

**WORKSHOP TALKS**

WILL RETURN NEXT ISSUE

## BLACK/RED VIEW

I am turning over my column this time to a young activist and thinker, Makalani Adisa.—John Alan

### 'Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles'

by Makalani Adisa

In talking about the recent damage done to New Orleans, you can directly apply what's in the *Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles* by John Alan to what should be done right now after Katrina. There's no way in the world that we can't use this as a turning point, nationwide, to build a new kind of movement. All the typical ingredients of race and classism were involved, and just like Sept. 11, 2001, the whole country is upset across the board. Unlike what happened to the Twin Towers, there's no mysterious "terrorism at large" or "bogyman" to blame except for the U.S. government. Everybody is saying this, not just Black people.

After people collectively figure out how best to help survivors, we need to build a revolutionary movement that has "Absolute" or "second negativity" as John Alan and News and Letters Committees suggests, with first negativity being throwing the slave master off our backs and second negativity meaning we don't use the oppressive tools of the slavemaster to run our own lives. This takes critical dialog and action to work.

This is what 19th century German philosopher Hegel put out and was developed by Marx to mean a "permanent revolution." And if what we mean by revolution is not just "military, armed struggle" or "seizing power" or "taking over," which is most of what people mean, it makes total sense. We can't just overthrow what's going on. We have to build a totally new society based on a new set of human relationships (rules) we do want. This is one of the key contributions, along with the unity of theory and practice, which *News and Letters* has been publicizing for over 50 years. They didn't come up with these theories, but they've been developing them, applying them and pushing for them in real people's struggles for the longest.

#### A MOVEMENT OUT OF KATRINA

Just imagine if a real Katrina people's struggle came out of Katrina. There's actually no excuse for one not happening. What about a movement that actually gets their hands dirty and does the grassroots work (like John Alan says about Ella Baker), but one that doesn't run away from talking about theory, philosophy or other difficult discussions? There's a book reviewed in *The New York Times*, *A People's History of Science*, that puts ordinary working people as the originators of most inventions and basic scientific theories that we use today, including the methodology of what's known as scientific inquiry, and it ain't no surprise.

Alan opens up by talking about the Supreme Court and how "diversity" is used whenever necessary to make the appearance of exploitation a little nicer. But since the book's been out, we can see an even more overt, up-front racism. Alan quotes former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott who says he prefers legal segregation. Nowadays they're lining up their super conservative Supreme Court—and not apologizing. Pretty soon abortion or walking down the street with more than two Black people might be illegal. Already we have Chicago's "gang loitering" and "mob action" laws.

Black struggles for freedom are the "touchstone" of the effort to overcome alienation, but are just as often sold out by leaders that stop at a few dark-faced reps and a few measly hand-outs. This is called the "political" solution that folks stop at. Nameless and faceless poor Black women have been at the forefront of correcting this. How people were tokenized was known throughout the last 35 years. *Dialectics of Black Free-*

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## Immigrant struggles and the response to globalized capital

by Htun Lin

Faced with huge protests by immigrants, on the one hand, and a split in the Republican Party between racist xenophobes who want to criminalize all immigrants and business interests that want to exploit immigrant labor, George Bush weighed in on the debate on May 15 by taking his approach to most issues—militarizing it. Bush ordered 6,000 National Guardsmen to patrol the U.S.-Mexico border and for a hundreds-mile-long chain link fence to be built along large parts of it. However, Bush has neither mollified the demands of immigrants for human dignity nor has he tried to silence the growing chorus of reactionary sentiment in Congress and elsewhere that wants to scapegoat immigrants as part of an effort to deflect attention from the real crises undermining the quality of life in this country. The Senate's decision to declare English the "national language" of the U.S. is but one expression of a rising backlash to today's protests by immigrants.

#### NEW KIND OF MAY DAY

On May Day, long recognized internationally as the day celebrating labor's radical origins, over a million immigrants took to the streets all over the U.S., not just to march but to show the country what "A day without immigrants" ("Un dia sin inmigrantes") looks like. It was, in effect, a mass strike, impacting among others agricultural production, construction, meat-packing, and service industries.

In many places, the demonstrations were multiethnic. Hundreds of thousands marched in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay Area, New York, and many other major and minor cities saw the largest demonstrations in their recent history, such as Denver with 75,000. For many small towns this was their first demonstration ever.



Immigrant rights march in Chicago, Illinois on May Day, 2006

The May Day demonstrators, demanding respect and dignity for their everyday labor, deepened the meaning of the immigrant movement's main motto "Ningun ser es humano es ilegal" (No human being is illegal), a message adorning many a T-shirt in the marches. It was the latest chapter in an immigrant movement triggered by a draconian law, HR4437, introduced by Rep. Sensenbrenner and passed by the House in December, which would immediately make the estimated 12 million undocumented workers in the U.S. into felons, as well as anyone who aided them like health care workers and church groups.

May Day witnessed the power of labor in a way the labor movement hasn't been able to demonstrate in a long time. In all of last year, labor union strikes in the U.S. involved 100,000 workers. In contrast, on May Day a dozen Tyson Foods plants were shut in the Midwest as well as eight Perdue chicken processing plants. Operations at the ports of Long Beach and L.A. were nearly closed as truckers stayed away. Low wage past

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## Bolivia today: Liberation or statism?

by Jorge Virana

*Editor's note: The following is a translation by Mitch Weirth of excerpts of an essay by Bolivian activist and theoretician Jorge Viana entitled, "Tiempo estatal vs. tiempos de emancipacion" (or "The rhythm of the State vs. the rhythm of emancipation").*

**EL ALTO, BOLIVIA**—In Bolivia we've lived with six years of insubordination under an intimidating state. Now the actions of a new state rather than the fatalism of a "cycle of waning protest" may be causing us to enter a time where our lives will be purely state-centered. The predominance of organizing and action by the state suggests that the time of struggle and insubordination be abandoned. It is the organization of forgetfulness of the period of insubordination, independent of the good or bad will of individuals.

The capital form implies a certain temporality, and the state is part of that temporal form. From my point of view, this might determine a regression induced by the state and not a fulfillment of the aims of a "cycle of protest."

The electoral victory in Bolivia of Evo Morales of the Movement for Socialism (MAS), with 54% of the vote, was a victory against the oil interests, the oligarchy of Santa Cruz, the parties on the Right, and the conservative colonial forces and transnational capital. Our enthusiasm for the victory, however, does not allow us to be imprecise. The victory was not the result of a combination of a strategy of mobilization with an electoral strategy. It was fundamentally a reflection in a liberal electoral scenario of the self-organization of the multiple collectivities mobilized in recent years.

This is a victory of the social movements and not of any party, although momentarily a few charismatic leaders, intellectuals, and one party have assumed the role of protagonist. The victory was not due to the rational abilities of any intellectual. Turning these secondary factors into the fundamental ones is what constitutes the error of fetishism. The most serious effect

of this kind of error is that it deepens and stabilizes a personality cult, one that is supposedly indispensable, a cult that has done so much damage to the struggle.

With great sadness, we've watched as individuals come to symbolize an entire movement and adopt the habits of the indolent ones who rule over the suffering, who internalize the perverse logic of the era of the State, the era of Capital.

I must insist: the electoral triumph was due to the anonymous abilities of the multiple self-organized collectivities. With many mechanisms of collective deliberation and action, they have been capable of responding to the political challenges confronting them. It is the triumph of a collective intellectual that has nestled in the assemblies, town councils, barrios, *ayllus*, appealing to its short term memory of the last 20 years of neoliberal spoliation and its long term memory of 500 years of colonial oppression. The MAS has simply capitalized on this reality in the electoral arena.

We celebrate the MAS victory because it is the victory of the self-organization and brilliance of anonymous people. This same brilliance is what relationship to clarify, after the celebration, the true relationship of the factors at play. Once again, the typical phenomenon of fetishism that capital imposes on us is what has made the charismatic leaders and the party apparatus appear as that which has made history. The true social relations get inverted.

There are other types of alienation and fetishism produced by the struggle. To conserve or consolidate what has been won, we start to alienate ourselves. In other words, we tend to differentiate tasks, institutionalize activity, create structures that start to anchor our existence in what Jean-Paul Sartre once called the practico-inert and no longer in transformative human praxis. The "epoch of change" anchored almost exclusively in the exercise of state power may become the

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# WOMAN AS REASON

## New stage of women's movement?

by Terry Moon

*"We the women, hard-working laborers of society; we are celebrating March 8 with all the women of the world to take control of our lives from the claws of poverty and exploitation. We join to take back our lives from the quiet corners of workshops, from our houses that have turned into jails, and from the street corners that we were pushed into. We are struggling against the system that pushes us to more poverty everyday, that feminized poverty. We are struggling for a system where honor killings or women's suicides do not exist, where we can send our kids to free schools and pre-schools, where we are not subject to any aggression from fathers, husbands or the state, where we are not the cheapest workers in the factories, free workers in the fields, forced workers at home."*

—Ilknur Birol, Peoples Houses Organization, Turkey

Did international Women's Day (IWD) this year only mark another instance of women's continuing resistance; or did it show the Women's Liberation Movement reaching for a new stage? What was new inter-

### Malalai Joya speaks

*Editor's note: Malalai Joya, outspoken critic of the warlords and jihadis in government, was attacked in the Afghan parliament on May 8. She was hit with water bottles and rushed by legislators who insulted and threatened her. Others formed a protective circle around her. We print excerpts from her recent tour.*

**BERKELEY, CAL.**—I come from a land still burning in two-fold fire. On the one hand, there are the brutal and horrific jihadi fundamentalists of the Northern lands, who are supported by the USA. On the other hand, there are the Taliban and Al Qaeda terrorists who have the support of all the fundamentalists and anti-democracy regimes, parties and organizations around the world. The same warlords who committed atrocities during the war now dominate our parliament.

### DISASTERS IN AFGHANISTAN

Our country is facing disasters worse than a tsunami. Seven hundred children and 15-20 women die daily due to the lack of health services. Ironically, this is happening in a country that has received \$12 billion in aid, and another \$10 billion more has been pledged at a recent conference in London. Not even a fraction of this aid has been used for the welfare of our people.

I come from a land where violence against women comes easily, because the husband is sure he has the support of the misogynist warlords of the Northern Alliance, and he knows that there is no implementation of a law that might bring him to justice. Despite the presence of more than 6,000 UN peacekeeping troops in Kabul, local women as well as NGO and foreign workers are kidnapped in broad daylight.

U.S. bombs and thousands of U.S. troops have not established democracy. Democracy has meant simply the imposition of the Northern Alliance jihadis. The U.S. relies on the Northern Alliance, who turned Afghanistan into hell for its people from 1992 to 1996 when they murdered 65,000 citizens in Kabul alone. Chief Justice Fazl-e Hadi Shinwari is affiliated with the most hard-line terrorist Islamic party of Gulbudin. His judicial activities attack women's rights, stop TV channels, cable networks and ban music.

I won the elections with nothing except my people's trust and love. I will always defend the truth and will not be degraded to the level of those intellectuals and politicians who, because of fear for their lives or their own interests, have made compromises with the enemies of our people. They killed lots of innocent people in Afghanistan, lots of freedom-loving and democratic people. Maybe one day, physically they kill me also, but because my voice is the voice of the suffering people of Afghanistan, they will never kill this voice.

### CLINIC THREATENED BY WARLORD

After I made a speech in the Loya Jirga [challenging the right of the war criminals to be in the parliament] they closed our local clinic, the only clinic which cares for those who have nothing. I invited the local warlord to come and inspect the clinic before it opened. Instead, he warned me that if we open, he will send soldiers and I will be responsible for all the killing. I insisted that I want to open the clinic that will help the poor. So many people agreed [that we prevailed]. We had beds for 50 patients, but because of lack of money, we have only 20.

