened. Some of the workers, all Latino, looked like they couldn't have been over 14 years old. A small crowd of women workers came over to the rally. You could almost feel their hearts pounding.

One woman took the stage alongside one of the fired workers and in Spanish said: "Every time we protest working conditions, they say the doors are open and we can walk out. I've been working here for eight years through different day labor agencies and have never gotten a raise. We want holidays and benefits just as other workers do because we deserve them as well. I hope that my co-workers will come out and join us because this is good for us and for our families."

While there was no walkout this day, things are definitely brewing. To get involved, contact the Day Labor Organizing Project at (312) 435-4548 or Jobs with Justice at (312) 738-6205.

—Sonia Bergonzi

## Workshop Talks

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dards.

I see this as Kaiser merely responding to what Marx called a new social average labor time. Labor time for a given product averaged over the whole society determines value. That new social average tells them to cut costs because all the employers insist on cutting health care costs for their employees to compensate for their own diminishing profit margins. The pressure is to reduce the cost of labor by cutting the cost of their health care and cutting the number of workers themselves.

Health care workers feel the pressure from both angles. So what Marx called "socially necessary labor time" required to deliver the product, in this case health care, is what drives managers. This drives front line health care workers crazy. We want to really care for our patients and that contradicts the corporate goal of value production.

Our daily tasks are broken down into discrete manageable mathematical units. Each task is assigned a value as is each patient care requirement and each morbidity factor. All of this used to be a tool for the nurses to determine the level of care needed by the patient. Now it is used by staffing administrators to mathematically manipulate these numbers to meet their budgetary constraints.

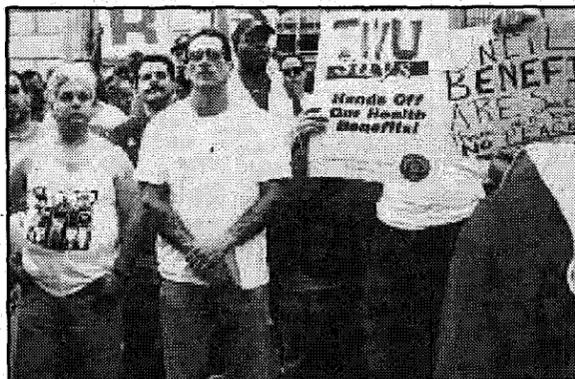
The bottom line is to get away with the least amount of nursing time, eliminating as much labor as possible. This is done through the use of machines, accompanied by less skilled personnel and also through the promotion of patient "self care" and "home care" techniques. In other words, anything that would "liberate" the nurse from bedside care.

What is especially alienating is that the pressure never stops. Workers implicitly recognize the inner workings of value production and its extraction of surplus value from our labor to satisfy the quest for profits. We have seen them spend a billion dollars on high-tech to replace half our workforce and still come back to us later crying "red ink" and "we need more effort from you."

They call for us to be better "team players," cut costs more, and work faster in order to take on more patients. Because nursing has been so thoroughly abused by managed care's staff reductions and speed-up, now they are unable to attract new applicants into the profession.

We know we are more productive than ever. Our rate of on-the-job injuries, especially bad backs and needle sticks, are proof of this. Yet our employer, like a hapless giant hounding the goose that lays his golden eggs to produce more, never seems to be satisfied.

# Bridge rally for transit workers



New York—On Wednesday, June 20, the whole Brooklyn Bridge was occupied by thousands of workers from Transport Workers Union Local 100 and their sympathizers demanding that health care benefits not be taken away. This march and rally across the Brooklyn Bridge was so well organized that we didn't even leave any garbage on the bridge.

Daily News reporters and photographers were there, but there was a news blackout—nothing made it into the newspaper. Why? Maybe because Mayor Giuliani is negotiating with the Teachers' Union and doesn't want news of this massive rally to be spread widely.

Last year the Transit Authority initiated 16,000 disciplinary actions against us. They also control payments from the Health Benefits Trust, which is paying its bills one week late. Negotiations have bogged down.

The Transit Authority is talking about work rule changes and co-pays as part of any bargain. It refuses to hand over the \$20 million which the contract obliges them to pay into the Health Benefits Trust fund. But our union is back! Members are angry that health benefits are still in jeopardy and we are fighting for our rights on the job. We will not be forced to make concessions. We organized a great rally.

—New shop steward

# 'Lives on the Line'

*Lives on the Line: Dispatches from the U.S.-Mexico Border*, by Miriam Davidson (University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 2000)

*Lives on the Line* is about the border towns of Nogales, Arizona in the U.S. and Nogales, Sonora in Mexico. The book looks at the problems brought about by the maquiladoras and the resulting environmental, social and economic changes on both sides of the border. It puts a human perspective on the workers who came to Nogales, Sonora and how the workers and their families lived in the colonias and how they survived and changed.

One of the problems discussed is pollution from the factories and the efforts of some citizens of Nogales, Arizona to deal with the cancer clusters. Their efforts as usual were bogged down in bureaucracy.

There is also a look at the problems of the border patrol, the border crossers and the wall the U.S. built along the border. There is an interesting chapter on what are called "the tunnel children." These are homeless children and teenagers who lived in tunnels under the border. The two border towns were not ready for the maquiladoras and their problems. It has been a long, hard time on both sides of the border.

—Pauline

# 'Real' prison jobs

Colorado—We are dying here in these prison cages so a prison guard can get a paycheck without having to work a "real" job. In the community around this prison there are generations of prison guard families. I suppose these people really do teach their offspring the art of imposing oppression and hardship on prisoners—in other words, the art of kicking others when they are down.

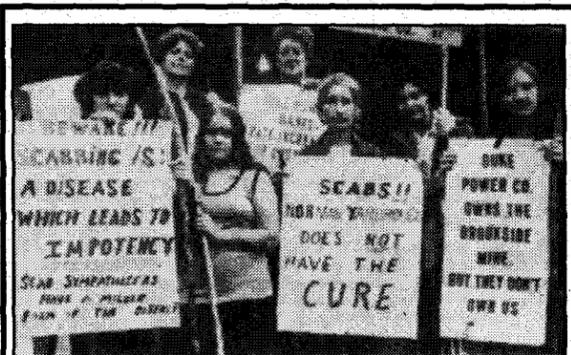
When I tried to expose the cancers growing on this system, I learned very quickly that the ones who do speak out are dealt with in horrible ways that have been perfected through the years. Any who come to the forefront against the demons of the prison industry are deemed the enemy and censored. Blasphemy isn't a sin reserved for the Bible. Cursing the gods of the prison industry will get you into hell just as fast!

The prison system has been allowed to strip us of our access to legal assistance. How many thousands would be able to secure their release through the courts if they had the money to hire a real attorney? Here in Colorado, prisoners are expected to work a job where they are paid 56 cents to a dollar a day. Then as if to add insult to that, the prison system withholds 20% of that for restitution or paying court fees or fines.

When that one or two dollars is withheld and sent to the clerk of the court monthly, has a "good deed" been done by the prison to benefit the citizens? Or has the prison once again played the role of humiliator and dehumanizer? It costs the State of Colorado more to collect this money than what is collected, but it is to make a point—just like it costs the State of Alabama more to have their chain gangs than what is earned with the services of the "legalized slaves."

It seems like most of the inmates coming into the system today are so preoccupied with telling each other and themselves how tough and gangsterlike they are that they don't take the time to see what's happening to them. While they play make-believe gangster, the guards raid their cells with the force of 10 or 15 to one and assault inmates in the name of "control." If any other group of men chose to attack single unarmed men in such armed groups, they would be labeled cowards, but cowards in uniform are called heroes.

—Jay



Women on picket lines in the 1974 Brookfield, Ky. miners' strike.

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From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya  
MARXIST-HUMANIST ARCHIVES

### Editor's Note

In response to ongoing discussions concerning what distinguishes Marxist-Humanism from other tendencies of radical thought, we here reprint sections of the Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 1984-85, originally entitled, "Where are the 1980s Going? The Imperative Need for a Totally New Direction in Uprooting Capitalism-Imperialism." This was one of several summations of Marxist-Humanism written by Raya Dunayevskaya in the period following the publication of her third major philosophic work, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, in 1982. What appears here is section 4, entitled "Objectivity/Subjectivity—in Actuality and in Philosophy," and a part of section 5, "Organizational Conclusions," written April 26, 1984. The original text is in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, 8123.

In restating Marx's Humanism for our age, *Marxism and Freedom*, 1958, began with the age of revolutions—national, industrial, social and political, as well as the intellectual revolution which discerned and developed the dialectics of revolution as the overcoming of stages of alienation. Beginning with the machine age and the revolutions of 1776 and 1789, *Marxism and Freedom* ended with the revolutions of our day—from the battles against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which signaled the Black Revolution both in the U.S. and Africa, to the East European revolts from under Russian totalitarianism.

Where, with our first breakthrough on the Absolute Idea, we had witnessed in the 1950s a series of new revolutions in East Europe from under totalitarian state-capitalism, the birth of a whole new Third World in the 1960s required further concretization of this philosophic breakthrough. This was achieved with our second major theoretical work, *Philosophy and Revolution*, in 1973.

There we concretized the dialectic of second negativity by going beyond Lenin not only politically but philosophically. Politically meant rejecting the vanguard party-to-lead, which had so totally misled the masses as to bring about the greatest tragedy of all—counter-revolution which came out of revolution and transformed the workers' state into a state-capitalist society. Philosophically meant working out Absolute Idea as new beginning, with a new sense of objectivity which revealed two kinds of subjectivity. One kind was voluntaristic. The other was masses in motion struggling for total freedom despite their oppressive awareness of the new enemy, the new objective reality—state-capitalism calling itself Communism.

We had actually first projected this in the second edition of *Marxism and Freedom* in 1964, in the added chapter on "The Challenge of Mao Zedong," which had ended with a subsection entitled: "In Place of a Conclusion: Two Kinds of Subjectivity." (The footnote to this section indicated that this was to be "the burden of a new work in progress"—i.e., *Philosophy and Revolution*.) The two opposing kinds of subjectivity discussed here were: 1) "Mao's, which has no regard for objective conditions, behaves as if state power is for herding 650 million human beings into so-called 'People's Communes,' as if a party of the elite that is armed can both harness the energies of men and 'remold' their minds." Under that delusion,\* Mao declared himself ready to ride the whirlwind of a nuclear holocaust. 2) The other type of subjectivity—that of masses in motion—"is the subjectivity which has 'absorbed' objectivity, that is to say, through its struggle for freedom it gets to know and cope with the objectively real."

Put another way, since the new enemy comes, not from traditional capitalism but from state-capitalism masquerading as Communism and continuing to use Marxist language, the struggle for total freedom becomes both more arduous and in need of a totally new relationship of practice to theory.

\*Hegel, in working out unresolved contradictions, refers to his *Phenomenology of Mind*, where he analyzes just such disoriented minds: "The self-alienated type of mind, driven to the acme of its opposition, where pure volition and the purely volitional agent are still kept distinct, reduces that opposition to a transparent form, and therein finds itself" (p. 610, J.B. Bailie edition).

# Counter-revolution from within revolution: the problem of our times

What that added chapter in *Marxism and Freedom* presented in embryo is what was worked out in the first chapter of *Philosophy and Revolution*: "Why Hegel? Why Now?" By then the world had witnessed the new passions and new forces of the generation of revolutionaries of the 1960s, East and West, as well as the new revolutions in Africa both in fact and in thought, as witness Frantz Fanon's Humanism. What was needed by then was also a new sense of objectivity—that is to say, a further development of the concept of transformation into opposite when it emerges, not from reformism's betrayal as at the outset of World War I, but from the transformation of the first workers' state into a state-capitalist society.

That further development into the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism could, in one way, also have been sensed from Antonio Gramsci's projection in his *Problems of Marxism* [reprinted in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*]: "The philosophy of praxis is consciousness full of contradictions in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not merely grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contradictions and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action."

The illumination that we gained from working out Hegel's three final syllogisms [of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*], especially para. 577, applies directly to our age. There Hegel says: "It is the nature of the fact, the notion which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the action of cognition." Where Hegel at that point consoled himself with "the eternal idea," *Philosophy and Revolution* in our age could show that the "Self-Thinking Idea" was actually the Self-Bringing Forth of Liberty. We could do that because we had become witness to the birth of a new generation of revolutionaries and had recreated Marx's Humanism for our age. In that new sense of objectivity was imbedded subjectivity—a subjectivity that had "absorbed" objectivity.

The 1970s, during which years *Philosophy and Revolution* was published, turned out to be when Karl Marx's last writings, his *Ethnological Notebooks*, were finally transcribed. This made it possible to view Marx's Marxism as a totality, as distinct from all post-Marx Marxists, beginning with his closest collaborator, Frederick Engels, whose first work after Marx's death, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, had been presented as a "bequest" from Marx. Once the *Ethnological Notebooks* were available it became clear how very far from Marx's multilinear dialectic was Engels' unilinear view of humanity's development.

The new moments of Marx's last decade disclosed, at one and the same time, Marx's rejection of others' interpretation of his "Historical Accumulation of Capital" as a Universal instead of a characteristic simply of Western Europe, a characteristic which the undeveloped lands (which our age calls the Third World) need not follow; and a philosophy of "revolution in permanence" which was not only theory but practice.

Marx's philosophy of revolution seemed to us to hold a trail to the 1980s, both on the emergence of the Third World, and on the development of women's liberation in our age from an Idea whose time has come to a Movement. This sense of contemporaneity gained a new dimension also from a study we had been making of Rosa Luxemburg's concept of the spontaneity of the masses.

Although we found that Rosa Luxemburg was nearly tone-deaf on philosophy, as a woman revolutionary she was both active in the mass, working class, anti-war, women's movement of her day, and fought the leadership of her German Social Democratic Party on their do-nothingness against imperialism. What emerged during that sharp struggle was the most virulent male chauvinism against her.

We decided not to wait until our new book [*Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*] was completed, but published in *News & Letters*, in January-February 1979, the draft chapter we entitled: "Relationship of Philosophy and Revolution to Women's Liberation: Marx's and Engels' Studies Contrasted." By the time *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* was completed, this became the climax to the whole work when it was developed as the final chapter which focused fully on "The Unknown *Ethnological Notebooks*, the Unread Drafts of the Letter to Vera Zasulich, as well as the Undigested 1882 Preface to the Russian Edition of the *Communist Manifesto*."

The 1980s view, which concluded that final chapter, held that Marx's Marxism, from the very beginning of his break with bourgeois society, disclosed that no concept of his was separate from that of permanent revolution—from 1843 to 1883. Our projection of Marx's Marxism as a totality disclosed that Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" was ground also for organization, a concept we consider most pertinent for our age, including its importance to the Women's Liberation Movement's search for a decentralized form of organization....

To concretize the momentous perspective of "revolution in permanence" for today is the arduous and imperatively needed task, if we are not to be buried in a nuclear holocaust unleashed by the superpowers to which all too many of the so-called Left kowtow.

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# Essay Hegel's dialectic: logic of capital—or of freedom?

by Tom Jeannot

This essay consists of excerpts from "Raya Dunayevskaya's Conception of Ultimate Reality and Meaning" from *The Journal of Ultimate Meaning and Reality*, vol. 22, no. 4, December 1999. — Editor

Hegel begins his chapter on the Absolute Idea in the *Science of Logic* by announcing that it "has shown itself to be the identity of the theoretical and the practical Idea. Each of these by itself is still one-sided."

In founding News and Letters Committees in 1955 and developing the theoretical presentation of Marxist-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya interpreted Hegel's announcement in the light of Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*, where Marx criticizes the "main shortcoming of all materialism," including Feuerbach's, for failing to "comprehend the significance of 'revolutionary,' practical-critical activity," i.e., the unity of the practical with the theoretical which, apart from which either moment, isolated from the other, is one-sided and false.

This is the definition of praxis, "a new relation of practice to theory and philosophy to revolution as an integral part of the struggle for freedom," about which she writes, "No concept of Marx's is less understood, by adherents as well as enemies" (*Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 264). Her original reading of the Absolute Idea as praxis, the principled hermeneutical basis of which was her deep fidelity to Marx's own Marxism and his philosophical appropriation and historically materialist transformation of Hegelianism, was the heuristic clue that oriented her practical and scholarly work from 1955 to her death on June 9, 1987.

Perhaps audaciously, Dunayevskaya claimed that she had "discovered a new Hegel, who, instead of closing his thought off in a 'system' and retreating with the Owl of Minerva, had at least left the doors open for future philosophers" (*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 9). But she could claim this only because she had also discovered a "new Marx," forgotten by what she came to call the "post-Marx Marxists" (from Engels and the Second International to the present day), who himself had discovered what she called "a new continent of thought and of revolution."

As the first to translate Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* into English (partly included as an appendix to the first edition of *Marxism and Freedom*, 1958), she was never taken in by the idle conundrum, occasioned by the unavailability of Marx's early writings until Ryazanov's archival labor of the twenties and early thirties, of how to relate the young, humanist Marx to the mature, scientific author of *Capital*, a pseudo problem that has waylaid most Marx scholarship in the 20th century.

She observed that not only in the well-known 1873 Postface to the second German edition of *Capital*, in which Marx declared himself "the pupil of that mighty thinker," but, later still, with the manuscripts he left to Engels for Vol. 2 of *Capital*, he wrote, "My relationship with Hegel is very simple. I am a disciple of Hegel, and the presumptuous chatter of the epigones who think they have buried this great thinker appears frankly ridiculous to me"....

## A MARXIST READING OF HEGEL

The world-historical instantiation of commodity fetishism as the absolute opposition of Marx's humanism, the philosophical mirror image of which is positivism—or, the totalizing reduction of the "dialectic of negativity"—inevitably pushed Dunayevskaya back to the Hegelian, as the "source of all dialectic."

Whereas a standard reading of Marx's critique of Hegel finds Marx repudiating Hegel's absolutes as the theological mystification of real history, as "metaphysics" and "idealism" over against "empiricism" and "materialism," and as a fantastic flight of the abstract speculative imagination of philosophers over against the "pragmatism" of activists who seek to change the world rather than comprehend it, Dunayevskaya finds Marx reinterpreting the absolutes in the light of his own humanism. Hers is not a "Hegelian" reading of Marx, but a Marxist reading of Hegel....

Perhaps more provocative still is the way Dunayevskaya laid hold of Marx's claim to find Hegel's "outstanding achievement" in the *Phenomenology of Mind* not just in its course of development, but in "its final result," i.e., "Absolute Knowing." If the dialectic were best understood as a theodicy, we might expect this cul-

minating moment to be heaven, but in its very last lines, as if deliberately to ward us off from the illusion of closure and absolute rest, Hegel returned, not to the parousia, but to "the Calvary of absolute Spirit." Dunayevskaya linked this metaphor of absolute negativity to the chapter on the Absolute Idea closing the *Science of Logic*, and also to the conclusion of the *Philosophy of Mind*:

In the *Phenomenology of Mind*, when Hegel finally arrives at Absolute Knowledge, the reader is confronted, not with any beautiful hereafter, but with "the Golgotha of the Spirit." Thus, as the *Science of Logic*, as Hegel approaches the Absolute Idea, the reader is not taken up into any abstract blue yonder, but learns that the Absolute Idea contains the highest opposition within itself. And thus, finally, when we reach the pinnacle of the whole system, the final syllogism of Absolute Mind of the entire *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*, Hegel has us face the self-thinking Idea (p. 38).



On this reading, following Marx, the Absolute is "absolute negativity," and the dialectic is the "dialectic of negativity." "Negativity," in turn, as "the moving and generating principle," is both "alienation" and the recognition of the "negative" in the "positive," and the impulse toward overcoming it, the restless, ceaseless wellspring of creativity.

Finally, for Marxist-Humanism, this unquenchable impulse and wellspring are situated neither in a remote heaven beyond, nor somehow metaphysically repositied in "matter" per se, as the reverse mirror image of dialectical materialism would have it. Rather, absolute negativity is the very rhythm of human subjectivity itself....

## THE DIALECTIC OF CAPITAL

Marx opened the first volume of *Capital* by asserting the following: "The wealth of societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails appears as an immense collection of commodities."

To achieve the appropriate conceptual depth of Marx's presentation from the outset, we can immediately add Dunayevskaya's acute observation that "The commodity of commodities in capitalist society is labor power" (*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 117). The commodification of working people themselves, therefore, is the differentia specifica of capitalism....

Though this is not the place to go into the details of Marx's theory of value, this reduction of human beings to merely a means of production entirely mastered by the imperatives of self-expanding capital is the inner core of commodity fetishism, explaining the inner drive of capitalist accumulation.

Two situations are proposed here, one in which workers exist for the sake of "the continual reproduction, on an ever larger scale, of the capital-relation," and its reversal, where "objective wealth" (as opposed to "value") "is there to satisfy the worker's own need for development."

Furthermore, as Marx developed the argument of the chapter [on the accumulation of capital], he declared that the general law of capitalist accumulation was "absolute": centralization and concentration of capital at one pole, ever worsening conditions of life for workers at the other ("be [their] payment high or low"); "the accumulation of misery a necessary condition, corresponding to the accumulation of wealth."

This absolute general law of capitalist accumulation foresees a world in which the domination of the capital-relation is total, or in other words, the totalitarianism wrought by the commodity fetish itself, the total heteronomy of persons as things, the total autonomy of things as capital, as if capital were god.

However, Marx can say of this absolute general law of capitalist accumulation what Hegel says of the Absolute Idea, that it "contains within itself the highest degree of opposition." Marx refers to its "antagonistic character," an antagonism or contradiction internal to its very character as absolute. As Dunayevskaya put it, "A second look is needed ..." (*Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 92).

Hegel, who, according to Marx, theorized in the "mode of being" of "abstraction" despite his deepest philosophical intention to the contrary, finally stood in contradiction with himself, explaining his systematic ambivalence and the inability of his system as it stood to stand otherwise than within the horizon of "modern political economy," the bourgeois horizon of the capitalist mode of production.

Although Lenin and Dunayevskaya read Hegel through the lens of Marx, and therefore recast the

"Absolute Idea"—"the identity of the theoretical and the practical Idea" that "contains within itself the highest degree of opposition"—as the praxis of human subjects aspiring to freedom, Hegel quite obviously did not cast it that way himself. Dunayevskaya explains why Hegel could not have written, with Lenin, "Notion = man":

In the Hegelian system, humanity appears only through the back door, so to speak, since the core of development is not [humanity], but only its "consciousness," that is, the self-development of the Idea. It is this dehumanization of the Idea, as if thoughts float between heaven and earth instead of out of the human brain, which Marx castigates mercilessly: "in place of human actuality Hegel has placed Absolute Knowledge" (*Marxism and Freedom*, p. 38).

From the Marxist-Humanist perspective, expressed in a single phrase, the "dehumanization of the Idea" is Hegel's essential mistake. "Because Hegel could not conceive the masses as 'Subject' creating the new society, the Hegelian philosophy...was compelled to return to Kant's idea of an external unifier of opposites. Hegel had destroyed all dogmatism except the dogmatism of 'the backwardness of the masses.' On this class barrier Hegel floundered" (p. 38)....

As Hegel dehumanized the Idea, so Ricardo dehumanized labor, conceiving the buying and selling of labor power, the exchange between capital and labor, as a "social relation between things"—as Marx put it in the section on commodity fetishism—while meanwhile, behind the factory doors, there reigns "material [dinglich] relations between persons": persons as variable capital, means of production, appendages of the machine.)

In the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation, the absolute reduction of human personality prevails as unconditionally as the Absolute Idea. The reification of persons, which deprives them of their agency, must locate agency somewhere, in a corresponding personification: in one case, the Absolute Idea as "pure personality"; in the analogous case, capital, or self-valoring value, as the apparent subject of its own process of production.