There are 68 women in the parliament. Some were warlords' candidates. Some agree with me but are afraid. When I speak at the Parliament, no one defends me there. But afterwards some of them hand me pieces of paper with their names and phone numbers, telling me they support me. In Parliament they don't respect me as a human. I said "hello" to a delegate who does not have legs. He said, "I should say 'good morning' to you? You are human?"

Freedom, democracy and women's rights are not a gift that somebody can give us. If we do not take this chance to expose those criminals, then we are giving them more time to continue to commit crimes under the name of democracy, just as they committed lots of crimes against our innocent people under the name of Islam and Jihad.

nationally was the breadth and depth of the demonstrations; the new leadership, some of which arose from the poorest, most exploited; and that the Reason expressed revealed a new militancy, and demands so total that to meet them would mean a transformation of existing society.

Most revealing is the struggle against a fundamentalist Islam that views women as less than human. Demonstrations by thousands took place the world over. Women in Iran led the way. It was not only that the demonstrations in many cities in Iran, particularly in Tehran—where 1,000 came—were militant, despite being brutally attacked. But a new stage was revealed in the organization of these demonstrations in cities across the globe—including the U.S. and Canada, and a march from Frankfurt, Germany, to The Hague—and at the same time in Iran while living under one of the most repressive fascist police states: Islamic fundamentalism in power for 27 years.

### 1979—A TURNING POINT

IWD 1979 in Iran was a turning point as Khomeini was stealing the fruit of the revolution, and ordered the women to wear the Chador. When tens of thousands came into the street, chanting, "At the dawn of freedom, we have no freedom!" only some of the Iranian Left supported them. At that time Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of Marxist-Humanism, proclaimed that to be the turning point of the revolution, when it could have moved forward had not the Left succumbed to Khomeini's lies that the women were "agents of imperialism" and the U.S. was the only enemy to fight.

That Palestinian women learned from their Iranian sisters was revealed on IWD this year when Hamas supporters challenged the women's demonstration, calling IWD a "western phenomenon and therefore alien to Palestinian culture and tradition." Margo Sabella, member of a pro-Palestinian women's organization, responded: "The Palestinian women's movement can be traced back to at least the early 20th century and is unquestionably part of the universal women's movement which must be encouraged in order for humanity to truly achieve justice, liberty, freedom, and equality for all."

The "universal women's movement" came to full flower this year as, from below, women like Malalai Joya in Afghanistan (see article this page) have arisen. Mukhtar Mai of Pakistan is another. From the moment she dared say "No" to those who gang-raped her at the order of her village elders in Pakistan, her self-development has been ceaseless: fighting her rapists, the village elders who ordered the rape, the courts, and finally President Musharraf when he imprisoned her to keep her from coming to the U.S. Women like Joya and Mai voice the aspirations of hundreds of thou-

sands and make it possible for others to challenge an oppressive reality.

### UNIVERSAL OF FREEDOM

These are only a fraction of the issues taken up: **Brazil:** 10,000 marched to decriminalize abortion and end violence against women; **Pakistan:** 5,000 marched against rape and honor killings; **Bangladesh:** thousands in over 30 cities denounced acid attacks; **Acheh:** women marched against acid attacks and the imposition of Shari'a law; **India:** 4,000 sex workers, lesbians and transgendered people marched against police harassment; **Turkey:** despite savage police beatings last year, thousands marched, declaring "We will not be silenced"; **Philippines:** thousands marched protesting child pornography, violence against women, and president Gloria Arroyo's attacks on women's rights.

What points towards the movement reaching a new stage—beyond the internationalist organizing, the leadership from below, and the masses in the streets—is the totality of demands, the Reason expressed. Women are demanding to be comprehended as fully human. Everywhere they have challenged the claim that culture is sacrosanct. By their action and thought they have presented the most serious challenge to cultural relativism and put forward in its place the Universal of full human freedom. When a high point like this is achieved, the next step is to build upon it in theory as well as in practice and challenge the very foundations of capitalist society.

## WOMEN WORLDWIDE

by Mary Jo Grey

Women's and human rights activists are mourning the death of Bangladesh feminist Nasreen Huq, struck by a car in May. Huq was a leader in Naripokko, a Bangladesh women's rights organization, for 18 years, where she founded the Campaign Against Acid Violence. Since 2002 she was director of Action Aid Bangladesh, focusing her efforts on relieving poverty, aiding the disabled, supporting communities affected by HIV/AIDS, and campaigning against injustice.

South Africa's highest court has unanimously recognized a lesbian marriage and told the government that it must enact legislation by the end of 2006 granting same-sex couples the right to marry. This makes South Africa the first nation in Africa to recognize gay and lesbian marriage. Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands and Spain are the only other countries where same-sex couples have the right to marry.

—Information from off our backs

## Memphis battles misogynist fanatics

**MEMPHIS, TENN.**—After the passage of the draconian anti-abortion law in South Dakota that would deny a woman an abortion even if her health was in danger and after Bush's two extreme right-wing ideologue appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court, the Memphis Women's Action Coalition (WAC) decided to have an action here, in the South, to show women's determination to keep abortion legal and safe, and to safeguard our right to legal and available birth control.

Memphis Regional Planned Parenthood, News and Letters Committees, the Memphis Center for Reproductive Rights, and the Memphis Freethought Alliance, signed on with WAC to sponsor our rally, which was held downtown in front of the Shelby County Courthouse as symbolic of our anger over Bush's appointment of far-right judges throughout the judiciary.

Had the weather not been horrible, with thunderstorms right up to the time of the rally, we would have had three times the 85 dedicated people who came, determined to make our voices heard. Several came from as far away as Nashville and Arkansas.

Barry Chase from Planned Parenthood spoke of the travesty the Bush administration visited on the morning after pill, refusing to sell it over the counter despite its proven safety; Mary Frank from the Memphis Center for Reproductive Health spoke of women's actual experience getting abortions in Memphis, debunking the myth of so-called "post-abortion syndrome," and other lies told by fanatics; Pat Holland from Nashville NOW told of Bush's war on women, nationally and internationally; Terry Moon from News and Letters Committees spoke of the effort to devalue women, treat us as less than human, and that abortion rights means reproductive justice; and Maya from WAC spoke about the huge April 2004 March for Women's Lives, and women's determination to keep abortion safe, legal, and accessible.

We also presented a skit with a "Liar," representing phony abortion clinics that tell women abortion causes

breast cancer, depression, and is dangerous; and Truth, who set the record straight. We read testimony from women who had had abortions before the procedure was legal. The talks were well received, with the predominantly young crowd breaking in with applause and foot-stomping.

Despite such minor setbacks as no press coverage, we left with high hopes that WAC would grow from the experience; and with plans for more actions in the near future.

—WACer



Terry Moon/News & Letters

The Christian Fundamentalist Center for Bio-Ethical Reform sent its Genocide Awareness Project (GAP) to the University of Memphis campus recently, we think because of the Women's Action Coalition's (WAC) extensive publicity for a reproductive freedom rally to be held later in the month. GAP set up a circle of larger-than-life, explicit photos of supposedly aborted fetuses next to Jewish Holocaust and Rwandan genocide victims, and African-American victims of lynching. They drew people into discussions and lied about abortion.

They had been invited by two right-wing campus groups, but none of their demonstrators were students. Student Members of WAC and News and Letters Committees joined the Planned Parenthood campus group VOX in holding signs and handing out literature. However, no other signs were allowed, since most of the campus is not a "free speech zone."

The number of our demonstrators fluctuated between four and twenty-four as students, professors and other school employees, joined us. We countered the propaganda students had just heard from GAP members, including the lie that Planned Parenthood is involved in eugenics.

Contrary to GAP's objective, the absurdity of their metaphors and signs appalled most passersby, and worked against them. Many people thanked us for being there and took flyers for our rally.

—Artemis and Brown

# Boilermakers battle Celanese lockout

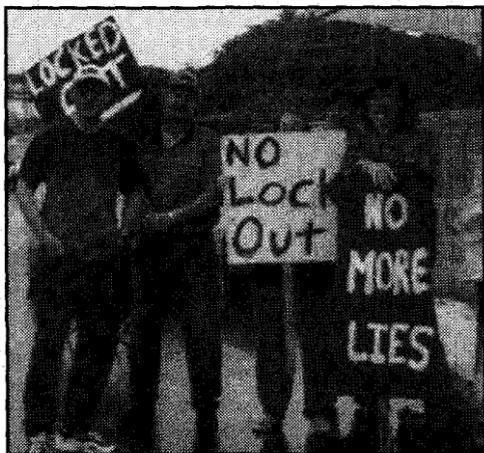
**MEREDOSIA, ILL.**—Boilermakers Local 484 members need your support. Locked out since June 5, 2005, this group has been in a battle with a greedy multinational corporation named Celanese, affiliated with National Starch, turning the small river community of Meredosia, (population 1,100) into a war zone.

Instead of negotiating in good faith, which is subject of NLRB charges, Celanese sent in Special Response Corp. (SRC), who specialize in union busting.

On July 6, 2005, Celanese offered a regressive package—reducing wages by 33%, eliminating the maintenance department, reducing vacation time and reneging on issues already tentatively agreed on—no union could accept.

Meanwhile SRC thugs have harassed families of Local 484 with their "anything goes" reputation.

Their campaign of terror includes videotaping members' homes and children playing in their yards.



Locked-out Celanese workers in 2005.

These illegal activities are enforced by the local Sheriff's office, and the local judge signed an injunction against the union, limiting even more activity by the union and supporters.

With the support of the international union strike fund, Local 484 is valiantly fighting back.

Rank-and-file members, empowered by President Kelly Street and the Executive Board, have organized a "Road Warriors" team.

Road warriors travel the U.S. to raise much-needed funds to support the fight and help support locked out families. Road warriors carry their message to unions and organizations to raise solidarity by speaking, showing videos and distributing literature.

This group has developed the Adopt-a-Family program, where groups or individuals can help the members stay in the fight, and that family is required to personally contact their sponsor to thank them for the much needed support.

Write IBB Local 484, P.O. Box 258, Meredosia, IL 62665, call 217 584 1916 or 217 248 8453, fax 217 584 1856, or email [tenab@boilermakers484.org](mailto:tenab@boilermakers484.org). Or visit our website at [www.boilermakers484.org](http://www.boilermakers484.org)

—Tona Battelfeld, Chairman of Road Warriors

# GM demands threaten workers' future

**SHREVEPORT, LA.**—General Motors has been pushing cost-cutting. They have used the billions of dollars in company losses as a threat of bankruptcy, especially after Delphi, the parts supplier that GM spun off, had declared bankruptcy and looked for a judge to slash wages and benefits.

Under the circumstances, a number of workers at the Shreveport plant are taking the \$150,000 buyout that GM negotiated with the UAW. That has forced supervisors back on the line. I heard that when one former supervisor at GM Shreveport started complaining about the heavy workload, the workers around told him he was the fool who had added the work on in the first place.

That ex-supervisor was lucky they were just mocking him. Years ago at a previous plant I had worked at, when supervisors were forced back into production, they would hear open threats of payback for what they had done to workers under them. Many supervisors would quit rather than return to the line.

For retirees, GM has made cuts in medical benefits, but pensions remain the same. So many companies, even the biggest ones, are wanting to dump their pension fund if they can get away with it. The federal agency that set up to guarantee workers' pensions can be a tool for companies to use for their benefit.

My friend's father worked at a steel mill which declared bankruptcy. The Pension Guaranty Board slashed his pension from \$1,500 a month to \$900. What is much worse, after his death his widow got only \$90.

The UAW and the labor movement have been on the Chryslers since the 1970s. You can't put workers' demands on hold. It reminds me of Sojourner Truth arguing with Frederick Douglass, one ex-slave to another, right after the Civil War. Douglass argued the rights of newly freed Black men were assured. Sojourner Truth thought that if the women waited to demand their own rights, it would take a lot to bring the issue up again.

The demonstrations of immigrant workers shut down factories and packing plants around the country. When politicians and employers try to discriminate against Mexican immigrants, they also target by appearance workers that were here before the country was formed. Some came with the Spanish in the 1600s as far north as Colorado, where I used to live. We are seeing in the immigrant rights movement all the elements for a revived labor movement.

—GM retiree

# Retaking May Day

As many Iranian workers prepared to celebrate May first, international labor day, House of Labor, a pro Islamic, governmental organization, called for a labor rally in front of the former US Embassy in Tehran. According to different sources, 8,000 to 10,000 workers participated in the rally. In addition to workers from Tehran, many came with buses from cities and provinces, such as Ghazvin, Qom, Ghilan, Kashi, Hamadan, Karaj, Damghan and Mashhad.

The organizers of the rally attempted in vain to turn the May Day gathering into a show of support for the Islamic regime and Iran's nuclear program. Even though the rally was carefully orchestrated to benefit the Islamic regime and provide it with some propaganda, participating workers from the very start took control of the event.

Alireza Mahjoob and Ali Rabii, the leaders of the House of Labor, and Ali Rabii, the leaders of the government. In their speech, they also condemned the cartoons of Muhammad as a western conspiracy against Islam. However many participants became very angry at the speeches. They said they came to the rally to speak about their conditions and plights, but instead they were being lectured about Iran's nuclear achievements.

—Mahmood Ketabchi

# Rosa Luxemburg in 'world's sweatshop'

by Peter Hudis

**WUHAN, HUBEI, CHINA.**—A remarkable conference was held in China on March 12-14 on "Rosa Luxemburg's Thought and its Contemporary Value." Sponsored by the Wuhan University Department of Philosophy, the conference was attended by 100 scholars and students from China and around the world. In addition to the participants from China, participants included speakers from Japan, Germany, The Netherlands, South Africa, Austria, Spain, Italy, Poland, and the U.S. It marked the most comprehensive discussion of Luxemburg's ideas ever held in China.

The conference was similar in some respects to an earlier conference on Luxemburg held in 2004 in Guangzhou (which was sponsored by the International Rosa Luxemburg Society and the Institute of World Socialism in Beijing), in that much of it centered on Luxemburg's view of spontaneous mass struggles, her critique of the organizational centralism, and her polemics with Lenin and other Marxists over the meaning of socialism.

## ACCUMULATION OF CAPITAL RELEVANT?

Yet the Wuhan conference also differed from earlier conferences on her thought in China in that it had a significant focus on Luxemburg's greatest theoretical work, *The Accumulation of Capital*. Though all the papers given on the *Accumulation of Capital* expressed admiration for Luxemburg's innovative effort to provide an economic explanation for imperialism, a wide range of views was expressed regarding its validity. Some were highly critical of *Accumulation* for its criticism of Marx's schemas of expanded reproduction in Vol. II of *Capital*, whereas others praised it for anticipating today's globalized capitalism.

The conference also had discussion on Luxemburg's relevance for the non-Western world. Kevin Anderson gave a paper on "Marx and Luxemburg on Nonwestern and Pre-capitalist Societies," which explored the similarities and differences between Luxemburg's analysis of non-Western societies and Marx's writings on the same subject in the last decade of his life. And Narihiko Ito from Japan gave an incisive paper on Luxemburg's writings on the national question.

Another major difference between the Wuhan Conference and earlier ones was its focus on philosophy. Though one speaker for the West stated that "Hegel and dialectics is of no importance" for understanding Marxism or Luxemburg, that view was not shared by the overwhelming number of Chinese participants. Many of the papers, given by those from China focused on Hegel, dialectics, Western Marxists like Lukács and Gramsci, and Marx's philosophical writings.

## FOCUS ON PHILOSOPHY

That half of the panels at the conference focused on philosophy may seem surprising, since Luxemburg herself wrote very little on dialectics. Yet a number of participants argued that the Western Marxist philosophical tradition's emphasis on humanism, inter-subjectivity, and critique of commodified relations of everyday life helps illumine Luxemburg's expansive vision of freedom.

At a panel on "Rosa Luxemburg and Western Marxist Philosophy," a young Chinese professor took issue with the way Perry Anderson categorized classical vs. Western Marxism by leaving out Rosa Luxemburg, and argued that she shares a lot with Lukács. Another young professor at Wuhan said that Luxemburg respected initiative from below as against the centralism of the USSR. A Chinese graduate student added that Luxemburg's theory of spontaneity was dialectical,

## Virginia rally for fired activist nurse

Women's rights, civil rights, labor and community groups across Virginia joined together in a rally and press conference Mothers' Day weekend in front of Eastern State Hospital in Williamsburg, Va. denouncing discrimination against women workers.

Hospital management recently retaliated against Debra Moore, an outspoken registered nurse and mother of three, by discharging her to punish her for using her rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act and to stop her from speaking out about a crisis that has left the hospital 73 registered nurses short of recommended staffing levels, calling it "dangerous for both patients and workers." Moore is president of the hospital's chapter of the Virginia Public Service Workers' Union.

"I worked 48 to 56 hours a week and had 400 unused hours of sick leave and still they terminated me," she said. Another employee insisted, "It is clear they targeted her, and we need people to speak up now."

Moore said, "There are eight other people that have been terminated unfairly since me."

She insisted that "we nurses have to stop fighting against each other, not be afraid, and use the union to change the culture at Eastern State Hospital."

To join in support of these women workers, contact: [www.vauel60.org](http://www.vauel60.org).

—Chris Townsend, United Electrical Workers

cal, at least implicitly. She stated: "Luxemburg's thoughts, after dozens of years, still make us feel fresh, because she never viewed the development of history in a still way but from a dynamic angle."

Another philosophical approach was the paper by Estrella Trincada from Spain on "Rosa Luxemburg's Contribution to the Philosophy of Liberation, with a Special Reference to the Women's Liberation Movement." She stated: "In her thought, the search for freedom was related to the idea of 'the whole.' She based this on Hegel's philosophy. Luxemburg fought in her theory and in her life against the idea of an isolated subjective ego, reactive or passive, that opposes reality beyond itself instead of acting freely in a communicative unity or totality."

She added: "Luxemburg's interest in women's issues had been neglected in both Marxist and non-Marxist studies. It took the modern women's liberation movement to discover Luxemburg's 'feminist dimension,' a term used by Dunayevskaya in her 1982 book [*Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*] which traced the feminist nature of her life. Luxemburg's earlier male biographers never considered the subject."

My paper was on "Luxemburg's Concept of a Post-Capitalist Society." It argued that though Luxemburg, like most Marxists of her generation, was tainted by the notion that capitalism equals market anarchy and socialism equals a planned organized economy, near the end of her life (especially in "The Socialization of Society" in 1918) she went further in the speaking of the need for a totally new kind of labor as what defines socialism. That Luxemburg wrote this long before the discovery of Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (which argued that the alienated character of the activity of labor is the central problem of capitalism) testifies to her grasp of the strivings of the human subject for liberation. It also raises the question of the vast difference between Marx's Marxism and what "Marxism" has become known as in both the East and the West.

What does it mean that, at the start of the 21st century, there is such interest in Luxemburg in China? Today's China is a country where a gigantic proletariat and urban population is rapidly being created and which has begun to make its grievances felt, as have exploited rural populations. This rapid process of modernization is bound to have an impact in the realm of ideas. In light of this, Luxemburg's thought takes on new life because of her distinctive contributions as a woman revolutionary, her tireless critique of capitalism, and most of all, because of her insistence that "there is no democracy without socialism, and there is no socialism without democracy."

## Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution by Raya Dunayevskaya

To order, see page 7.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF  
**RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA**

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

Following the Japanese publication of her *Marxism and Freedom*, Raya Dunayevskaya traveled to Japan in the winter of 1965-66 and held discussions and meetings with student youth, autoworkers, anti-war activists, and Marxists grouped around the anti-Stalinist Zengakuren movement.

Here is one of her lectures, "The Humanism of Marx Is the Basic Foundation for Anti-Stalinism Today," delivered in Tokyo on Dec. 28, 1965 and presented to the Waseda University student newspaper. It was published in *News & Letters* in January 1966. The text has been edited for publication and can be found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, pp. 6762-6763.

Another speech from the trip has been reprinted as "Lecture in Japan on Hegel" in *The Power of Negativity: Selected Writings on the Dialectic in Hegel and Marx* by Raya Dunayevskaya.

The death of Stalin, in March 1953, marked the end of an era. De-Stalinization began almost at once, not by Khrushchev from above, but by the East Berlin workers from below, who on June 17 rose in spontaneous revolt for "Bread and Freedom" and against raising "work norms" (speed-ups). Within weeks the East German revolt was followed by one in the forced labor camps in Vorkuta inside Russia itself. When the 20th Congress of the Russian Communist Party, in February 1956, finally embarked on de-Stalinization, it brought to the surface the seething undercurrents of revolt throughout Eastern Europe, and by October 1956, Russian Communism was faced with a proletarian revolution in Hungary that demanded freedom from its overlordship. By the time the Sino-Soviet conflict reached the point of no return in 1963, Mao Tse-tung was boasting of the fact that it was he who initiated the Russian armed intervention.

Thus did the Russian-Chinese counter-revolution begin and, hand in hand with it, came the campaign of slander against the Hungarian revolutionaries as "revisionists." However because the revolutionary, creative restatement of Marxism for our age came from an elemental surge forward, and because the Humanist banner was soon seen also in Latin America, in Africa, in the whole new Third World fighting for freedom from Western imperialism as well, it was impossible any longer to consign the Humanist Essays of Marx to unreachable library shelves.

Philistines there are...who declare that we should never have awakened the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* from their century-old slumber. Serious thinkers, on the other hand, know that no other writing anywhere, at any time, has made history as have Marx's now-famous essays on "Private Property and Communism," "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," and "Alienated Labor." To look, even just cursorily, at the...history of these essays is to embark on a journey of adventure which reveals the grandeur, the tragedy, and the challenge of our times.

It is true that when the young Marx left his manuscripts "to the stinging criticism of the mice," it forbade no tragedy because the living Marx kept concretizing and developing his concept of alienation as it developed into the proletariat's "quest for universality." This vision of "all-round" man was an integral part of the very organism of Marx, both as theoretician—be it the theory of revolution, the Paris Commune, or that of "the economic laws" of *Capital*—and as activist, as General Secretary of the first International Workingmen's Association.

**LENIN'S INDEPENDENT PHILOSOPHIC BREAKTHROUGH**

Altogether different was the fate of those Humanist essays when the official heirs of Marx and Engels—the German Social Democrats—kept them sealed in vaults and thus deprived themselves of the concept of a new human dimension. With the outbreak of the first World War and the collapse of the German Social Democracy, Lenin had to recapture the unity of the ideal and the material through a painstaking return to the philosophic origins of Marx in Hegel, and only then moving it forward to the new historic plane, 1917, when the population "to a man" would not only abolish private capitalism, but would run production and the state, and thus initiate the breakdown of the division between mental and manual labor that characterizes all class societies.