However, as Hegel did not fail to recognize in the Absolute Idea, capital as an absolute also "contains within itself the highest degree of opposition." In order to thematize this opposition, Dunayevskaya found Marx enlisting an analogous strategy for each case, a strategy of "splitting the old category."

As the "old category" was "labor" for Ricardo, so Dunayevskaya argued that it is the Idea for Hegel. She developed this argument in the context of political economy, in her own account of the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation in *Philosophy and Revolution*. First, she acknowledged, "It is true, of course, that Marx had to break with Hegel's Absolutes before he could discover the materialist conception of history" (p. 92). "But," she continued, "this hardly explains Marx's return to Hegel...a second look is needed":

When Marx came to the end of his analysis of the process of production and moved over to its "results" in the accumulation of capital, the word absolute became crucial. It is there the Absolute is broken in twain... Now, there is no doubt that where Hegel's Absolutes are always "syntheses," unities—of history and philosophy, of theory and practice, of subject and object—Marx's are always total directions—absolute, irreconcilable contradictions, whether that be of the technical base and social character, or of accumulation of capital at one pole and misery and unemployment at the other, or of dead labor versus living labor. Where Hegel's Absolutes are always high points, Marx's are always collapses, as is the nature of "the law of motion of capitalist society." And where Hegel's Absolutes seem achievable within the existing framework, Marx's tear up the existing society by its roots (pp. 92-3).

## AN AGE OF ABSOLUTES

In other words, if what dialectically emerges in Hegel's hands is "absolute reconciliation," what emerges in Marx's is "absolute contradiction." Hence, for Marxist-Humanism, there are two series of absolutes, absolutely opposed: in mystified form, the Idea and capital as god; in demystified form, the Idea as praxis, and human beings as the subjects and agents of revolutionary, practical-critical activity. The "absolute positivity" of totalitarianism can be opposed only by the "absolute negativity" of the human aspiration and struggle to be free....

In *Marxism and Freedom*, Dunayevskaya wrote: "Today we live in an age of absolutes, that is to say, in an age where the contradictions are so total that the counter-revolution is in the very innards of the revolution. In seeking to overcome this total, this absolute contradiction, we are on the threshold of true freedom."

We are now in a position to see what she might have meant by "ultimate reality and meaning." It is not a content already achieved by speculative insight, but "a new continent of thought and revolution" yet to be won. It is not a theological determinism or theodicy with its outcome guaranteed in advance, but an adventure in freedom that can rest assured only in the idea of freedom itself. As she put it in the title of her lecture to the Hegel Society of America in 1974, it is, in one sense, Hegel's Absolute, but it is "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning."

**THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY AND THE CHALLENGE FROM BELOW**

President Bush revealed to the whole world, during his European trip, that his is an imperious presidency which intends to make unilateral decisions whenever it suits his hegemonic agenda for the "New World Order" his father inaugurated. It is the height of self-contradiction in this dogmatism that, on the one hand, Bush claims there is not enough good reason to compel us to reduce greenhouse gases, despite overwhelming scientific evidence of global warming. But, on the other hand, his secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld, is going around lecturing everyone that just because there is not enough research data to prove Star Wars (a.k.a.: "Missile Defense Shield") would actually work, it should not deter us from diving headlong into its "deployment." Rumsfeld repeatedly invokes the advent of aviation: if we had let setbacks stop the Wright brothers from moving ahead, we wouldn't have airplanes today. But we are talking about nuclear conflagration. The first sign of psychosis is the inability to separate fantasy from reality.

**Concerned California**

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While Britain's relations with the Economic Union are endlessly debated here, the alliance with the USA is so much taken for granted that it hardly figured as an election issue at all, even though Bush has repudiated the Kyoto Agreement which Britain supports. Bush's "Missile Defense" plans will require British co-operation, including the use of radar facilities here. Blair would no doubt have preferred a Gore presidency, but he is unlikely to face up to Bush on any important issue.

**Richard Bunting Oxford**

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If the Europeans expected President Bush to thoughtfully consider their concerns about his Star Wars proposal, they must not have been paying attention to what happened in the U.S. when he stole the presidency. The fact that he lost the popular vote by more than half a million ballots that were counted, let alone all the votes that weren't, didn't stop him for a minute from establishing a new stage of retrogression at home in even less than his first 100 days. There is an incredible arrogance at work here that is frightening.

**Worried Chicago**

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How fast capital can adapt, take on new and more radical forms of exploitation, is almost unbelievable. GATT, FTA, NAFTA, APEC, EU, GATTS, WTO, etc., etc. Practically every day we hear a new name for another subterfuge for the corporate subjugation of the whole world, the exploitation of its resources, both human as well as natural. What will mobilize the masses against this barbaric totalitarian assault? Will it be just the spontaneous revolt of the masses? I worry when the machine guns will replace the rubber bullets and tear gas.

**L.G. Canada**

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The movement to shut down the School of the Americas, that began with a handful at the gate of Ft. Benning, Ga. in 1990, drew more than 10,000 protesters to the gates last year, with 1,700 arrested. The government changed the name, but everyone still knows it as the School of Assassins and is urging all who can to come to Ft. Benning on Nov. 16, 17 and 18 to shut it down forever. Meanwhile, one of the 26 who were picked by the government this year to spend six months in prison as an "example," was a feisty 88-year-old nun who has been a long-time activist. It may have been one of the dumbest acts the government has done, since she attracted a lot of publicity—all of it greatly sympathetic to the cause.

**SOA resister Illinois**

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As you point out, mass movements which have arisen over the past year like the Cincinnati rebellion are challenging the retrogression we are facing. There

are a lot of such movements, some of them European or Japanese based, that have developed over the past few decades. I am thinking of the anti-nuclear movement and the Green ecological movement. In the U.S. we've also had countless solidarity movements against U.S. imperialism largely focused on Southeast Asia and Central America. The opposition demonstrations which Bush encountered on his trip to Europe are, I think, the continuation of these earlier mass movements. The Right now wants to chasten its former antagonists and take revenge for its setbacks from the political activity of ordinary people and show just who is boss.

**Eli New York**



**DEBUNKING MILITARY HOOPLA**

Seeing all the hoopla surrounding the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II got me to wondering whether there will be any celebration in the year 2025 of the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Not likely, since U.S. imperialism doesn't like being reminded of its greatest defeat. It's why Dubya's recent signing of a bill ramming through construction of the World War II memorial makes perfect sense. It's as if he is saying that the center of attention in the nation's capital cannot be an ugly hole-in-the-ground Vietnam memorial, that we need a proper memorial to a "good war" and should forget about the more recent past.

In erecting this glorious monument, however, many are saying that the beauty of the mall will be destroyed. That brings me back again to Vietnam and a ghostly aphorism of imperialist justification: "We had to destroy the village in order to save it."

**C.R. Michigan**

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I appreciated Felix Martin's article on Pearl Harbor. He saw the war as a matter of American capital trying to get workers to not even think about the war but to just get busy fighting the Japanese. That one article was greater than all the programs we've seen on TV where veterans were dragged out to cry over their friends who died. It showed powerfully a revolutionary take on that whole episode in world history.

**Asian-American revolutionary California**

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I read *The Revolutionary Journalism of Felix Martin* with great fascination. What gripped me was that he was at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 in the U.S. Navy. My grandfather spent the entirety of World War II there in the U.S. Army. And, like Martin, he later became a worker/labor agitator with Caterpillar. As Martin astutely pointed out, World War II, like all American military actions, was simply "a rallying cry for American workers and the poor to arm themselves to protect American capitalism and to help expand capitalism throughout the world." He had a big heart and an open mind, along with a pithy way of expressing truths. There is a supreme irony in the way a man from Hell For Certain, Ky. lived to witness international capitalism's destructive attempts to establish a worldwide real Hell For Certain on earth.

**Prisoner Texas**

**ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS**

Don't be misled by reports that Israel is "easing the closure." Just listen to the report of Ta'ayush, an Arab-Jewish organization in Israel that has done excellent work in conveying food and solidarity to blockaded Palestinian villages. They set out on June 23 on their fifth

**READERS' VIEWS**

expedition since the start of the Al-Aqsa Uprising with 150 Arab and Jewish activists in 40 cars and two trucks loaded with staples and clothes into the West Bank. The Israeli military had blocked all access by pulling up the asphalt on the road, digging deep trenches and piling high soil ramparts on the access routes. The convoy had to keep doubling back until they met a giant soil rampart.

They used picks, shovels and bare hands to level it and finally fashioned a precarious and steep path over the artificial hill. The cars edged into the village but the trucks could not possibly pass so they formed a human chain and laboriously passed sugar, flour, rice, canned food and clothes hand to hand, up the hill and down the slope into the village. This leveling of the barrier was allowed by the military for two reasons. One was that the foreign press was covering the action. The other was that 150 Israelis demanded it. Palestinians alone would have been prevented. The event went unremarked in the Israeli media. The Palestinian press emphasized the action on TV and radio as well as two daily newspapers.

**Gila Svirsky Jerusalem**

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I want to tell you about one of the actions of the Israeli Left (the real Left, not the Labour party which takes part in Sharon's government and is very far from being anywhere near Left). There were more than 50 cars in our food convoy to two Palestinian villages which were closed by the army. Still, we managed to get through the closure and bring food to them. I know it may seem like a drop in the sea, but when you are so few it is better to do a little than to do nothing. As an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian people and with their struggle, it is not "nothing."

**Naomi Eden Israel**

**COMPANIONS FOR MILOSEVIC?**

Now that Slobodan Milosevic is in prison in The Hague, wouldn't it be great for him to be joined there by his good friend Ariel Sharon? It has often been overlooked, especially by 'leftist' apologists of Milosevic, that Sharon befriended him years ago and initially deplored U.S. plans to take military action against him. Here we really have two butchers that are one of a kind.

**Bosnian Solidarity Activist Chicago**

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I don't understand those who are dis-comforted by Milosevic's arrest. Sure, U.S. rulers have committed plenty of crimes that deserve to be taken up by the International War Crimes Tribunal—Kissinger for his role in Vietnam, Reagan for his role in Central America, the elder Bush for his role against Iraq. Does that make what Milosevic did any less terrible? Let's rejoice at his arrest and ask that he be joined by these esteemed companions.

**Peter Wermuth Chicago**

**BREAKING THE MOLD OF THOUGHT**

From family tradition I started as a reform communist (my father participated in the 1968 movement in the party here). I participated with my students in the 1989 strike and hoped for a better future, only to see the drift to the wildest forms of 19th century capitalism in the name of "democracy." In 1992 I started to study Trotskyist and other literature. Later a friend lent me a copy of *Marxism and Freedom* by Raya Dunayevskaya. I also read several books from the Cliffite viewpoint on state capitalism, but there are some quite obvious mistakes in them when compared with the reality I remembered from the old regime.

I found your journal through the internet while looking for more works of

Dunayevskaya. What I found important is your notion that it is not enough to bother with how to start a revolution, but that it is important to know what to do then—how to reach the second negation from destruction of capitalism to building a free human society.

**Teacher Czech Republic**

\*\*\*

The essay article on Lukacs was the centerpiece of the June issue of *N&L* for me. At first the critique seemed pretty obvious that Lukacs' theory of reification was compelling because he seemed to expand it more than Marx. Marx saw it as labor power under the gun of the factory clock, whereas Lukacs extended reification to the entire society, including your very thought processes. That seemed to him superior to Marx. You could see why in presenting it that way Lukacs would appeal to an outside force for the masses to break out of the mold of capitalist thinking. The problem is where this party comes from. They are part of the same society.

**Activist-thinker Bay Area, Cal.**

\*\*\*

What struck me in the lead article on China in the June issue of *N&L* was the title of the document "On handling contradictions among the people." That was Mao's thought, which he knew he needed all the state's might to enforce. U.S. rulers don't even realize the centrality of thought to a belief in capitalism and the world market. They believe capitalism is objectivity itself.