It took a Russian Revolution plus the tireless efforts of the great Marxist scholar, Ryazanov, plus money to pry the 1844 manuscripts out of the vaults of the Second International. But once again reaction intervened to rob the proletariat of its philosophic heritage. In Russia the triumph of Stalin meant the beginning of the end of "the realization of philosophy," the Marxian concept of theory and of freedom. In Germany the victory of Hitler marked the height of capitalist barbarism, the Holocaust of World War II, the bankruptcy of bourgeois thought. Thrown into the savage inhumanity of a Buchenwald, who could

# Marx's humanism and the mass struggles since World War II

think of philosophy?

And yet World War II had no sooner drawn to a gory end with American imperialism's atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, than throughout Western Europe, everyone from the Catholic theologians to the atheistic Existentialists rediscovered those precious Humanist Essays. But the Communists were powerful enough to keep the debate confined in academic channels. The reality is this: yet another generation was born to face the challenge. No matter how young and new the present generation of anti-Stalinist revolutionary Marxists are, they must come face to face with these two overpowering facts: 1) World War II had come and gone without resulting in any successful proletarian revolution,

and without starting a new stage in thought comparable to the one begun by Lenin at the time of World War I and his return to the Marxian origins in Hegel; and 2) nothing but a stillbirth had resulted from Leon Trotsky's gigantic labors to build an anti-Stalinist Marxist International. This, despite the fact that only Lenin had stood higher than Leon Trotsky in the leadership of the Russian October; despite the fact that Trotsky had tried to keep the Marxist banner

unsullied by Stalin's betrayals and perversions of Marxism; despite the fact that he spent all the remainder of his life trying to build a revolutionary "vanguard party"; and despite, finally, the fact that he had succeeded in getting a few other outstanding revolutionary internationalists, such as the Dutch Marxist, Hendrik Sneevliet, to sign the Manifesto of the Fourth International.

**TROTSKY'S PHILOSOPHIC FAILURE**

To this writer it has become all too obvious that Leon Trotsky failed because he had not been the theoretician that Lenin had been, had not prepared himself either for 1917, or for 1939, in the manner Lenin had or would have. That is to say, Trotsky had not met the twin political-philosophic challenges that each generation of Marxists must answer for itself: 1) What new stage of production and, with it, relations in production had we reached? And 2) what new stage of workers' revolt and new, related underlying philosophy will now emerge? But whether or not you, the readers, single out the Humanism of Marx as the theory of liberation for our state-capitalist age, you must find the link of historic continuity. If history has rejected Trotskyism—and the fact that the Fourth International has proved to be a still-birth seems to bear this out—then the new anti-Stalinist revolutionary forces must find the "why" of the failure of the first appearance of anti-Stalinist Marxism.

Not only is it impossible "to skip" historic stages, but one must face reality and note that, where the movement from theory to revolution proved a still-birth, the movement from practice did not. Quite the contrary. Whether you begin with the Hungarian Revolution openly unfolding the banner of Marx's Humanism as a movement of freedom from Communism; or with Fidel Castro in Cuba, who, in fighting against American imperialism and its puppet Batista, claimed [at first that] his revolution was both against capitalist exploitation and "communist political tyranny," was "humanist"; whether, instead, you begin with the year, 1960, "Africa's Year" when no less than 19 nations gained their independence from Western imperialism, again under the banner of Humanism; or whether you use that year as the new point of departure because of the mass demonstrations in Japan against the American Security Pact (when the marvelous "snake dancers" promptly built an international bridge of solidarity between you and the second America of the proletariat, the youth, the Negro Revolution, the anti-Vietnam war fighters), one truth stands out: every-

where the masses were in motion, and, from below, there was a dynamism of ideas unmatched in grandeur by the movement from theory that is bound to an elitist "vanguard" party.

**THEORETIC VOID DENIES HISTORIC ACTION**

No sadder commentary can be made about the 40 year theoretic void left by the death of Lenin than by quoting Zhou Yang and realizing that his downgrading of the Humanism of Marxism reflects the views of some who call themselves anti-Stalinists: "The modern revisionists and some bourgeois scholars try to describe Marxism as humanism and call Marx a humanist . . . This, of course, is futile . . ."

If a serious discussion on an international scale is to be started among anti-Stalinist Marxists, then we must begin here, just here. Zhou Yang notwithstanding, it is not some "bourgeois scholars" who brought Marx's Humanism onto the historic stage, but masses in motion—masses in motion against established Communism, masses in motion against American imperialism, masses in motion against British, French, Belgian imperialism, masses in motion against all existing societies. The Marx of 1844 who could write of the Silesian weavers—"the Silesian uprisings began where the French and English uprisings ended, with the consciousness of the proletariat as a class"—needs no lessons in class struggle from a representative of state power in China. Stalinism, be it in Russian or Chinese garb, should not be allowed to sully Marx's concept of revolution and vision of the "all-round" man.

It is the concept of individual as well as social freedom, the conditions of class society that had to be undermined, abolished, transcended. It is this we must now recapture, unfold, develop on the new historic plane of the 1960s.

**BASIS FOR A NEW REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONAL**

There must be no more Hiroshimas and Nagasakis. And something a great deal less honorary than "a degenerated workers' state" should be reserved for retrogressionists, for any who expound the barbarous view that a "new civilization" can first be built on the ruins of what would be left of

the world after a thermonuclear war. In a nuclear age where the only war that can be won is the battle for the minds of men, it is high time for Marxists and other freedom fighters to clear their heads, and, in opposing both Western imperialism and private capital as well as state-capitalism that calls itself Communism, East and West, unfurl a banner of a classless society and begin laying the foundation for a new revolutionary Marxist International.

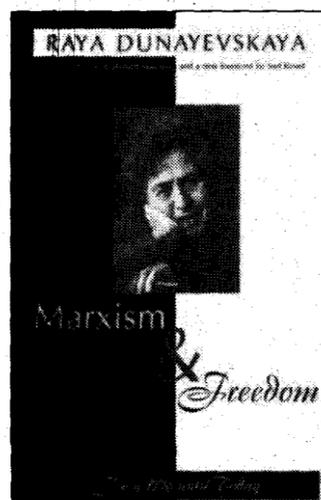


In Tokyo, Japan protests, above, in 1960 led to rejection of nuclear weaponry in the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Revolutionary youth rediscovered Marx's Humanism in an atmosphere of student and proletarian mass movement.

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by Raya Dunayevskaya

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# ESSAY Hutchings' feminism reconsiders Hegel's dialectic

by Ron Kelch

Hegel's dialectic comes to life in Kimberly Hutchings' *Hegel and Feminist Philosophy* through an engagement with the spectrum of contemporary feminist philosophy. Hutchings guides the reader on a seemingly linear journey, which is actually a complete circle, more easily comprehended, she says, if one is not a participant.

Hutchings' journey is a movement through "generally recognizable trajectories of feminist thought" (p. 12). Such a journey may begin with liberal "rationalist feminists" who challenge women's lack of freedom in society by comparing all individuals as abstract equal legal entities in liberal democracy. Sexual difference feminists correctly judge that this abstract equality is itself a male bias, which ignores the concrete differences that make women and men unequal and also leaves patriarchy intact in concrete everyday life outside of the political and civil sphere. The alternative for sexual difference feminists is subjectivity rooted in women's essential natural difference. Postmodern feminists deny any natural essentialism and assert an absolute radical otherness. They counterpose diverse particularity of the individual to any universal notion of the immanent social character of individual existence.

Hutchings traces how each tendency criticizes binary oppositions in other tendencies only to fall into their own fixed opposition such as thought versus being, spirit versus nature or individual versus universal. To Hutchings the pattern of this movement displays the "way of despair" Hegel says consciousness goes through on the path toward comprehending the truth as a self-moving unity of the whole. For Hutchings, that truth, which Hegel called "Absolute Knowledge," is not the "end of history" but "spirit as the ever changing realm of self-changing intersubjectivity [that] is fundamentally self-determining" (p. 41). From the standpoint of the dialectic of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, Hutchings challenges contemporary theory and its relation to today's feminist movement. In Hutchings view, this challenge must be very modest because beginning from Hegel's dialectic runs into a "paradox" that it can create a binary opposition of its own as soon as the philosopher moves beyond a disengaged retrospective and limited goal of comprehension. This self-imposed limitation compels another look at Hegel's dialectic itself and, in particular, the way Hegel's dialectic came alive for the Hegelian-Marxist and feminist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya. That was just when the modern women's movement emerged and brought a new dimension to our time's "self-changing intersubjectivity."

Hutchings' closely argued work examines the dialectic's relation to theory and an actual movement through a return to Simone de Beauvoir's 1949 *The Second Sex*. Specifically, Hutchings reexamines Beauvoir's encounter with Hegel and later feminist reactions to de Beauvoir's feminist classic. To appreciate Hutchings' argument, as well as the possibilities opened by beginning from Hegel's dialectic itself, requires stepping back, as she does, to take a brief look at Hegel's spirit in two primordial moments in his *Phenomenology*, two moments which have been the foci of many debates in feminist theory.

## THE MASTER-SLAVE DIALECTIC

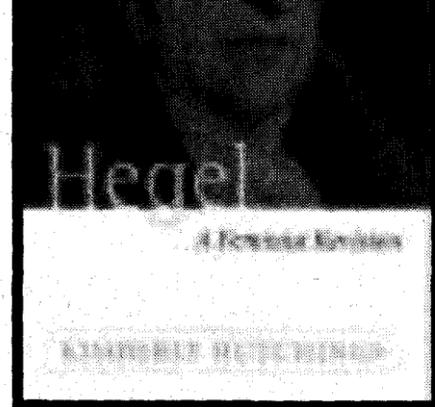
The first is Hegel's celebrated master/slave relation, which is the result of a life-and-death struggle between what is often mythically posed as two isolated and independent consciousnesses becoming self-conscious through the encounter with an "other" from which each demands recognition. Hegel here set the stage for his idea of freedom that moves through human relations and the idea of self that structures those relations. The death of one kills any possibility of recognition for the other. Logically, this hypothetical "first" encounter could lead to the ideal of mutual recognition and respect for the freedom of the other. History, however, did not unfold that way.

In actual history, inter-societal contact was the source of the oppressive and distorted human relations of slavery through which a new quest for freedom developed. In the master/slave relation, where one consciousness is the dominating subject and the other submissive object, Hegel makes his famous twist. While it might seem that the master has recognition of his humanity and independence on his side, his consciousness becomes in reality the dependent one, even as the slave, in order to survive, accepts the enslaving idea that shapes both spiritual (social) existence as well as humanity's relation to nature. The slave, using her mind and body to transform nature, discovers the essential freedom of thought through being totally disciplined, albeit in an absolutely negative manner, by that spiritual existence. The slave's consciousness as a form of negativity, the discovery of freedom within her own thinking, is the pathway to realizing a self-conscious existence that embodies real freedom and independence through mutual recognition.

De Beauvoir, like Hegel, saw freedom as emerging through reciprocal recognition of the freedom of the "other." Beauvoir's lifetime collaborator was Jean Paul Sartre whose Existentialism rejected an idea of freedom realized through reciprocal recognition. Sartre abstracted freedom from human relations—with each other, with nature and humans' own natural existence. De Beauvoir's concept of freedom was still somewhat influenced by this abstracting freedom from humanity's relation to nature.