**Ron California**



**WORKERS AND THE 'ENERGY CRISIS'**

In forcefully condemning the "deregulation" of electricity, a resolution passed this Spring by CSEA-SEIU 1000 (which represents over 120,000 California state workers) seems to go counter to the national organization of the AFL-CIO which has apparently made a deal with the Bush administration on his "energy plan." The idea that is catching on with rank-and-file workers is that the energy crisis is man-made. People I talk with at work are now freely using the term "cartel" in talking about the abuses we are facing from the energy giants. The resolution called for "worker input" alongside the call for seizure of power-utility assets, and for the election of public utility officials to be directly accountable to the public.

**Health worker California**

**SUPPORTING TEXTILERAS**

In both North America and Central America working women struggle within a system that devalues their work and keeps them and their families in poverty. This is especially true for the women who sew the clothes we wear and harvest the food we eat. STITCH (Support Team International for Textileras) is an important project created to help defend the rights of working women in Central America. It's unique as a solidarity organization; its board and staff are both made up of women. You can find out how you can help by writing to STITCH at 4933 S. Dorchester, Chicago, IL 60615 or calling them at 773-924-2738.

**Supporter Chicago**

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**FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE**



Justice is supposed to stand for balance, harmony, equity, settling of accounts, and so on. But in practice it seems to me that it has two applications today: "just us"; and "just ice."

Those who have the appropriate amount of money, power and/or influence belong to the "just us" group. They receive a slap on the hand if they get caught in dirty doings. The rest of us find the law applied in the form of "just ice," where the principles of mercy, compassion and humanity are all missing in statements such as "it's the law," or "you brought this on yourself," or "we have to set an example." The punishment for this group is always more than a slap on the wrist. This two-tiered justice system has operated in numerous governmental forms and will undoubtedly continue long into the future unless there is a new awareness about human relations on a very deep level.

M.C.  
Lincoln, Nebraska

\*\*\*

Amnesty International's report on police brutality shows the Detroit Police Department as the worst in the nation in its failure to keep records on brutality complaints or to track officers with a pattern of incidents. Mayor Dennis Archer, under community pressure, has called on the FBI to investigate the Department's actions and the current police chief, Benny Napoleon, is resigning as of July 15. All this supports the cases brought by a small, brave group of families whose relatives have been killed by police officers during the Archer administration. They have faced media slanders but have persisted in their fight for justice.

Susan Van Gelder  
Detroit

\*\*\*

Every city can make comparison between what happens to the military polluters and others. In Memphis, James Williams, a Black man who had his own

barrel cleaning business, was fined and served three years in prison for doing \$198,000 worth of damage by dumping waste on the ground. He didn't realize what he was doing. The EPA and the U.S. government were harder on him than on the Defense Depot—a Superfund site in the middle of a Black community—or on any manufacturers that spew poison into the air or contaminate lakes and rivers. A white man who had a barrel cleaning service like Williams got a slap on the hand from Tennessee. He was fined \$10,000 and one year probation. I asked the EPA how they could allow the Black man to go to prison when a white man doing the same thing walked free. They just looked at me.

Doris Bradshaw  
Memphis

\*\*\*

I attended the Chicago Police Board public meeting on June 21 to give support to an 11-year-old African-American girl, who was attacked on April 3 by three white males—Chicago police officers in plain clothes. They have not been disciplined for their attack. I wrote a poem for the little girl called "Who Do You Call?"

Eleven year old girl attacked by one man. Who do you call?  
Eleven year old girl attacked by two men. Who do you call?  
Eleven year old girl attacked by three men. Who do you call?  
If you say "The police," you have called back her attackers.

George Wilfrid Smith Jr.  
Chicago

**PREPARING IN GENOA**

At the end of May, I was dismayed to hear TV news informing us that "European Secret Services found in Germany lots of warehouses full of arms ready for Genoa." This disgusting piece of government propaganda appeared to me a bad sign for those who will be coming to Genoa in July. A few days earlier TV had showed the leader of the Genoa Social Forum, which includes 324 anti-globalization associations (66 of which are foreign), standing in front of the Italian Secret Services in Rome, declaring "The

government wants to make us all appear as terrorists. I'm afraid it wants to push us all on that way."

The radio news is telling us that there will be violence in Genoa. One of the newspapers reported that the government will send special corps of Army, Navy and Air Force to "maintain security" from July 20 to 22 and that Genoa will be cut off for that period. For 667,000 Genoans it will be difficult to move at all, with railway stations as well as Genoa harbor all closed. The airport and toll booths will also be closed. They are going to issue a booklet to Genoese inhabitants to tell them how they will have to move in their own city.

In July 1960 there was a revolt here in Italy in which police were ordered to shoot Reds in the squares and streets. The biggest revolt then was in Genoa. We are left to wonder what will happen in July this year?

Correspondent  
Milan

**GAY PRIDE 2001**

Many young people work long hours in the financial, design and service industries of New York. There is no limit to their workday. It's not what they dreamed of doing with their lives. But I saw the opposite of this youth alienation in the large, lively and spirited Gay Pride March on June 24 in Greenwich Village. These youth were affirming who they are. There were inventive costumes and floats. A major theme was health issues. There were contingents from Vassar, Yale, NYU and other schools. Many churches were represented. Parents held signs saying they were just as proud of their heterosexual son as of their courageous homosexual son. It was striking that instead of the white gay establishment, the march and its participants had a working class, Black and Hispanic character this year.

Concerned musician  
New York

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Some 500,000 people, twice the number expected even by organizers, turned out on June 23 for a vast Gay Pride demonstration in Paris. Slogans included: "Homosexuals, Heterosexuals, All

Together Against Discrimination," "For the Right of Adoption," and "Recognition for Homosexuals Deported During the Second World War." Delegations from workplaces were particularly numerous.

Journalist  
Illinois

**THE SEDUCTIVE REBATE**

The checks that are supposed to be mailed out to U.S. taxpayers later this year remind me of an experience I had while a mailhandler in the U.S. Postal Service. During labor contract negotiations one year, the union hierarchy agreed to forego percentage wage increases for the next two to three years. Instead, all full-time regular mailhandlers (the "casuals" didn't get anything, of course) received a few extra checks that amounted to about \$1,500 to \$2,000. It was a bribe. While people sure did like getting that money, they were being "set up." Monthly retirement pay is based on your highest three years wages and if that is reduced by a few percentage points (which is just what happened then), your pension is reduced by that percentage for your entire retirement. Dubya has a lot of nicknames and I say we should give him another one—seducer. It's the dictionary definition of "bribe-giver."

Retired postal worker  
Michigan

**HELPING N&L CONTINUE**

I put off responding to your plea for money for a while because I was out of work, but today, I got a new master and my first official act as a member in good standing of the toiling and exploited masses again is to send you my enclosed donation. I always enjoy getting your paper. You are doing us all a great service.

Employed again  
Massachusetts

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## 'Hour of reckoning' for Mumia Abu-Jamal

**New York**—At a June 15 "Free Mumia" meeting held at District Council 1707, AFSCME, speakers warned that we are at the hour of reckoning to save the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal "and for all social justice." Mumia, a journalist, has been on death row since his conviction at a kangaroo court in Philadelphia for killing a policeman in 1981. He claims innocence and a frame up due to his political activities. Mumia is now awaiting a hearing on his federal appeal—his last chance to avoid execution.

Mumia recently fired his legal team and brought in a new one. His supporters are now demanding his freedom rather than a new trial, although the legal arguments for both are similar. The meeting featured Sam Jordan, formerly with Amnesty International and now coordinator of the Washington, D.C. Mumia Coalition. He explained many factual points exposing the weakness of the government's case against Mumia, including the fact that the bullet that killed the policeman could not have come from Mumia's gun and the fragment removed from his body is now missing. Several people who testified for the prosecution have since stated they were lying, and a mob hit man confessed to the killing last year, saying that he was hired to kill the policeman to stop his interfering with corruption within the police department.

Jordan also explained that a 1996 law severely limits the power of the federal court to review the conviction. He called the law an "erosion of the fundamental guarantees we take for granted," because it prohibits the federal courts' power to review state court decisions "as long as the state judge thinks his decision was reasonable."

"The fight to free Mumia is at ground zero in the fight against repression," Jordan said. "The government is willing to abandon every principle in the criminal code." He listed the main reasons why 95 people have gotten their convictions overturned since 1995, and then showed that Mumia's trial had not one, but all of those defects. "That compels his release," Jordan concluded. Some of the reasons are that Mumia was removed from his trial 65% of the time, his lawyer asked to be

released from the case and worked with the prosecution, one juror stated he could not be fair, and Mumia's association with the Black Panther Party was brought into the sentencing phase of the trial.

"We are in a state of rebellion, and Mumia's case is a barometer," Jordan said. "The whole world is watching." Other speakers included Pam Africa of MOVE and

Carlos Rivera, who compared Mumia's struggle to that in Vieques. "The same oppressor keeps Black and Puerto Rican people down. Puerto Rico is also incarcerated," he said. "As long as the state exists, it will get more repressive. When we put our differences aside and unite, we will show what power is, and there will be no more frame-ups like Mumia's." —Mumia Supporter

## Fight for freedom for the Angola 3

**Chicago**—Albert Woodfox and Herman "Hooks" Wallace, two members of the "Angola 3," remain in the notorious Angola Prison in Louisiana after almost 30 years of solitary confinement. They are serving sentences of natural life in a cell the size of a small bathroom 23 hours a day, seven days a week. The other member, Robert King Wilkerson, finally gained his freedom after 29 years at Angola Penitentiary for a crime he did not commit.

The Angola 3 are unique according to Mumia Abu-Jamal, who calls them "political prisoners of the highest caliber," and longtime political prisoner Geronimo Ji Jaga (Pratt) (now freed), who calls them "the kind of soldiers who never cried out to anyone for help, even though they were facing life imprisonment. Understand that being in that situation for so long, I can personally attest to the highly disciplined and dedicated nature of these *askaris*. They endured, and they survived, over all the years, with very little help from the outside."

All three were originally imprisoned for unrelated crimes 30 years ago. Substantial evidence carefully organized by their legal team confirms that they were framed in the murder of a prison guard in 1971, by authorities intent on crushing their political organizing. Their cases are still alive in the courts; however, Woodfox's appeal to the Louisiana Supreme Court was denied the week of June 25. A hearing on Wallace's

case is scheduled for June 28 in Baton Rouge.

Like 85% of the population warehoused at Angola, the three are African American. Angola Penitentiary is named after the homeland of the slaves who worked the land, which was once a plantation. The prison has earned notoriety for violence, the plantation-style forced labor in the fields by inmates, and more recently, via the documentary "Angola: The Farm," which was nominated for an Academy Award.

In King's case, the witness who originally testified against him was threatened with the electric chair if he

supported King's claim to innocence. At trial, King was shackled and his mouth was taped shut. King's confinement continued even after another man confessed to the crime. He was finally released in February, whereupon he stated that, "I may be free of Angola but Angola will never be free of me."

Angola 3 Support Committees are already active on both coasts, supplementing efforts in Louisiana to secure Woodfox and Wallace's freedom. Activists in Chicago are meeting in July to organize a speaking tour by King to publicize, among other things, the inhumanity and injustice of the American penal system and the innocence of the two still confined in what some call "the belly of the beast."

For more information, call (504) 940-6756 or (504) 484-7131.

—Beth Shaw



Robert King Wilkerson, Albert Woodfox, Herman Wallace.

## Black/Red View

(Continued from page 1)

stake.

The above is only a small list of corporations now benefiting from drilling for oil in Sudan. More information about their interlocking share holdings and the selling of their stock on Wall Street can be found in Amnesty International On-Line Report (June 23, 2001.)

It is also public knowledge that Khartoum's take from oil concessions is \$500 million annually. This will climb steeply, once the oil corporations have recovered their risk. This will undoubtedly tip the war in the favor of the Khartoum government. It has given that government the ability to garrison the main roads and the oil fields armed to the teeth with tanks and helicopters to fight the People's Liberation Army in Southern Sudan.

Another appalling thing about Sudan's war, is its racist dimension. This can't be ignored. On one side is Arab authoritarian power and on the other side are sub-Saharan African masses fighting for freedom.

Eric Reeves, in an article for the June issue of *The Nation*, put this race division on the table when he wrote: "The National Islamic Front looks to the Islamic and Arabic world for culture and racial identity. Moreover its view of the Nilotic and Equatorial peoples of the south is animated by a vicious racism. The most common term of designation in Arabic is *abid*, which translates almost exactly as 'n-----r.' Such attitudes do much to explain why Khartoum has actively abetted a modern slave trade, directed against racially 'African' people of the South."

The above depiction of Arabs in Sudan as racist in no way means that Arabs are inherently racist, but, like the racist European, they become racist in the process of exploitation of African labor and natural resources. What Sudan tells us today is that the inherent drive of capitalism to accumulate an infinite amount of capital, if left unchecked, can lead to genocide. In other words, racism is a manifestation of the utter subordination and the alienation of labor in the process of capital accumulation.

Sudan also tells us, as Raya Dunayevskaya wrote in 1973, "that political independence does not mean economic dependence has ended, but on the contrary, the ugly head of neo-imperialism then first appears. Yet equally crucial were the new divisions that arose between the leaders and the led once national independence was achieved. At the same time new divisions also arose between Arab leadership and the 'uneducated masses.' Whether we look at Zanzibar, which did succeed in overthrowing its Arab rulers, or to the southern Sudan, which had not, the need remained the same: a second revolution."

Today, oil and more oil is the "ugly head" of neo-imperialism. To get new sources of oil animates a large part of the planning and the politics of the George W. Bush administration. Overcoming that retrogression is the task for revolutionaries in this country as we confront our own unfinished revolution and new forms of exploitation and racism.

## Teacher learns that 'The Soul Knows No Bars'

**The Soul Knows No Bars: Inmates Reflect on Life, Death, and Hope**, by Drew Leder, Rowman & Littlefield, 2000

Drew Leder, a philosophy professor, volunteered to teach philosophy to prisoners in Maryland's maximum security prison. In the course of the two-year class he befriended the prisoners. He started recording their sessions. This book is alternately an edited transcription of their discussions and Drew Leder's own thoughts on what he learned.

The strength of this book is that it shows that philosophy is alive. Admittedly, the prisoners attending the class were not "average." They chose to participate in this class. But neither are they completely atypical. In every prison there are prisoners who are intellectually active, eager for a real discussion of ideas.

Once they decided to participate, they engaged ideas of a variety of philosophers, from Simone Weil to Malcolm X. In every case, they could relate the ideas of that philosopher to a reflection on their own lives. In some cases, while never dismissing anyone's ideas, they strongly disagreed, showing where the philosopher was wrong.

For example, in discussing Friedrich Nietzsche's idea that will to power is the "single basic drive dominating all human beings, even all life" (p. 25) H.B. counters: "there is a reality of power in prison, and over these past twenty years I've seen that power always in the hands of somebody who didn't want it... [I]t always seemed to radiate from a person who cared about those prisoners and those pris-

oners knew it. It's usually a prisoner. But it's the type of person who the prisoners knew would give his life for them, would be carted off in chains trying to protect them.... When you get an individual who cares about the prisoners and they know it...now that's power" (p. 30).

In his alternating sections, Drew Leder, who admits to being a phenomenological philosopher, in other words, one describing rather than explaining life, nevertheless wants to draw out some meaning from the discussions. In most cases, he shows that what at first instance might appear opposite: power/powerlessness, victim/victimizer, prison/freedom, is only another side of the same coin. While he never discusses Hegel or dialectics explicitly, this drive of our mind to not accept categories we "find" in the world, to question them and create new ones, is dialectical.

It is not Drew Leder's "project" to overthrow capitalism. Yet the power that ideas have in one's life comes shining through these pages. "My greatest fault was I didn't value independent thought" said Arlando "Tray" Jones III in discussing Martin Buber (p. 168).

For the prisoners (and teacher) in this book and the women prisoners I know the process of change starts with reflection on oneself, changing of oneself. This thoughtful reconstruction of the "I" as one that cares about others is the beginning of changing our world, of finally being able to see the walls of capitalism we build around ourselves and dismantling them.

—Urszula Wislanka

## Memphis abolitionists resist Garza execution

**Memphis, Tenn.**—Only a week after gathering to oppose the resumption of federal executions in the killing of Timothy McVeigh, death penalty abolitionists in Memphis again acted to oppose the federal execution of Juan Raul Garza. The day before the execution, activists gathered at the Civic Center Plaza in front of the federal building holding signs urging an end to executions and passing out leaflets detailing the injustices inherent to a system of capital punishment. In particular, the arbitrary and racist nature of the use of capital punishment were highlighted, as both of these were relevant in the Garza execution. Garza was executed for crimes for which others have not received the death penalty. Jurors in the case were not told that they could give him a sentence of life without parole instead of the death penalty, and he was a Mexican American.

Currently there are 19 men on federal death row under sentence of death, 14 of them Black. A recent Justice Department analysis of federal capital cases since 1995 found that in nearly 80% of the cases the defendant was a member of a racial or ethnic minority. Yet Attorney General John Ashcroft maintains that a

racial bias in the application of the federal death penalty does not exist.

Ashcroft has also amended Justice Department guidelines for U.S. district attorneys, making it easier to bring capital cases in states without the death penalty. The new guidelines suggest "an intention to impose the death penalty in states that don't have it," said David I. Bruck, a veteran death penalty lawyer at the Federal Death Penalty Resource Counsel Project, which provides assistance to court-appointed lawyers in federal death penalty cases. "In that sense, it is the nationalization of the death penalty," Mr. Bruck added.

The morning of Garza's execution, activists demonstrated in front of the main employees' entrance to the federal building. As employees came to work they were greeted with such signs as "No Executions," "Stop All Executions," "Death Penalty is Racist," and "Death Penalty is Ugly and Stupid." Several persons stopped to express their support for ending executions. Abolitionists will continue to gather for a demonstration each week at a busy Memphis intersection.

—Anti-death activist



## VIEWS FROM THE INSIDE OUT

## American colonialism continues

by Robert Taliaferro

We often hear various statistics on the incarceration of Blacks as compared to whites in the nation's prisons, and tend to forget that the statistics of "others" incarcerated are just as viable an argument against the prison-industrial complex.

In Hawaii, the prison-industrial complex takes on a new dimension that extends well beyond "just" the simple fact of incarcerating someone for a crime, especially when that individual is removed from the Hawaiian islands to a prison on the mainland. It should not be surprising then that one of the premier court cases that supports the transfer of prisoners just about anywhere in the country, away from family, friends and support networks, is a case with origins in Hawaii.

## The U.S.-paramilitary link in Colombia

Carlos Castano, head of Colombia's illegal right-wing paramilitary forces, reportedly "irrevocably resigned" his leadership in May. Meanwhile the largest guerrilla group, the FARC, has begun to move from the mountainous jungles to the larger cities after turning over 250 soldiers and police being held captive. Any gestures of peace by the FARC will continue to be accompanied by demonstrations of force to ensure their position against U.S.-supported Plan Colombia.

**Growing criticism of Plan Colombia and its \$1.3 billion in U.S. military aid has forced an investigation into the Colombian military and its horrendous human rights record. But who are the paramilitary and why do they still go largely untouched? Well perhaps it's business as usual.**

The paramilitary, usually local mercenaries and hired assassins paid by the political right, grew from 93 men in 1986 to 8,000 in 2000. Groups of "paras" were founded by the military in the early 1980s as a counter-insurgency tactic. They were declared illegal in 1989 only to continue to grow under the euphemistic name Auto-Defensas Unidas de Colombia. Today they are responsible for more than 70% of the country's politically motivated killings.

According to Nazih Richani, a visiting scholar who spoke recently in New York City, the increase of violence in Colombia since the mid-1990s surpasses the level that existed in the early 1960s during the peak of the gruesome civil war "La Violencia." It has also been both supported by the Colombian state and based on the determination of the most powerful forces in Colombia to find a military solution.

**The definition of massacre in Colombia is the simultaneous killing of three or more people. In the year 2000, there were 1,226 reported massacres, more than twice the 505 reported in 1994. Richani also pointed out that resources committed to warfare and the military by the Colombian state have doubled in the same period, from 1.8% to 3.7% of the GNP. One of the main reasons for this new and lethal phase in the Colombian war system is the appearance of the paramilitary. But how is the climate for business operations for the Colombian and U.S. governments improved by Colombia's culture of violence?**

U.S.-supported military intervention would avoid the need for political and social reform that would undermine the foundation of the regime. The interest groups have two things in common: their connection to the paramilitary, and their fear of the growing insurgent movement. Some of these dominant social forces are the large landowners, cattle ranchers and other agri-businesses located in biologically-rich regions. Other players are the land speculators and multinational corporations such as Occidental. Last are the military forces who serve the interests of the above and who, upon discharge, whether honorable or not, often join the ranks of the paramilitary.

A prime example of the paramilitary as a repressive force was presented during two recent events organized by a group named Movimiento Por La Paz en Colombia NY-NJ-CT (Movement for Peace in Colombia NY-NJ-CT). The two events were titled Las Mujeres Valientes de Colombia (The Valiant Women of Colombia) and consisted of women activists from the Organización Feminina Popular and their sister group La Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres Por la Paz Negociada (Women in a Peaceful Route for Negotiated Peace.) These women live in the petroleum rich region of Barrancabermeja, in the Northeastern Department of Santander, taken over by the paramilitary. They are known for their thought-provoking and courageous slogan, "No vamos a parir mas hijos para la guerra" (we will not bear more children for the war).

These women are also known for bringing home-cooked meals to the displaced people who inhabit the area and have fallen victim to social cleansing tactics by the paramilitary. They have been threatened with annihilation by the paramilitary forces unless they shut down their organization of 30 years and hand over the building. The women, however, have refused to dialogue with any armed party, and have demanded removal of the paramilitary by the government. The government has yet to respond.

—Raquel Remedios

The 1983 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Olim v. Wakinekona*, in essence, stated that prisoners had no rights with regard to transfers from one prison to another, and that the states had all the right in the world to ship their prisoners anywhere in the United States.

**Justice Thurgood Marshall, along with Justices Stevens and Brennan, filed a rather scathing dissent from the majority opinion, exemplifying the plight of Hawaiian prisoners, and the treatment of native Hawaiians in general. Of *Wakinekona's* transfer to a prison on the mainland in California, Justice Marshall wrote that it was synonymous with "banishment" from his homeland, "...a punishment historically considered to be 'among the severest'."**

In the case of Hawaiians being shipped to the mainland, 2,000 miles of ocean would separate them from their home, family, friends, culture, and land. In essence, removing people from Hawaii and shipping them to the mainland is very similar to removing Blacks from the continent of Africa and moving them to the Americas.

Native Hawaiians are being incarcerated in such rampant numbers that Hawaii has the third fastest incarceration rate (per capita) in the country. As Healani Sonoda writes in *ColorLines* (Summer 2001), "Though we were an independent nation, Hawaii was colonized because of American imperial, strategic interests in the Pacific and Asia. The United States overthrew our government and stole millions of acres of Native lands. Now a colonized people, we inhabit the islands' lowest socioeconomic strata." As with any colonial conquest, the indigenous peoples of the occupied territories—in essence—become slaves to the invading party, and anything that is not consistent with the ideas of the colonial power is criminalized.

On the mainland, the indigenous peoples of the Americas were exploited by virtue of Wild West shows. In Hawaii, indigenous peoples are exploited through tourism. Even with the amount of capital derived from such exploitation, it is only the corporate sponsors of those contemporized and encapsulated traditions that are allowed to continue and reap the benefit from the trade. The obvious result of such actions is poverty.