For de Beauvoir, this meant woman's quest for full recognition of her humanity was special difficulty because woman's status as "other" is inextricably tied to the biological function of the reproduction of the species. The pull of biology as a barrier for women led de Beauvoir to the conclusion, as Hutchings puts it, that "women therefore depend on men to recognize their freedom..." (p. 70). This conclusion didn't sit well with the new assertive and self-certain women's liberation movement that arose in the turbulent 1960s after *The Second Sex*. Hutchings maintains that many feminist theories, which emerged out of the movement, drew

Hegel and feminist philosophy  
By Kimberly Hutchings  
Cambridge: Blackwell, 2003



the misguided conclusion that de Beauvoir was held back due to the influence of Hegel.

For Hutchings, the real limiting influence in de Beauvoir was the pull of Existentialism that took Hegel's life and death struggle as an ahistorical starting point for the process of recognition, passing over Hegel's view that all historical development of spirit includes within it the biological natural foundation for human life. As Hutchings points out, Hegel says human young comprehend quickly that their very existence depends on learning the accumulated social experience passed on to them through parenting (p. 74). Human experience begins from a foundation where the social and biological are intertwined in an unconscious way through parenting and kinship ties. Ethical society, where social life has yet to fully realize itself in distinction from this natural foundation, is Hegel's other starting point for the development of spirit, reflected in the ancient Greek tragedy of *Antigone* by Sophocles.

## ANTIGONE AND ETHICAL SOCIETY

Antigone's crime is defying her leader, the king Creon, when he orders that the body of Antigone's brother, who was killed in a rebellion against the state, be left in the open for the vultures. Antigone claims the right to give her kin a proper burial in the name of "the unwritten and unfailing statutes of heaven." Creon brings the force of the new state, personifying a conscious written law, against Antigone. Both come to a tragic end because, according to Hegel, each one acts out of their own one-sided conviction and each is unable to comprehend their ethical dependence on the other. For Hegel, self-conscious ethical society as a whole requires, not the exclusion of the other, but recognition of the mutual dependency of both perspectives.

For Hegel, Antigone personified the realm of "divine law" and Creon the realm of "human law." Hutchings questions the way many modern feminists let an immediate negative reaction to this gender differentiation, reflecting an actual moment of ancient Greek society, shape much of their contentious discourse over Hegel's use of *Antigone*. Citing H. S. Harris's interpretation, Hutchings challenges those who criticize Hegel for supposedly assigning the natural arena to women and self-conscious spirit to men by pointing out that both divine and human law shape the sense of being Greek and being a citizen.<sup>(1)</sup> Both are bound up with nature through kinship ties, including Creon's inherited position as king.

## ANTIGONE & HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY

Hegel recognizes Antigone as the self-conscious spokesperson for ethical society's unconsciously accepted foundation—a whole array of customs and orderly social processes which pre-date the rise of the state and, says Hegel, form the immediate principle of the "life of a people." This points to another aspect of the tragedy of *Antigone*, which reaches beyond the ethical, moral arena from which Hutchings argues. This immediate principle has no awareness "of pure individuality on...[its] own account" (*Phenomenology*, Miller trans., p. 214). In a non-egoistic way Antigone stands out as an individual and pays with her life. Both master/slave and ethical society are mere beginnings, which give an intimation of the movement of the whole *Phenomenology*.

The movement of the *Phenomenology* goes beyond the moral arena and aims to reach a totally new beginning ("Golgotha" as the death and rebirth of spirit) wherein Hegel's non-linear dialectic, as a recollection and internalization of the historical process of individuation, can itself make a difference. The dialectic itself becomes the active agent, through which individuals on their "own account" can together realize the freedom of ethical society as a dynamic "conscious, self-mediating process"

(para. 492). Later, in *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel designates this as an individualism "...purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself" (para. 481). At the end of *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel makes his most explicit declaration of the agency of philosophy in realizing freedom: "philosophy appears as the idea of which liberty is the aim, and which is itself the way to produce it" (para. 576).

Hutchings doesn't engage Hegel's intimations of the way philosophy itself can make a difference but views action as being necessarily a form of judgment of the "moral agent." As "moral agent," all action that challenges existing society breaks up the unity of spirit in relation to a concept of the whole that is given. Philosophy then is caught in what Hutchings calls a "paradox," which she says limits it to the modest aim of observation and comprehension because any action makes a negative judgment that breaks up the whole. Dunayevskaya noted that Hegel himself doesn't stop at comprehension as the only goal of philosophy but poses, especially in the *Logic*, a new unity of theory and practice in his Absolute Idea that transcends the one-sided "moral agent."<sup>(2)</sup> Hutchings looks for a solution to the "paradox" of the "moral agent" in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, a work in which Hegel does not return to his concept of the agency of philosophy articulated in the *Logic* and *Philosophy of Mind*.

## A NEW UNITY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

In the Absolute Idea at the end of the *Logic*, Hegel begins anew from his dialectic itself as he returns to the unity of thought and being from which the *Logic* began, but this time not as an immediate unity but a "mediation of a kind that does not belong to a comprehension by means of thinking." It is, instead, "in general the demand for realization of the Notion, which realization does not lie in the beginning itself, but rather the goal and the task of the entire further development of cognition" (*Science of Logic*, Miller trans., p. 828). Hegel's new unity of theory and practice turns on the mediation of absolute negativity, or negation of the negation. Absolute negativity becomes itself a new foundation through a negative self-relation from within the process of change. In other words, implicit in all change is a positive in the negative as the self-determination of the idea of freedom. Without a philosophy of a positive concept of freedom, action can get locked into a mere opposition to what is and keep repeating the despairing cycle of the moral agent. Hegel intimates that the "urge" of the idea to realize itself through absolute negativity "completes its self-liberation" in the *Philosophy of Mind* (p. 843-4).

I believe that Dunayevskaya, like Hutchings, viewed feminism from the perspective of Hegel's dialectic of the self-moving whole. In her 1973 work, *Philosophy and Revolution*, Dunayevskaya included a discussion of the profound reason of the newly emergent women's liberation movement. But Dunayevskaya, who founded the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., began with Hegel's dialectic especially in the *Logic* and *Philosophy of Mind*. She titled her first chapter on Hegel's whole philosophy "Absolute Negativity as New Beginning" in order to stress that only by beginning from Hegel's dialectic could all the new voices of freedom realize their potential. Dunayevskaya had been thoroughly rooted in Marx's ideas, which she credits as enabling her, in a 1953 study, to discern, in the structure of Hegel's permanent self-movement, a new unity of theory and practice, especially in the final syllogisms of *Philosophy of Mind*.

From the start Dunayevskaya engaged the many voices of the liberation that arose from within and persisted beyond the revolutionary 1960s, during which much was oriented around pure activity and first negation. Dunayevskaya challenged both revolutionary theorists as well as activists to see the character of the epoch as the implicit existence of Hegel's idea of absolute negativity in the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory. Beginning from the view that social movements contain not just negative judgments but the impulse to realize the notion, to realize the positive in the negative as the self-determination of the idea of freedom, Dunayevskaya highlighted the unity in the new diverse voices of the women's movement as a reason, which demanded that working out freedom couldn't wait until after the revolution. Bringing a negative self-relation to the process of change itself by criticizing the Left's division of labor and gender differentiation, women reached for a total concept of freedom. For Dunayevskaya, the maturity of our age demands that Hegel's absolute negativity itself be brought to the fore as the foundation for a new freedom for all forces struggling to be whole.

A new focus on Hegel's dialectic itself from within feminism couldn't be timelier when so much of the prevailing retrogressive ideology turns on trying to negate women as self-determining subjects even as feminism and feminist theory has persisted and grown. The task that remains is, as Marx once put it, to "realize" Hegel's dialectic in the real life struggle for liberation.

## NOTES

- (1) Hutchings rightly doesn't excuse Hegel's sexism. She points out how in other writings he extends this gender differentiation into his own time when there were already plenty of indications that he should not have done so.
- (2) Hutchings' "paradox" of the moral agent is very similar to that of H.S. Harris. For a more direct and detailed examination of this issue, see my article "Harris's Paradox and Dunayevskaya's New Beginning: Can Hegel's Method Shape a New Unity of Theory and Practice," *CLIO* 32:3 (Spring, 2003), 303-330.

## WORLD OF LABOR AS POWER AND CONCEPT

Investigations since a coal mine explosion killed 67 miners in Mexico several months ago have exposed the following: the mine had a long history of safety violations that were known but never corrected; collusion between President Vicente Fox's government and the leaders of the corrupt miners union to destroy attempts to organize an independent union; the president of the miners' union lives a life of luxury that included living in a mansion and travel by private plane; President Fox, instead of following his election campaign promise to expose the well-known scandalous corruption between the government and union bureaucrats, has embraced the corruption. The disclosure of these investigations have not only outraged the survivors of the miners who died, they have created an uproar among all the Mexican people that threatens both the union bureaucracy and Fox's political party.

**Ex-miner  
Detroit, Mich.**

Thank you for pointing out in the Workshop Talks column of the April-May issue that halting capital punishment in California is a labor issue. You may want to know that the California Nurses Association, which has been in the forefront of the struggle against health care restructuring, issued a statement on Sept. 25, 1988 that reads in part: "It is a breach of the ethical tradition of nursing to participate in taking human life, even through a legally authorized civil or military execution... CAN is strongly opposed to all forms of participation by nurses in capital punishment by whatever means, whether under civil or military legal authority."

**Nurse  
California**

The capitalism we live under today creates a situation where some do all the work and get nothing, while the bosses and owners keep everything for themselves. It is manifested as the class struggle. It is what happens when people let their responsibilities slide. We are responsible for the world and need to build the organizations necessary to service all the people as we protect ourselves from capitalism and move forward to the next stage of mankind. I call it the Marxist-Humanist incentive.

**Sid Rasmussen  
Iowa**

The 2006 Labor Notes Conference held in Detroit in May reflected the profound impact of the movement for immigrant workers' rights, internationally and locally. Following the 30,000 who marched in Detroit last March, worker to worker solidarity and cross-border organizing was on the agenda. One workshop was an organizing session among workers in El Salvador and Detroit, both places where unions are threatened by privatization of municipal water service. Everyone emphasized that privatized water service may not maintain current water quality and safety. Latino students in Michigan universities are forming a support group.

**Susan Van Gelder  
Detroit**

I see migrant workers as the "vanguard" of the global working class. Immigrant workers are voting with their feet and giving the big middle finger to the whole global economic system. Their struggles are at the cutting edge of revitalizing the entire working class movement in this country, as their success at returning the traditional May Day to its home attests. As revolutionaries and internationalists it's not only a matter of principal that we should support these workers and their struggles, but it is our greatest hope to see a world transformed. As I see it, globalized capital has made international working class struggle not just a pretty slogan but an absolute necessity.

**Labor activist  
Chicago**

One can't help but feel solidarity with the immigrants who protested on May Day. Many come from countries where folks have been persecuted for helping

others in need, especially the poor. House Bill 4437 is similar since it would punish those who help immigrants. No wonder so many responded spontaneously.

**Reader  
Kansas**

In the 1950s and 1960s Black people here in Tennessee and the South would go to St. Louis and Chicago, to the car manufacturing plants, to get a better job and they were welcomed by the capitalists with open arms because they could pay them less than the white workers. They used Black labor to undermine the white worker. I see the way the capitalists are using immigration as the same pattern.

**Peace Activist  
Memphis**

The Los Angeles Times got it right when it said that for many of the truckers who shut down the Southern California ports on May Day, "staying away from work on May Day was more than a statement about U.S. immigration policy. It was an attempt to kick-start changes in working conditions that many complain are dismal."

What was important to me was that they were pretty much acting individually when they left their rigs and joined the rallies. It was reported that they were amazed to realize later what they had been able to do collectively, since they are notoriously such a fragmented group. One of the truckers is quoted as saying, "This is the beginning of the way we change our lives."

**Supporter  
Southern California**



**POMEROY  
ON  
WHY  
MARX?  
WHY NOW?**

Anne Pomeroy's essay on *The Power of Negativity* in the April-May issue helped me understand some of the concepts involved in the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism that I have had trouble understanding. It also made me feel I was not alone with that problem when Pomeroy was so honest about saying that it is not helpful, when you are trying to understand Dunayevskaya's writing, to have her go off into some Hegelian terminology. That certainly doesn't make it any clearer for me. But I keep trying because I'm convinced what Dunayevskaya is saying is important to understand. I've come to believe that to grasp it I will have to reorient myself to a whole new perspective of reality.

**Longtime Socialist  
Wisconsin**

## VOICES OF REASON FROM WITHIN PRISON WALLS

I can see that the prisoners' struggles to be treated like human beings are a worldwide battle that is being fought by our sisters and brothers in occupied countries like Iraq; in the so-called sweatshops; and in public schools where Blacks and Latinos graduate without being able to read and write. In this richest country in the whole world, no new schools are being built, clinics and hospitals are being closed, but new state-of-the-art maximum security prisons are built every year to add to all the old ones still operating. In the last ten years, I have seen younger and younger prisoners coming into the criminal system, without any hope for their future. They will get no rehabilitation, no educational or vocational training. Just 24/7 lockups to look forward to.

**Prisoner  
Susanville, Cal.**

The time for our socialist beliefs have reached a dire point. I have read that the Roman Empire collapsed upon itself and I wonder if the Empire we are looking at today will follow the same path and lead

# READERS' VIEWS

Anne Pomeroy is a professor who knows a lot about Hegel, but she says *The Power of Negativity* made her ask not "Why Hegel?" but "Why Marx? Why Now?" I hear her saying we learn a lot from Dunayevskaya on the Hegel/Marx connection that gives us a better view of Marx.

**Women's Liberationist  
California**

Her posing of the distinction between Hegel and Marx is the most succinct I've ever seen and helped to clarify it for me. I don't think it can be defined in a more succinct fashion. I see her talking about human mediation as human relations in the working out of new ideas. She doesn't turn Hegel into an idealist or Marx into a materialist in opposition to that.

**David  
Bay Area**

Pomeroy's review of *The Power of Negativity* deals with the degradation and enslavement resulting from capitalism's mode of production. The crime committed by the capitalist against humanity is the greatest atrocity in history. They rob humans of their fundamental natural right, that is, the ability to formulate ideas, thus turning enormous masses of people into automatons fit for becoming appendages to capitalist production machinery. No other economic social system can claim to have doomed more people to an alienated life and death than the monstrous capitalist system.

**Prisoner  
California**

## SOME CANADIAN HISTORY

Consider this a book review to share with your readers: *The Hanging of Angelique* by Afua Cooper is (sadly) non-fiction, the story of a slave girl in Montreal in the 1700s who was brutally tortured and then hung. Worse—it is a well-documented account of slavery as it existed in Canada. I must tell you, Canadians are educated to believe that the slaves came up from the U.S. via the underground railway and were free when they got across the border. The part we are not told is that we, too, had a society which bought/sold/mistreated slaves, no different than the society on your side of the border. Afua Cooper holds a Ph.D in African Canadian history and teaches history at the University of Toronto.

**Longtime supporter  
Vancouver, BC**

## WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

"New challenges to global capital in Latin American battle of ideas" by Peter

Hudis in the April-May issue was full of useful information/analysis about the present social/political movements in Latin America opposing global capital. But I appreciated it most for raising (but not answering) the two key questions of the day, "What is socialism?" and "What happens after" the revolution? I use the term "real socialism" to distinguish it from all the fake socialisms that have ever existed, which were/are state capitalisms, with the dictatorship of "the Party" over the working class in nearly all cases. By "real socialism" I mean world society as never before—of the workers, by the workers, and for the workers—without capital, commodities, wage-slavery, imperialism, money, the State, borders, nationalism, war, racism, sexism, gay/lesbian discrimination, rampant environmental destruction, prisons, poverty, inadequate health care, illiteracy, etc.

But how can this be done? Marx and Engels guiding principle was "from each according to their ability, to each according to their need." World production would be highly planned through a democratic world council and produced by democratic, council or assembly-based workplace. But how do we get from here to there? Let's focus on the above goals and then discuss the "from here to there."

**Perry Sanders  
Denver**

## NO SECRET ABOUT SECRETS

A few months ago we were assured by the Bush administration, after the media exposed the practice, that secret electronic surveillance of communications in the U.S. was restricted to foreign contacts. Now we know that this is not true (surprise, surprise), and that domestic communications are also being monitored.

The first report was that ATT, Verizon, and Bell-South had cooperated in the eavesdropping, and there were no denials. But then, after the telephone companies had time to consult with administration legal eagles, we learn that ATT denied cooperation and other denials soon followed. After all, it's their word against ours, right? All of this, of course, is what has been exposed. But then there is what we don't know and that is the most scary. At this point, where so many Bush administration lies have been exposed on so many issues facing this country today, how can anyone believe, or trust anything that comes from that triumvirate of Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld?

**Increasingly Fearful  
Michigan**

the world into another Dark Ages? Can the process be stopped? Will the power mad be stopped before their own destruction? I doubt it but I can still hope. That's why I look forward to reading your paper every issue and thank you for the work you do.



**Prisoner  
Coffing, LA**

I wish I could say I enjoy the paper, which is superbly constructed. The state of the world is discouraging and I thank N&L for bringing it to me without any artificial sweetener coating. The truth is hard to swallow. But deceptive information is deadly.

**Inmate  
Angleton, Texas**

I am on Death Row and am writing to thank you for sending me N&L. I really enjoyed it. I have passed it on to the other Death Row inmates and hope you can find a donor to pay for a sub for me. Whether or not you can do that, please keep up the great job you do. Your support means a lot to all of us here.

**Inmate  
Youngstown, Ohio**

I'm enclosing a bit of money. I like the idea of it being used for someone locked up; but you know your needs better than I do.

**Longtime subscriber  
Vancouver**

Readers: Can you help to pay for a sub or other literature requested by those who cannot pay for it themselves?

**AN EXCHANGE ON ISLAM AND THE LEFT**

Dear Mr. Barry:  
I have read your short commentary on the recent version of *N&L* February-March 2006. In the "Our Life and Times" column regarding the Australia riots it did not seem that you gave much analysis to the underlying causes of the recent riots. I don't know your stance on Islam but I do feel the Left has dropped the ball. You may find the faithfreedom website interesting. It is a free speech zone where the articles are by people from all viewpoints. Please do not give me a fast, pat response until you have thoroughly analyzed what I can only call an apostate insurgency that many on the Left have willfully ignored. There are other care-free websites that need to be carefully read as well and it is my hope that the folks at *N&L* can discuss this issue honestly. Very few other socialist groupings will touch it. Maybe they assume that being against Islam is to be racist and rightwing. Of all the groups I know of, I feel yours has the best chance of dealing with it honestly.

**Infidelinfty**

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Dear infidelinfty:  
Thanks for your response. I agree the article lacked analysis, but this part of our paper is more factual reports than theoretical analysis. I also looked at the website faithfreedom—what struck me there was a lot of ethno-religious hostility. We have written a lot about Islamic, Christian and other fundamentalisms, but also on Islamophobia, which is certainly real as well. Our April-May issue has an Editorial analyzing the cartoon controversy. Perhaps it will have at least some of the analysis you found missing in the short article. In case you haven't seen it earlier, here is the link to our statement at the time of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks:

[http://www.newsandletters.org/issues/2003/October/dblTragedy\\_Oct03.htm](http://www.newsandletters.org/issues/2003/October/dblTragedy_Oct03.htm)

**Kevin A. Barry**

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I appreciated the educational value of the April-May *N&L* Editorial on "Europe, Muslim minorities and 'free speech'" that combined several topics. It didn't leave anyone off the hook. It made me think about how the posturing from

politicians on Dubai was exposed by the revolt in Dubai and the complete non-response to it from here. We need an article to show how that was the opposite to fundamentalist xenophobia. When you are an immigrant, you are marginalized and in the new land you gain a fresh perspective on "old" issues.

**Korean-American  
California**



**THE  
BLACK  
DIMENSION**

In his review of Tavis Smiley's *Covenant with Black America* (April-May *N&L*), John Alan succinctly summed up the political bankruptcy of the book in the title of his column, "Covenant cannot overcome crises." Why not? He answers in the form of a simple but important question: "Haven't we learned that looking for solutions within politics, one is necessarily going to work within the capitalist framework?" It's the same myriad social issues confronting Afrikan Americans, other people of color, and white working poor. To think that the capitalist framework can somehow change to no longer perpetuate inequality is tantamount to suicide. By now one would think that Black politicians, academics, and community leaders would have come to this realization. The absence of an alternative vision to bourgeois politics speaks to the vacuity in Black so-called leaders regarding any philosophy of liberation. It underscores the need for us to create such a philosophy beginning with our self-activity.

**Prisoner  
Crescent City, Cal.**

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Georgiana Williams' article on the loss of emergency medical treatment in the Black and Brown community in Los Angeles is very thought-provoking. The

closing of the trauma unit in South Central is clear: poor people use it and they don't have money to pay. Kaiser's CEO made a statement on patient-dumping onto skid row where he got very moralistic. But we live in a dumping, two-tier society. This is what the labor struggles to fend off two-tier were trying to prevent. Georgiana covered several different topics but they were all related. Racism ran throughout all of them.

**Health worker  
California**

\*\*\*

The case of former Chicago police commander Jon Burge the torture of 135 African Americans to secure false confessions over a 20 year period is in the news again as part of the investigations by the UN Committee Against Torture. Despite mountains of evidence and judicial findings that Burge and his officers systematically and methodically tortured African Americans at police headquarters, not a single officer or other official has been prosecuted. While the Burge cases may be the most well-known they are not isolated or past-history. The Committee has raised the need to collect nationwide reports and facilitate action to mete out punishment and try to prevent all forms of police brutality.

**Activist  
Chicago**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Please let your readers know about this. On May 8, 2006 a trial was concluded in Johannesburg, South Africa, which cleared a high-ranking government official of rape. Jacob Zuma, the accused, was the former deputy president of South Africa until recently, and has interest in becoming South Africa's next president. During the trial, the victim's past sexual history was interrogated and the outfit she was wearing at the time of the incident was discussed at length. Steps are now being taken to pass legislation improving the way victims are treated in Court. To learn more about this, visit the One in Nine Campaign website at [www.oneinone.org.za](http://www.oneinone.org.za). The One in Nine Campaign was formed in response to the Jacob Zuma trial, and is working to raise awareness about vio-

lence against women in South Africa.

**Kirsten Grimm  
Los Angeles**

**BIBLE AND CONSTITUTION**

The story is about a hearing in March in Annapolis on the proposed Constitutional Amendment to prohibit gay marriage, where Jamie Raskin, a professor of law, was asked to testify. At the end of the testimony, Republican Senator Nancy Jacobs said, "Mr. Raskin, my Bible says marriage is only between a man and a woman. What do you have to say about that?" Raskin replied, "Senator, when you took your oath of office, you placed your hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution. You did not place your hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible."