**Poverty is always followed by laws which tend to criminalize the concept of being poor, laws that are designed to glamorize the traditions of capitalism by clearing the streets of alleged unwanted societal elements, and the prison-industrial complex, like a thief in the night, is quick to capitalize on such fears and prejudices.**

Hawaii, like many states, has decided to utilize the services of corporations like the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), claiming, as Sonoda writes, "to save \$50 per inmate daily by sending prisoners to continental private prisons. In addition, CCA offered the state financial incentives to house all Hawaii inmates in CCA facilities at a discount."

And when prisoners are so far removed from their homes, the only profit derived is for the whole of the prison-industrial complex, which includes more than just the profits reaped by the keepers. Exorbitant overseas phone costs in order to maintain some semblance of familial and cultural contact, lower prison pay, extreme changes in diet and environment—all of these things are factors that play a role in the growing attempts to deculturalize and further colonize Hawaii.

Of course, if you remove so many men and women from the island, the children of those individuals will ultimately suffer, further fueling the self-perpetuated

existence of the prison-industrial complex. "While-Hawaiian children make up 35% of juvenile arrests," writes Sonoda, "they comprise 52% of Hawaii's youth correctional facility population."

As on the mainland with Black prisoners, Sonoda writes that most Hawaiians have family members, or friends, who were incarcerated. Hawaiians are twice as likely to be incarcerated after going through what she calls "the colonial legal process" as whites or Japanese on the islands.

We must be careful, when speaking of racism, discrimination, and prejudice, that we are inclusive with the dialogue. We must take care that we do not preclude the discrimination incurred by indigenous peoples when we discuss issues of Black and white in conjunction with the prison-industrial complex, for if we do, we lessen the universal struggle for freedom that is inclusive of all people.

## Vieques arrests



Jacqueline Jackson, wife of Rev. Jesse Jackson, was one of the protesters arrested on Vieques, June 18. She spent 10 days in solitary confinement after refusing a body cavity search.

**New York**—The U.S. Court of Appeals in Boston, June 14, upheld the convictions and sentences given four New York politicians who were arrested in civil disobedience in Vieques, Puerto Rico. They and many others were protesting the use of that island by the Navy for bombing practice. During more than 50 years of bombing, the island and its people have suffered much damage.

Recently, demonstrations demanding the Navy leave Vieques have become so widespread that Bush was forced to announce the bombing will stop in two years. Protests are continuing, and the unusually long sentences were undoubtedly imposed to prevent further "trespassing" onto the Navy base. Rev. Al Sharpton is serving 90 days in jail, while the three others are serving 30 days.

On June 21, the UN Decolonization Committee called for an end to the bombing, for the Navy to leave and for decolonization of Puerto Rico. That same day there was a spirited rally at the UN demanding an end to both the bombing and U.S. colonial occupation of Puerto Rico.

—Anne and Malik

## Election and resistance in Iran

Given an undemocratic but decisive choice, Iranian voters turned out en masse on June 8 and handed Mohammad Khatami a landslide presidential victory with 77.8% of the vote. Less than 1% voted for Ali Fallahian, the candidate with known ties to assassination squads. But a considerable number, nearly 15%, voted for a former labor minister who campaigned under the slogan of "less political freedoms, more economic justice!"

Despite solid backing, the number of those who believe Khatami will truly oppose the hard-line and conservative clerics has plummeted drastically. There are those who say that Khatami's presence only serves as a shield for the clerical establishment against challenges to its religious and ideological legitimacy. They point out that Khatami was also the candidate of the conservatives. But relatively few Iranians were willing to hand over more power to the other factions. There is good reason to believe that a considerable number of people, however, heeded the call to boycott the elections or turn in their ballots blank. According to one eyewitness in the city of Qum, nearly 65,000 blank ballots were turned in.

**Meanwhile, less than a week after the elections, workers at a recently privatized textile factory stormed the office of the new owner-manager to protest the non-payment of their salaries. According to a report in the *Financial Times* (June 18), workers at the Chit-e-Rey factory near Tehran smashed furniture and hurled computers out of windows when their new boss arrived for the first time in two weeks, empty-handed.**

The workers' protest at Chit-e-Rey follows a wave of

other protests due to economic restructuring which spells out wholesale shutdown of factories and massive layoffs of workers with no social security or unemployment benefits.

**Most Iranian industries have been run by bonyads or religious conglomerates that need not keep their books open to the public. According to various estimates these foundations run from one-fifth to two-thirds of Iran's economic output. During the last two years the bonyads have been selling off industries that lose money.**

As the *Financial Times* reports, the Foundation for the Oppressed and War-Wounded (which took over the former Shah's wealth and then expanded during the war as a major war industry) recently revealed that it employs 63,000 people and supported 120,000 war disabled, but only 85 of its 400 companies were profit-making. Chit-e-Rey was one of the losing industries sold off to private investors. The new owners, for the most part, have shut down the plants and stopped paying wages to workers. Several hundred workers shocked the establishment when they took their protests to the Majlis chanting "Death to the bonyad."

After the latest elections, workers' protests are sure to spread in an organized way in the period ahead as privatization proceeds. Iran's economy has been stagnating and coming apart at the seams. In that sense Iranian workers have nothing to celebrate with the election of Khatami. The entrance of workers into the arena of the political struggles carried on by the youth movement since the late 1990s may finally help lift the incubus from the mind of Iranians to break the back of this regime.

—Cyrus Noveen

# Profits skyrocket when capital calls an energy 'crisis'

(Continued from page 1)

peting shippers started to share the pipeline capacity.

Because electricity is a commodity that cannot be stored and must be used as it is produced and put on the grid, it is the easiest market to manipulate. Texas-based Enron Corporation runs the world's largest e-commerce site including a spot energy market. The company has an army of specialists in everything from weather to geology figuring how to manipulate the market.

They struck gold in California. The so-called shortage that hit California was caused by a quadrupling of the number of unscheduled power plant shutdowns. Typical of reports from many different power plant workers in California was one from an Etiwanda power plant in San Bernardino, owned by Texas' Reliant Energy. Workers reported that they were repeatedly ordered to shut down and then restart as they watched the spot market energy prices rise past a certain point. Sometimes this happened four or five times in an hour. An ex-worker at a Duke power plant told a state Senate committee that his plant was ordered to go up and down "like a yo-yo."

When PG&E declared bankruptcy, one-third of the independent power producers exacerbated the fake shortage because they stopped producing after they hadn't been paid in months by the bankrupt utility. For its part, the parent company of PG&E is a major energy producer out of state and is itself under investigation for price gouging and market manipulation in Boston. The entire northeast region is now also asking for price relief from FERC.

The same Texas energy players that were bleeding California's treasury dry pumped unprecedented money into the Bush campaign. Enron CEO Kenneth Lay contributed a half million dollars alone. Bush's illegitimate presidency was financed outside any spending limits by using nearly unlimited funds from his energy pals.

Once in power Vice President Cheney openly relied on Lay to formulate energy policy in secret meetings and allowed Lay to hand-pick federal regulators. With former energy CEO's Bush and Cheney in the White House, there is a virtual interlocking directorate for energy policy between the executive branch of government and the current Texas energy CEOs. Raking in the loot, the ultimate sin for them is price controls, and the other capitalists experiencing calamity and calling for controls are the biggest infidels.

## CAPITAL'S RELIGION

But liberal opposition can never seriously challenge an even deeper religion than faith in the market. That is capital's need for the self-expansion of value production as an objective truth that trumps concern for nature or workers who have to buy energy to live. Thus, the ruling ideologues are using the present economic problems inflicted by the energy industry against conservationists and future generations for whom non-renewable resources will disappear.

Along with Cheney's policy of drill-and-burn-with-impunity approach came his smug dismissal of conservation as merely a "sign of personal virtue." However, Californians, who are already in one of the most conserving states, did heed the call to conserve even more, especially with a run on light bulbs that use less energy. They cut energy demand an additional 10%. By the end of June suddenly power plants, facing a lot of pub-

lic scrutiny and price caps from FERC, stopped withholding capacity and energy prices fell dramatically to below \$100 per megawatt hour. Suddenly the prophecy of impending doom—hundreds of rolling blackouts during this summer's peak usage period—has nearly vanished.

Bush-Cheney and their fellow energy lords kept saying price controls would only make matters worse and that there were no short term solutions to California's problems. They returned us both to the retrogressive ideology of the 19th century as well as to its pollution when capital went unchecked in its rape of the environment through drilling and burning. Bush relaxed pollution constraints on power plants. Bush even told the world to go to hell when he broke a campaign promise and rejected the ever so mild globally negotiated restraints on green house gasses to reduce global warming.

No supply of fossil fuel is off limits to capital's voracious appetite, from the delicate Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the Florida coast to national monuments and the California coast. Mexico was enlisted to fire up even dirtier plants across the border which will belch pollution both in Mexico and in Imperial County, California. Unthinkable a few years ago, new nuclear energy plants are back on the agenda. Of course, they want a government subsidy in the form of extending a limit on their liability in accidents—a corporate welfare no other industry has.

Governor Davis has been a fountain of populist rhetoric, rightly attacking the energy giants strangling California. He promised there would be no further increases in utility rates on residences after the January increase. His populism only went so far. When businesses screamed about getting hit with the colossal June increase, Davis retreated and again placed the burden almost wholly on workers. Davis' pronouncements have been full of sound and fury, threatening from the start to seize the price gouging power plants under the state's power of eminent domain. Davis' overriding concern, however, is to do nothing to alien-

ate investors and capital markets who might no longer feel "safe" in California.

Many point to Los Angeles and publicly owned power of the kind workers fought to institute there at the beginning of the 1900s and won in 1916. They fought reform tendencies that were pushing for mere market regulation which today's experiences show is easily corrupted by those who are to be regulated. It is true that during this crisis the 1.2 million Los Angeles customers had cheap, abundant, reliable power from their municipally owned utility. However, they didn't pass up the chance to sell their excess power to the State of California at exorbitant prices until Governor Davis threatened to move against them. Public power will not turn around the reality of capital as an alien force that dominates humans.

Capitalists let the energy companies get away with as much as they did because all capitalists are united in reinforcing the dominance of capital against workers. That means doing everything to promote their permanent restructuring in a global economy. All the different layers of capital and government had to do something when energy companies were spoiling the party and the ideology that drives deregulation began to be seriously questioned. As Senator Lieberman, who started hearings in the new Democratic controlled Senate put it, "If the federal government doesn't step in and provide temporary price relief, the natural trend toward deregulation will come to a halt."

Now the brokering between regulatory agencies, the courts, and the state may go on for years while workers pay the bill. With the California-centered energy crisis we get a glimpse how players in industry, the government, the world of e-commerce and finance capital reinforce a propensity for 21st century capitalism to self-destruct on the backs of workers who produce everything. That can only be turned around when humans as workers freely create their own social relations and take responsibility for humanity's metabolism with nature.

## Suit hits military polluters where it hurts

**Memphis, Tenn.**—In the middle of June, Defense Depot Memphis, Tennessee—Concerned Citizens Committee (DDMT-CCC) called a demonstration. We had been working on this action since October when Congressman Bob Filner of San Diego came to a people's hearing about toxic chemicals around military sites. He noticed that all the stories were just alike: the military was not accountable for the damage it had done in our communities, and no actions could be taken against it. His bill would allow people like us to sue the military for not complying with environmental laws, and at the rally people signed a "letter of intent" to do just that.

In December Congressman Filner gave out a draft copy of the bill to members of communities from San Antonio, San Diego, Alaska and others, and asked if there was something we wanted to add. We wanted to add that the military cannot be responsible for its own cleanup; there has to be independent oversight. Altogether it was a good bill, addressing the health issues around military sites, taking up needed cleanup, and putting the military on notice that it was not above the law.

In San Diego, big Navy ships dump nuclear waste, oil, everything you can think of into that beautiful bay. If any other ships polluted as much, ship owners would be fined and sent to jail.

The Memphis Defense Depot has poisoned us since 1942. Anybody who had anything to do with the depot needs to be arrested and fined. That military site wiggled around the Clean Air and Clean Water laws, and the Right to Know Act. The military walked away from their responsibility for the health problems that people are going to have for years and years to come.

The demonstration we had was good. We had over 25 people from the community and several white supporters too. In the days following, we ended up with 90 names on our "intent to sue" letter. All in all, 104 people contacted us since the demonstration. People brought their neighbors, and others called and said, "Don't leave me out, I want to sign on."

Even people who had left the neighborhood came to the demonstration. No one has ever sat down and gone home to house and talked with the people in the depot neighborhood to find out how it has affected our health.

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I came to the demonstration about suing the Defense Depot because I have had so much cancer and death in my family. As soon as my father was retired from the depot, he became ill. He died of brain cancer. My broth-

er died of lung cancer when he was 44. My sister had cancer, now in remission, but is in poor health. My other sister had a hysterectomy. My mother had a hysterectomy early and several miscarriages. I had a miscarriage. I had a baby born with heart problems and all kinds of organs reversed, who died. There's been a lot of depression, alcoholism, and mental illness in my family.

My dad would bring home 55-gallon drums from the depot and we would play and burn trash in them. We lived in front of a depot drainage ditch, and when it rained, we played in those ditches. We played at the playground and at the pool on the depot grounds too.

I feel very cheated because not only myself but maybe my children and their children will have problems and may not even know all of this. I've been documenting a lot of these things so that they will have this information. I feel cheated that the government has done this, covered it up and lied about it, and that they've cheated me out of my father, my mother, my brother. It's ruined our whole family.—White Woman

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I came to the demonstration because I stayed in the Castalia neighborhood all my life. My father worked at the Defense Depot over 30 years, my brother over 20 years, and both of them are deceased. My brother was just 40 when he died. They said that he had ulcers, and a blood clot went through his heart and killed him. We tried to look into it, but they said it wasn't anything at the depot that caused it.

Another brother worked over there maybe 10 years, and he's ill now. My father became ill and retired early. We couldn't figure out what was wrong with him. Then my Momma was ill for several years before she passed. She had a brain tumor. Another cousin who stays two or three streets from me had a heart attack. He worked over there.

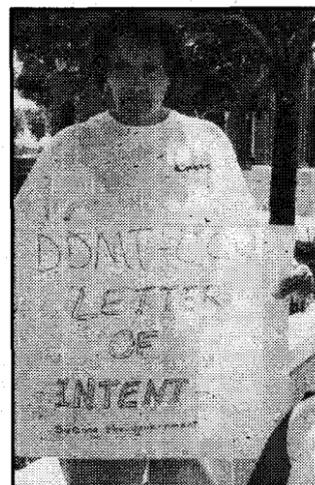
I have high blood pressure, a lot of aching. I went to the doctor yesterday, and I got six prescriptions. All my grandchildren deal with allergies. So do the neighbors' kids. My grandson has headaches and his temperature is up and down.

A whole lot of my neighbors are elderly now, and they have sicknesses and can't get out. I called several of them and told them I was going to the demonstration. They asked me if I could bring back some information and give their names also.

We need some kind of clinic to check us for chemicals. The air we breathe on this side of Hays Street had some aluminum dust, and they found traces of mustard gas from the World War II chemical bombs. The water sometimes was brown and different colors. There is a drainage ditch running from the depot one street over from my house. As kids we played all around here.

If there's nothing in the water or the soil, like they say, why do we have cancer? They need to go around door-to-door and see how many people that stayed in this area have died from cancer or something else they couldn't tell what it was.

If they think it's so clean, put all the politicians there—the ones that need to be standing up for us and are not. They're just worrying about getting an NBA team in Memphis instead of worrying about the water we're drinking and people dying.—Black Woman



News & Letters

### Memphis communities rally against Defense Depot's toxic pollution.

How to contact	
NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES	
<b>CHICAGO</b> 36 S. Wabash, Room 1440 Chicago, IL 60603 Phone 312 236-0799 Fax 312 236-0725 <b>MEETINGS</b> Call for Information	<b>NEW YORK</b> P.O. Box 250657 Columbia University Station New York, NY 10025 212 663 3631 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays, 6:30 p.m. Washington Square Church 133 W. 4th St. (parish house parlor), Manhattan
<b>DETROIT</b> P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227 <b>MEETINGS</b> Mondays, 6 p.m. Central Methodist Church Woodward and Adams	<b>OAKLAND</b> P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays, 6:30 p.m. 2015 Center St. (at Milvia) Berkeley
<b>LOS ANGELES</b> 4475 Sunset Drive-Box 181 Los Angeles, CA 90027 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays, 5:30 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)	<b>MEMPHIS &amp; MISSISSIPPI</b> 1910 Madison Ave, PMB 59 Memphis, TN 38104
<b>FLINT, MI</b> P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502	
INTERNET	
<b>Email</b> nandl@igc.org banandl@yahoo.com (Oakland)	<b>WORLD WIDE WEB</b> www.newsandletters.org
INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS	
<b>BRITISH</b> BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX http://members.aol.com/THEHOBGOBL/index.html	
<b>IRANIAN</b> Anjoman Azadi, 36 S. Wabash #1440, Chicago IL 60603 anjomanazadi@aol.com, www.anjomanazadi.org	

**EDITORIAL**

**Europeans challenge Bush's arrogance**

The day before George W. Bush started off on his whirlwind Grand Tour of Europe to Spain, Belgium, Sweden, Poland and Slovenia—the five countries carefully chosen as an audience for his blatant right-wing agenda—he held an ostentatious Rose Garden press briefing to make it clear that he had no intention of reversing his opposition to the global warming accord supported by the European leaders he was about to meet with.

The day after his return he made clear that he intended to proceed with his plans for missile defense "with or without Russia," as his National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice put it bluntly. Secretary of State Colin Powell echoed this the same day: "We will get out of the constraints of the (1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile) treaty when those constraints do not allow us to move forward with our technology."

There was no mistaking the Reaganesque arrogance of what Bush was planning for the world. What his trip, however, also made abundantly clear was the depth of the European opposition to those plans.

In Spain, chosen as a "friendly" starting point, the private meetings with Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar were described as "diplomatic disagreements," but the demonstrations at the U.S. Embassy were vigorous against Bush as the "champion of the death penalty." The meetings, friendly or not, were heavily guarded as protesters hounded Bush wherever he went.

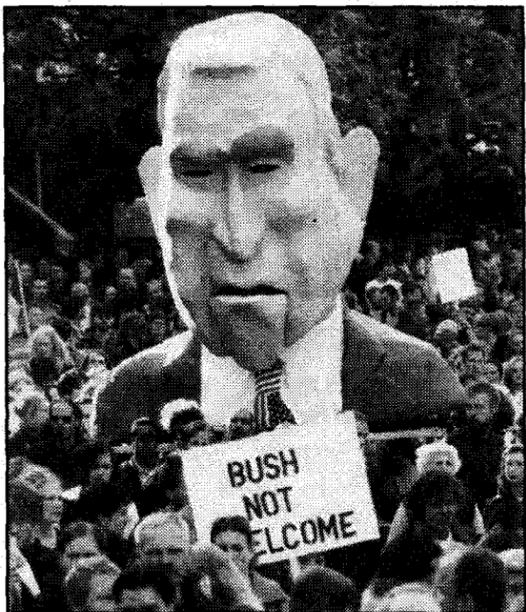
In Belgium, where Bush met with 18 fellow leaders of NATO, his insistence that the 1972 ABM Treaty with Russia was "outdated" and that the U.S. intended to develop a "missile defense shield" drew sharply undiplomatic critiques from both German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and French President Jacques Chirac, who called it a "fantastic incentive to proliferate" weapons of destruction throughout the world. As in Spain, the demonstrations and protests continued outside of the heavily guarded meetings.

**WIDE SPECTRUM OF OPPOSITION**

But it was Sweden, where Bush appeared at a summit meeting of the European Union, that showed the great difference between the resistance to Bush's plans for the world expressed by all the other leaders and the protests in the streets, which had grown massive in Sweden. Tens of thousands filled the streets and parks of Gothenburg, challenging Bush on global warming, his proposed missile defense system and his support for the death penalty. The demonstrators included all the forces we have previously seen in Seattle and Quebec—from feminists and environmentalists to the whole spectrum of anti-globalization activists. The total contempt they had for Bush was most dramatically displayed when dozens of protest-

ers participated in a coordinated mooning.

That it was in Sweden, of all places, that police for the first time opened fire, felling three demonstrators, marks the increasingly ferocious response of the authorities to the growing movement. What the thousands of young people in the streets were making clear—as one protester summed it up, explaining the long list of complaints on her poster—was that "the capitalist system" was "a way of living" they would no longer accept. That they were protesting not only Bush but the EU leaders as well was made evident as the demonstrations continued long after Bush had left Gothenburg. Indeed, they did not allow the leaders to ignore that, while Bush made it arrogantly clear he had no intentions of ratifying the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, not a single European nation has yet ratified it, either.



'Bush not welcome' was message of June 14 demonstration in Gothenburg, Sweden.

The week finally ended with "summit talks" between Bush and Vladimir Putin in Slovenia, where those two "hardliners" told the world they had come to look each other in the eye, and Bush announced that in his two hour private talk with Putin, he had been "able to get a sense of his soul." Putin did not say what he might or might not have been able to sense of Bush's soul. But

the day after Bush returned to the U.S. and made his missile defense pronouncement, Putin responded that Russia could be counted on to ensure that it would be able to overwhelm any such a shield by upgrading its strategic nuclear arsenal with multiple warheads.

More important, Putin had made it a point to fly to his meeting with Bush in Slovenia from China, where he and Chinese President Jiang Zemin had met to discuss their common opposition to any U.S. missile shield. They had, in fact, signed the founding charter for a Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and planned to hold regular summits between them, the next one to be held next summer in Moscow.

**MORE PROTESTS TO COME**

Meanwhile, more and more demonstrations against the "international elite" were being promised for this summer. But in the wake of Sweden, the meeting of the World Bank in Barcelona was quickly cancelled, while Silvio Berlusconi's Italian government made it known that it plans to shut down Genoa completely for four days in an unprecedented security crackdown on any anti-globalization protesters that might be headed for the Group of Eight summit in that city.

There is no question that the increasing opposition from below—which is the only real challenge being made to the plans our rulers have to destroy us all, one way or the other—will continue to grow. The imperative challenge, however, to the new movement that has arisen since Seattle, is how it can self-develop to become a movement that not only knows what it opposes but finds a way to create, out of its uprooting, a new, truly human world.

**Asian youth fight racism in Britain**

(Continued from page 1)

attacks. Racist violence loses its specific meaning, as violence caused by racial oppression, and becomes just another crime.

The prevailing misconception is that the cause is of something outside, alien to this society, in particular the presence of the fascists. There is no doubt that the activity of the tiny fascist groups with three election candidates in Oldham has been a major contribution to the racism. Furthermore BNP candidates in two Oldham constituencies polled 11% and 16% of the vote from local whites and that percentage is several times more than anyone in the Socialist Alliance got anywhere in England and Wales.

Whilst that is disturbing enough, the fact cannot be

ignored that the SA did not see themselves as capable of meeting the racist challenge in the Oldham except by ANL deliveries of "Don't Vote Nazi" leaflets. In fact, the phenomenon of a fascist revival in the election is rooted in the decomposition of old-Labourist class politics and its replacement by Blairism. Because New Labour has expunged the idea of class struggle in its ranks, it tries to explain away the problems of the working class as an "attitude problem"; resistance and struggle rather than "upward mobility" as an option for working class communities is not on the agenda. (Oldham has, after all, stood by the Labour Party for years.)

Nor evidently is it on the agenda of the Trotskyist Left who, in the Oldham elections, decided not to field a candidate and thus effectively tail-ended New Labour in the cause of "anti-fascist unity."