**Still smiling  
California**

**COME TO COURT JUNE 9**



Last May Indiana was barred from seeking the death penalty against Zolo Agona Azania, because of the length of time between trial and sentencing and because of past misconduct by the prosecution during two prior sentencing trials. The prosecutor has appealed the decision to the Indiana Supreme Court who will be hearing oral arguments on June 9. It will be a key turning point in Zolo's struggle for justice. The hearing starts at 9:45 am (8:45 am Chicago time) at 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 45204, Room 317. We are organizing a car caravan from Chicago that will leave the city at 4:30 am on June 9. We urge you to help us show the justices we will not allow the State of Indiana to kill Zolo. The caravan will leave the Jewel/K-Mart parking lot at 1341 N. Paulina. If you need a ride, call us at 773-4235-6716.

**No Death Penalty  
PO Box 478314  
Chicago, IL 60647**

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By RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

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

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- For pamphlet plus donor copy for a prisoner.....\$16
- The Revolutionary Journalism of Felix Martin (Isaac Woods)**.....\$8
- Working Women for Freedom** by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan, and Mary Holmes.....\$2
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# Life and politics in Kenya since the fall of the dictatorship

*Koigi wa Wamwere, Kenyan human rights and political activist for three decades, spoke to the New York News and Letters Committee April 30. Following many years in jail in Kenya and in exile, Wamwere was elected to Parliament after the fall of the Moi dictatorship in 2002, riding on a wave of "people's power." He is currently a member of the Ministry of Information.*

Kenya still has many problems, but now we have hope that someday we will have a society where people will have three meals a day and enjoy basic rights. That will take awhile. Moi is out of power, but the system is still there; the structure of dictatorship was inherited and the mentality is very much the same. Because virtually the same class is in power, the resistance to fundamental change is still very stiff.

## TIME OF TRANSITION

It has been a government of transition. Those of us who were in prison are out. It's not colonialism, nor as insensitive as the Kenyatta government, nor a dictatorship as bad as Moi's. It may not take us to "the promised land," but at least it's not leading us back to the past.

There is corruption, but less than before. I think much of the criticism of the government, especially in the Western media, is meant to bring the government down. Western corporations are mad that Kenya is doing business with China instead of only with them. Attacks have been led by the British ambassador, who seems to want to restore the former regime, without regard to its record on human rights.

Regarding human rights, Moi belongs to the same class as Pinochet. I'm sad that Moi is not also being prosecuted. Part of the reason is that he owns so much of the media, including the most popular TV station. The media have succeeded in cleansing him. The commercial interests want him back in power. It scares me that he seems to be coming full circle.

Our other problem is what I call "negative ethnicity," what used to be called tribalism: organization along ethnic lines. Each ethnic community has its own party and leader. Even the government we have now is actually more or less a coalition of tribal chiefs, people who only represent their respective communities—even the government ministries operate that way. We tried to change this by changing the constitution, but the proposal was wrongly branded as benefiting only one ethnic group, so the other ethnic groups voted against it. This was a big setback. The proposed constitution would have set an upper limit on how much land one individual could own, and established gender equality and children's rights. So we continue under the old constitution, which makes it possible for the country to slip back into dictatorship.

There is still hope, if we can beat back negative ethnicity. You remember what happened in Rwanda and Somalia, where the government and opposition were of different ethnic groups, leading to civil war and genocide. I have appealed to the UN not to continue to stand back and allow these situations to develop, but it seems as if the Western powers are fanning the flames.

The same thing could happen in Kenya. Even on the national level, every politician is tagged by his ethnicity. You can't have real democracy under these conditions. You can't fight corruption, because whoever is in power, his ethnic group thinks that means it is their turn to eat at the trough. Corruption is seen as bad only when it's done by the other communities. You can't fight corruption or mismanagement as long as those responsible are from your community.

## A GOVERNMENT FOR EVERYONE

If we can overcome this, then we have a chance of setting up a government for everyone, but we'd have to do more than just unite people. There is the problem of class. As long as the economy is divided along class lines, the resources are enjoyed by the elites from all ethnic communities. At the top, they unite. I like to compare our country to a jungle with grass-eaters and meat-eaters. The grass-eaters struggle to end meat-eating, but even as they do so, they still admire the meat-eaters and call them their leaders. Moi is seen as an old lion. Elections may replace old lions with young ones, but the life of the jungle continues. The real problem is that the grass-eaters don't believe that real leadership can come from them, nor that it is possible actually to end meat-eating.

We are in danger of losing our own history. I was shocked to learn that as part of the economic restructuring imposed by creditor countries, Kenya was required to eliminate separate courses on history, geography and civics from the schools. Now there is only one course, "social studies." To me, this seems like part of a conspiracy to re-colonize Kenya by hiding our past.

The gospel of globalization is neo-colonialism. The U.N. and Western governments talk only about corruption in Kenya, as if there were none in the West. Their dominant call is for privatization. We are close to being asked to privatize the government, to hand it over to a Western company that would be more efficient! I'm afraid some Kenyans almost accept this.

It seems we are taking some steps backward before we can go forward. We need to cut through the noise and propaganda from a media that is no longer patri-

otic or nationalistic, and form one party that is not based on ethnicity.

The current government does deserve credit for establishing free primary school education although secondary school is still very expensive and many cannot afford it. [Ed. Note: Readers can make contributions to Wamwere's scholarship fund for poor students unable to afford high school.] Another good program is the yearly funding that each constituency (political district) gets to devote to development of grassroots projects. Economic development is on the way up.

But perhaps the most important result of the new government is to make the country freer. There is a free press and media, freedom to set up opposition parties and radio stations, freedom of movement, freedom of speech—all of Nairobi is like Hyde Park, with people speaking on every corner. This freedom gives the country a chance for real change in the future.



Koigi wa Wamwere

## Defend Khalfani Khaldun!

Khalfani Malik Khaldun, a New Afrikan political prisoner who is confined at the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility in Indiana, is involved in an important struggle against abuse by the prison authorities.

On March 17, prior to recreation time, Khalfani was subjected to verbal abuse by a prison guard who has been harassing him for months. The officer threatened to "take him on" physically. After reaching the exercise yard, Khalfani noticed that there was no basketball and asked for one. He placed his hands inside the cuff port to be handcuffed, but the officers did not close the cuffs. Then the door leading from the yard opened, and the officer challenged him to a fight. Before Khalfani could react, he was hit in the face and knocked down.

Khalfani reports, "My hands were already loose, so I automatically responded in self-defense. I pushed the door open and entered the range. Both officers attempted to jump me but I exploded, knocking one into a corner. The other officer attempted to mace me. A lot of blows were exchanged. A third officer attempted to take me down. Several staff arrived, and then others entered the range (approximately 10-20 officers). They slammed me to the ground, placed me in handcuffs and shackles, and then escorted me to the shower after first giving me several kicks in my rib cage and smashed my head and face into the concrete."

Following this assault, he was charged with three separate Code 102 Battery Charges that alleged serious bodily injury. All of the officers involved returned to work the following day. On March 23 he was sentenced to three years in disciplinary segregation, deprived of 900 earned good days, and placed on 12 months phone restriction because of the incident.

Khalfani states, "Self defense is not a crime, and as a man I will never willingly surrender to being anyone's victim. Since the incident the officers are spreading a lot of false rumors that I don't have any family or real support from the outside. I guess it makes them feel confident that they'll get away with their violations against me. I am currently preparing a request for an interstate compact transfer to an out-of-state facility. Anyone wanting to voice your anger and support of me can do so by sending an email to the Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Corrections."

Write to: Commissioner J. David Donahue (317) 232-5711; jdonahue@doc.in.gov and Deputy Commissioner Edward B. Motely (317) 232-5568; emotley@doc.in.gov. You may send a letter to a final review authority advising that he dismiss or modify the three charges to Charles A. Penfold, Final Review Authority, Indiana Government Center South, 302 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 47838.

Khalfani can be contacted at: Bro. Khalfani Malik Khaldun #874304 (Leonard McQuay), WVCF, Cell B-902 SHU PO Box 1111, Carlisle, IN 47838.

**Dialectics of Black Freedom Struggles**

Race, Philosophy and the Needed American Revolution

by John Alan

Only \$8 (including postage)  
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## BLACK/RED VIEW

Continued from page 1

*dom Struggles* even mentions a study that's still in a lot of homes, a paperback by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights made after the Watts riots. It blatantly says that they will pacify Negro masses by electing more Negro mayors and hiring large numbers of Negro policemen. They say this in plain English! Alan sums this up as a retreat from challenging capitalism.

He then explains why ghettos in the U.S. have become what they are today, with the global rate of profit in the world declining in the 1970s, decades after WWII and numerous global people's struggles. Jobs were able to move overseas because Black, Latino and poor folks were stripped and sold out of employment and industry here. This was when they started finding bigger moneymakers for us—prisons.

## BLACK MASSES AS VANGUARD

He mentions that Blacks have been at the vanguard or front position, with most to gain and most to lose, at every stage of U.S. militarization, when the U.S. has attacked people of the Philippines, China, Puerto Rico and Cuba. All this while domestic attacks on our rights as citizens are being done through racial profiling and police brutality.

With the criminalization and massive lockup of Blacks and people of color, they're trying to eliminate the revolutionary legacy that we've been fighting for since we got here. He also says, "Too few have assessed what the African-American struggles in this country represent, historically or otherwise," and the modern day anti-war movement will be stagnated until it addresses these things. From what I see, this is very slowly happening. However usually in these formations there's a focus on demonstrating and direct action.

Beginning with Chapter 5 it says that "racism needs to be recognized for what it is, the social manifestation of American capitalism." This makes sense in terms of Katrina. If instead of putting out that "this shit is racist" or that "George Bush doesn't care about Black people," Kanye West could've said that people are drowning and dying because of this capitalist government and that it's rotten to its core.

I would just be careful and mention that contradictions like racism and sexism predate capitalism as a type of economy (by quite some time, especially in the case of exploiting women). So by doing away with capitalism, you don't automatically get rid of other forms of oppression. This is the line held by mostly white "class-only" analysis types and it's faulty. Pick any country that had a revolution. The way they made things weren't exploitative in the direct sense, but from day one they started to divvy up roles and responsibilities based on ethnic group, language and sex.

## DESTROYING CAPITAL

However if you're talking about destroying capital (the social relationship of different, specialized or dominating classes in contradiction, that can exist whether there's straight-up capitalist production or not), then you're getting somewhere. Again, if you're talking about destroying capital, meaning all oppressive social relationships, and addressing them as we're fighting for the end of value production, then we got a fighting chance of getting free. White-led and most groups in general have got this one-sided approach to what capitalism is. News and Letters Committees is one of the few exceptions. So thinking like this leads to a basic 1-2-3 (algebraic) way of fighting. First factory workers, then, after we take power, we'll "give" and "empower" women, then Blacks and Latinos, then gays, and so on. But it never comes. Because we're not studying or talking about what capital is, we think it's only money as we can recognize it as such (and not credits or vouchers or other things they have in "socialist" societies).

Like the meaning of "worker" has shifted to include those who help the formal worker maintain their position as a worker (at the point of production), we have to see what we really mean by capitalism or exploitation so we can break the whole thing down. John Alan is trying to say we can aim higher than just nationalism or guerrilla tactics as our core principles. **Just** community control, **just** Black businesses or **just** Black unions is not enough, 'cause it ain't been enough.

Raya Dunayevskaya, founder of Marxist-Humanism, is quoted in the book: "Dialogs and discussions have to turn into theoretical preparation of the revolution itself." I was always taught to study revolutionary theories because once the masses are moving and you have no personal control over when that might happen, some questions or dead-ends that we already know about have to be put out there, or we'll be right back where we were in the first place. The revolution will be reversed. And it's happened before. Grenada, a Black island country in the West Indies 90 miles from Venezuela, is mentioned at the end of this book by Dunayevskaya. In Grenada the first shot of counter-revolution was shot from within the old "revolutionaries" and against the people. That allowed the U.S. to come in and mop up all the people's forces and set them back indefinitely. The point is that without philosophic structure, the revolts invariably get pulled back into the framework of bourgeois politics, of who's getting elected instead of what do people need.