In reality New Labour acts as if the white working class was born racist and as such should be demonised, attacked and excluded from the Third Way vision of England. Thus Blair and company claim that Oldham is an exception, and they have one solution: police repression, which is in any case racially biased. That's reflected in the prison population in the UK which is now 20% non-white.

It should not be forgotten that 19th century Oldham and Lancashire as a whole were bastions of radical Chartism and working class solidarity with the anti-slavery Abolitionist cause in the USA. Remnants of this tradition have been expressed by the postal workers' union who challenged the legal mass distribution of racist literature during the election campaign. And Paul Hargreaves of the Fire Brigades Union, addressing the urgency to "stamp out racism and the fascists," rightly noted, "The police aren't going to stop them. It's up to us."

—London Corresponding Committee

**Airport developers threaten rural town**

*Editor's note: Residents of Peotone, Ill., a rural community south of Chicago, are organizing against plans to build an airport near their home which will serve the Chicago area. The following is an excerpt from a speech Anthony Rayson, an activist with the organization Shut This Airport Nightmare Down, was denied permission to give at a recent public meeting on the plan's feasibility.*

There are many reasons why this is a terrible place for an airport. First, it is not needed. There are airports galore ringing Chicagoland. This is nothing more than a poorly disguised massive, naked landgrab. "Peotone" is about development—about lucrative contracts, real estate speculation, land deals, road construction, hotel building, luring business ventures out here. It's about money. It's about destroying pristine farmland for the almighty dollar. It has nothing to do with human beings, whatsoever!

**Upwards of \$100 million of Illinois taxpayer money has already been poured into this Peotone project. Think of what all that money could have done to benefit depressed southside communities. What a god-awful waste already.**

There is no infrastructure out here. It would all have to be built at enormous taxpayer expense. We're 40 miles from the Loop. Why would travelers want to land that far away? How can you expect major airlines to base their operations down here when their clients want to be in the city? If you build it, they won't come.

Where's the water going to come from? We're outside the Lake Michigan watershed. To get permission to have Lake Michigan water pumped to the Peotone airport site would require the unanimous approval of eight states and two provinces of Canada. The aquifer down here is shallow and of poor quality. Are you going to drain the Kankakee River?

Because that's where all the pollution generated from the airport would flow to. This airport would also choke off five streams in the area that flow into the Kankakee River. Environmentally, it is a major tragedy in the making. Prairie, woodlands, wetlands, animal habitats would all be tragically and negatively affected.

This area is also very archeologically significant. It is loaded with Paleolithic sites. This history cannot be allowed to be buried under the bulldozers and earth-movers, like most of this history has been. The past present and the future are all linked and should not be allowed to be irrevocably severed by the forces of greed.

—Anthony Rayson, Secretary of STAND  
P.O. Box 433, Monee, IL 60449

**Toxic fight in Arkansas**

*Stamps, Ark.* — Twelve or so years ago, Mr. Ferguson bought the Red River Aluminum site and put it in the back of a Black neighborhood where a railroad track separates the Blacks from the whites. The company went bankrupt and now it's a Superfund site. They left 10-foot-high mounds of contaminated waste in our backyards that were there four or five years after the plant closed.

**The plant is in a flood zone, as are our homes, so we have all types of toxics that flow onto our property. The EPA would not give us an analysis of what was going on at the Red River site. So I got a chemist and we had samples analyzed. Arsenic, titanium, copper, zinc, and other chemicals are in the water and on our property.**

There has been a division in the neighborhood between the eleven families who live up against the fence surrounding the Red River Aluminum site and others in the area. It came about when Gov. Huckabee said he would give the eleven families \$350,000 in subsidized loans for homes. That means they would have to meet certain loan requirements in order to move, and that money would have to be paid back. But the people didn't agree with that.

Now, they don't want to move. Huckabee told them they had to get out. But he told the people who lived across the street from these 11 homes, that he didn't have time or money for us, that he could not satisfy everyone in the neighborhood.

**The people across the street, about 20 families, all got lawyers. It split the community because some people think the governor is going to give them more money—but he's not. The money he offered was from his campaign funds. You have to ask, why would the governor use campaign fund money when there's federal funds available to move people out? What are they hiding?**

Now the toxic chemicals are coming up in our yards, forming salt cakes. It's a fight because it's in a Black neighborhood. If it was in a white neighborhood, do you think the governor would let the toxics poison white children? We just lost a man last week to a rare cancer, Marshall Asberry. He was 51 years old. The doctor thought he had served time in the military, but he had not. The cancer came from the toxic chemicals. We have children born in this community who cannot talk; some children are completely bald; we have people who are blind; we have breast cancer and colon cancer here; we have people dying real fast.

—Black woman

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## Our Life and Times

**Unrest threatens Indonesia's Wahid**

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In Indonesia, workers in Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya and the industrial sectors of East Java began a series of anti-government protests at the beginning of June. They opposed a decree ending the requirement for employers to provide severance and service time payments to workers who retire or quit.

Without the requirements, it will become easier to fire workers. President Abdurrahman Wahid told union officials the decree would make Indonesia more attractive to capitalist investors. The workers' demonstrations have forced Wahid to hold back the law, only for the time being, but a number of unions intend to keep demonstrating until the law is permanently shelved.

Wahid is facing opposition not only on the streets, but from other sectors of the ruling class, including the military. The legislature has already voted a special session of parliament to begin impeachment proceedings against him in August. Since being elected president almost two years ago, defeating Suharto's hand-picked successor Habibie, Wahid has been unable to

**Japan's nationalism**

Several hundred people—Japanese, South Korean, Chinese and Filipino—protested on June 12 in Tokyo, surrounding the Education Ministry to condemn a new middle school history textbook that glosses over wartime atrocities committed by Japan.

Resurgent right-wing nationalist groups—fueled in the 1990s by Japan's economic slump—have been especially successful in gaining control over the content of history textbooks. The text in question was also approved by a government commission. It characterizes the Japanese invasion of Korea as an unopposed "annexation," allegedly necessary for Japan's security and to prepare the rest of Asia for independence from European colonialism.

The South Korean and Chinese governments have lodged protests against the textbook. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who took office in April, has refused to stop its release. Instead, Koizumi has fanned the nationalist flames higher by announcing he will visit, in August, a shrine that "venerates" Japan's war dead, including a number of convicted World War II war criminals. Koizumi additionally wants Japan to eliminate Article IX from its post-war Constitution, which renounces war as a means of settling disputes.

**New Peru president**

Alejandro Toledo was elected president of Peru and will take office July 28. He defeated leftist APRA candidate, former president Alan Garcia, in a June 3 runoff. Toledo won 53% to 47%, with 10% of voters spoiling their ballots (voting is obligatory) after a campaign which sank into allegations of drug use, child abandonment and corruption.

Toledo came to political prominence by putting together a coalition—Peru Possible—opposed to the previous president, Alberto Fujimori, now in exile in Japan. While Toledo stressed his Indian-peasant roots—while campaigning, he liked to be compared to the Inca emperor Pachacutec—his economic and social proposals reflect his U.S. business school background and World Bank employment. Toledo has named a number of neo-liberal capitalist establishment people to this government, not the least to "reassure" investors and lending agencies that he will continue Fujimori's economic policies.

handle any of the crises besetting Indonesia, be it the economy or the demands for regional autonomy in Irian Jaya and Aceh.

Vice-President Megawati Sukarnoputri, the likely successor to Wahid, has said virtually nothing to indicate her position on these events. While her party, PDI-P, opposed Suharto when he was in power, it is now in

**Protests in Algeria**

Police fired tear gas and a water cannon as hundreds of thousands of protesters marched in Algiers, June 14 in the largest demonstration since independence, for greater freedom and in opposition to discrimination against ethnic Berbers. Protests have been ongoing since April.

**Milosevic finally extradited to The Hague**

As we went to press, the Serbian government extradited Slobodan Milosevic to The Hague to stand trial before the International War Crimes Tribunal for his actions during the 1999 Kosova War. The most significant mass response was not in Serbia, but in The Hague, where hundreds of victims of Milosevic from the Balkans gathered to applaud his arrival.

In addition to his crimes in Kosova, which resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and the expulsion of 800,000 Albanian civilians from their homes, Milosevic deserves to be tried for genocide for his 1991-95 war in Bosnia and Croatia. In Bosnia, Milosevic's forces slaughtered 200,000 people, mainly civilians, drove two million from their homes in an "ethnic cleansing" campaign, and set up rape camps where thousands of Muslim and Croat women were assaulted by troops.

Only weeks ago Serbian politicians were adamantly stating that they would "never" cooperate with The Hague Tribunal. What has changed? Many are pointing to financial and political pressure from the U.S. and other Western governments, but, as we know from their decade of compromise with the Milosevic regime, these imperialist powers have no big commitment to prosecuting him or his lieutenants. Leading Serb war criminal Radovan Karadzic still lives in Bosnia right under the noses of NATO troops. As it announced Milosevic's arrival, the International Tribunal called this situation "scandalous."

The greater factor is the change in public opinion inside Serbia itself. During Milosevic's rule, the public was fed falsehoods on state television. This spring, alternative Serbian media such as Radio B-92 and the weekly *Vreme* began to expose Serbian war crimes.

In June, Serbian state television finally broadcast footage of a mass grave containing the bodies of 100 Kosovar Albanians—many of them women and small

alliance with his party, Golkar, along with the military and the right-wing Muslim Central Axis, to remove Wahid.

Sukarnoputri did not condemn the orchestrated appearance in April of a right-wing group, the "Anti-Communist Alliance" (AKA), which set out to burn "subversive" books and attack left-wing political leaders. Its titular chairman, Eurico Guterres, headed one of the most brutal paramilitary squads in East Timor opposed to independence.

Whoever may succeed Wahid will inherit an economy still staggering from the 1997 Asian financial meltdown. Capitalist growth, which soared to 7% in the 1990s, was down to 4.8% in 2000, and is expected to slip as low as 2.8% this year. The estimated total private and public debt is close to \$150 billion, with some 40% of government operating expenditures going to debt payment alone.

On the one hand, the IMF is withholding \$400 million in funds until the government institutes cutbacks to begin shrinking the deficit. On the other hand, there are an estimated 40 million people already jobless, and at least one-fourth of the population lives below the official poverty line. The long-service payment requirement for dismissed workers was passed only last year, mainly to prevent the kind of mass layoffs, and workers' defiance, that followed the massive economic crisis in 1997-98.

When the government put a 30% fuel price increase into effect on June 16, it deployed over 42,000 military and police in Jakarta to guard property from student and worker protests. This is an indication of the struggles ahead.

children—who had been buried secretly in the Spring of 1999 in Kladovo, Serbia. According to the present government's own reports, refrigerator trucks were used to transport hundreds of bodies of murdered Albanians to secret mass graves in Serbia. This may account for some of the 10,000 Kosovars still missing since 1999.

As Milosevic was extradited, a few thousand of his die-hard supporters demonstrated in Belgrade. A member of the student movement Otpor, looking on, responded: "The old fools! Milosevic is Serbia's shame!" (*Le Monde*, June 29, 2001).

As his trial moves forward, Milosevic's supporters, at home and abroad, are sure to defend him as a victim of NATO. Sadly, a good many of his defenders consider themselves part of the Left. This newspaper has not allowed, and will not allow, such monstrous arguments to remain unanswered, especially when they emanate from the Left. We will continue to expose the lies of outright supporters of Milosevic such as the Serbian philosopher Mihailo Markovic. We will also refute the distortions of those like Noam Chomsky, who formalistically argue over who has the right to judge him, while attempting to relativize his genocidal actions.

To evade such a critique would be to give tacit support to those forces that are trying, at this very moment, to suppress the Albanian minority's demands for human rights and multiculturalism inside Macedonia. That, and not the tactics of a small group of rebels in the hills, is the key question facing that country. While nothing resembling Milosevic's "ethnic cleansing" has taken place, recently there have been some very disturbing signs. They include threats to drive Albanians out of Skopje, the capital, as well as the "disappearing" of politically active Albanians, possibly with police complicity.

**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*.