Adapted from a presentation to the Chicago News and Letters Committees, Feb. 27, 2006.

# EDITORIAL

## Iraq war drags on amidst chaos

The conditions of life and labor in Iraq continue to spiral downward. Since Sunni fundamentalist insurgents destroyed a revered Shi'a shrine in the city of Samarra in February, each day seems to bring word of sectarian killings that exceed in ferocity those of the day before.

The U.S. intervention that brought this situation about limps on without those who are responsible for it showing evidence that they have either an idea about how to extricate themselves from the disaster they have created, or the honesty to admit that they have made an error that will haunt them for years to come.

### SHRINE ATTACK AN ESCALATION

The bombing of the Samarra shrine Feb. 22 was a profoundly symbolic indication of the depths of the sectarian strife to which the country of Iraq has been subjected. The sectarian assassinations and bombings were no secret before the shrine incident, but since then, the violence has taken on a more open and institutionalized form.

The Sunnis resent the strength of the Shi'as in the U.S.-backed government, while the Shi'as feel that after years of suffering under the regime of Saddam Hussein and the experience of the violence targeting them after his fall, they are assuming their rightful position in society. The result of this is a country in which fear, suspicion and hopelessness are pervasive.

Families in traditionally mixed neighborhoods of Baghdad and other cities are abandoning their homes and moving to places where their religious group is predominant, further factionalizing the country. No official count of internally displaced Iraqis is available, but it is widely recognized to be a substantial number.

Many are even choosing to conceal something as personal as their real name if it is one that is thought to be identifiable with one or another religious group. Stories abound of people assuming neutral sounding names in the interest of avoiding being targeted for murder or kidnapping.

### NATIONAL ELECTIONS, UN-UNIFIED NATION

The political climate in which these conditions prevail is a chaotic one. After the last round of national elections in December, a long period of infighting commenced as Iraq's parties fought over who was to hold the office of prime minister. The incumbent prime minister, Shiite politician Ibrahim al-Jafari, was the target of intense efforts by the Kurdish and Sunni parties, as well as the influential U.S. ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, to unseat him. They considered him at the same time ineffectual and too beholden to sectarian interests. While this political maneuvering dragged on, the basic mater-

ial needs of most Iraqis continued to be unmet.

So far there is no evidence that the candidate who in April emerged victorious in this process, another Shiite

politician by the name of Nuri al-Maliki, will be distinguished from his predecessor in any way. Nor is there any indication that he will be able to bring about one of the things high on the American wish list—the consolidation of an Iraqi army out of the country's many sectarian and ethnic militias.

Equally unlikely is the possibility that he will be able to improve the

day-to-day lives of ordinary Iraqis. The U.S. failed to deliver on almost the entirety of its promises for reconstruction. Billions of dollars were promised through mismanagement, inefficiency and outright corruption. As a result, basic services such as electricity and sanitation operate at levels far below those that were in place before the invasion.

### ARMIES OF OCCUPATION

The only thing the government is sure to accomplish is to continue to increase the power of the conservative religious forces—regardless of their sect—throughout all levels of Iraqi society.

The American and British troops in Iraq become more and more resented by the population as their presence in the country drags on. British soldiers in the south of Iraq are being openly attacked on a regular basis as the Shiite militias there become increasingly bold. American troops continue to be involved in heavy fighting in Anbar province and the towns of the Sunni triangle, areas where the insurgency is strongest. Many of these battles result in deaths of innocent civilians, and with each casualty the already strong sentiment against the U.S. hardens. At the same time, an insurgency is emerging in Afghanistan where we had been told the Taliban had been defeated.

This antipathy, combined with the seemingly endless tours of duty many soldiers are subjected to, is having a serious impact on morale in the American forces. The large number of suicides taking place among soldiers has drawn attention to reports of individuals debilitated by traumatic stress being kept on active duty in an attempt to maintain troop levels. As the war and its steady toll of fatalities and seriously wounded soldiers drags on, the ability of the U.S. military to sustain its undertaking in Iraq will become more and more of a challenge.

### IRREPRESSIBLE OPPOSITION GROWS

An even greater challenge will be the Bush administration's task of continuing to justify the Iraq war to the American public, even as it sets more tools in place to repress domestic opponents, like the NSA's requisition of phone logs and bank transactions. For much of the time since the invasion, Bush has been able to successfully manage the war's image to the public. Yet opposition from the Left and from ruling circles is now irrepressible. The staggering financial cost is largely pushed off into the future for Bush's successors to deal with. The American fatalities, while steadily mounting, have been low enough for the administration to handle and the seriously wounded soldiers shipped out of Iraq are isolated in military hospitals in Europe or at home.

## Chilean Mapuche hunger strikers

**AMHERST, MASS.**—Juan Carlos Huenulao, Florencio Jaime Marileo, and Patricia Roxana Troncoso have been on hunger strike since March 13, 2006 at the Angol Prison in the Novena Region (Ninth Region) of Chile. They were tried and sentenced under an anti-terrorism law, put in place by the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet.

Juan Carlos Huenulao, Florencio Jaime Marileo and Juan Patricio Marileo are Mapuche, one of the indigenous ethnic groups of Southern Chile. Patricia Roxana Troncoso is a student who lived among the Mapuche community and who has pledged solidarity to their cause. In 2005, they were all sentenced to ten years imprisonment and fined over 425 million Chilean pesos (US\$827) under anti-terrorist law.

All four have been in prison since 2002 after being convicted of setting fire to 100 hectares of forest in 2001. They claim the forest is Mapuche ancestral land that was wrongfully distributed to timber and paper producing companies during the Pinochet dictatorship.

The hunger strikers are protesting against what they claim was an unfair trial and an unjust sentence under legislation that is not applicable in this case. On

Even the price of gasoline was, until recently, relatively low.

As the situation in Iraq continues to deteriorate, Bush's ability to deal with these factors is sure to decrease. The prospects for Republican Party candidates in the midterms are at risk and Bush's legacy is in jeopardy. As the war drags on and continues to make life for the Iraqi people close to intolerable, those who oppose the war and its authors should continue to look for ways to both solidarize with the Iraqis, the non-fundamentalist opposition to the occupation, women's liberation organizations, and labor unions. A real fight against the agenda of the U.S. rulers rests on that kind of solidarity.

## Vet's anti-war diary

**MEMPHIS, TENN.**—"What the hell is going on in Crawford, Texas with this Cindy Sheehan?" I wondered. The situation last summer was causing controversy, so I was motivated to go there and check things out.

Upon arriving with a few friends, we set up a tent in the ditch and proceed to acclimate ourselves. The first irony was an Iraq War vet walking patrol to assure that the Pro-War, Pro-Bush, anti-Sheehan crowd would not cause any more problems, as had occurred by a fellow driving his truck dragging chains over the wooden crosses placed to signify U.S. troop deaths in Iraq.

A Vietnam-Era veteran of myself, I was profoundly impacted by the presence of the groups affiliated with Cindy's effort to ask Bush for what noble cause had her son died. George didn't take time from his vacation ranch to answer this question. Goldstar Moms, Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), Veterans for Peace (VFP) and Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW) all participated in the event.

Having aggressively pursued anti-war activities prior to the beginning of this Iraqi slaughter, I was prompted to again aggressively involve myself in efforts to stop this war.

### GOING HOME, GOING NATIONAL

Returning to Memphis, I joined Veterans for Peace and began a process to establish a VFP Group here.

Next stop: Washington, D.C., Bush was back from his vacation. We're still here, George, and not going away until the killing stops.

The next scheduled event was a march from Mobile, Ala. to New Orleans. The purpose was to draw attention to the devastation along the Gulf Coast caused by Katrina and the failure to invest the dollars necessary to avert a disaster of this magnitude. The money and National Guard are supporting the Iraq War. The five-day trek allowed me to connect more deeply with these folks and we became more of a family.

Joining VFP, IVAW, MFSO and Goldstar Families, I journeyed to Atlanta for the anti-war protest marking the third year of this immoral war. This was Atlanta's largest antiwar march. The momentum is growing and my desire is to fuel that momentum by all means possible. Our chicken hawk leader should be impeached and our troops brought home now.

### MORE DEATHS, MORE RESISTANCE

Just returned from the New York City April 29 anti-war march, joining VFP and 350,000 persons opposed to Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld, this War and its supporters. People are coming together, but not quickly enough. The deaths of American troops today reached 2,420. Thousands wounded, innocent Iraqis slaughtered, and the souls of our young men and women demoralized.

If you are a veteran, get involved. If not a veteran, you can join VFP as an associate member. Iraq Vets check out the IVAW website, ivaw.net. If you have family in the service join MFSO, or after the ultimate sacrifice of a loved one, Goldstar Families. It's happening, please join us.

—Mike Hearington



Iraq vets in New York march against Iraq occupation, April 29.

## Bolivia today

Continued from page 1

point of departure for the predominance of the practice-inert over human praxis, which will be expressed by coopting the movement, institutionalizing it, forcing it to lose its autonomy.

The State implies a kind of alienation of time. It is the fundamental machinery for the alienation of the time of struggle. The temporality of the struggle and the preservation of autonomy and the capacity for criticism and independent activity of social movements are incompatible with the dynamics of the State.

Pardon me—perhaps I don't understand the logic of the old dogmatic Left that wants to undisturb every social movement under the umbrella of a few initials, that imposes the idea of reducing the enormous creativity of the subalterns to the dynamic of the State, where all must be synchronized. Perhaps I don't understand the need for what some in El Alto have been calling for: "All must line up with MAS!" Isn't this an attempt to program the movement to the needs of governability? If it continues, if it becomes the dominant trend, it will mean the predominance of object over the subject, the alienation of the years of struggle—regardless of the good will and sincerity of those companions who have accepted positions in the State.

We will lose six years of struggle if the so-called economic model of "Andean-Amazon capitalism," centered in a "strong state" that makes a pact with power rather than constructing another power, becomes the dominant force. We will be living the "transformation of qualitative human attributes into the quantitative attributes of inert things," the predominance of a state that must sterilize the capacity for creativity that has been born and nurtured.

April 28, 2006 the Chilean Minister of the Interior, Andres Zaldivar, promised that the Anti-Terrorist Law would no longer be applied against the Mapuche people. However no mention was made of the four individuals currently in prison under this law.

The Mapuche Solidarity Committee of Western Massachusetts calls on the Chilean government to ensure that all four political prisoners on hunger strike receive immediate and adequate medical attention and are treated with humanity and respect. The committee supports their demand to have their sentence reviewed by the Chilean Court of Justice and requests that the Chilean government stop applying the anti-terrorism law in this case and in any future case against Mapuche people. To support the four, call 413 256 1298 or email millapel52@hotmail.com.

—Ester Orellana

Update: After weeks of solidarity actions in Chile and around the world, including protests in Austria, England and the U.S., the four jailed Mapuche rights activists agreed to suspend their 63-day hunger strike on May 14. In exchange the government agreed to consider their supervised release from prison.

# Immigrant struggles arise in response to globalized capital

Continued from page 1

food workers have been singled out for organizing drives for years to no avail, but on May Day many a McDonald's was closed as were other restaurants. Many high schools and middle schools experienced walkouts of students who joined the protests.

## CLAMPDOWN ON IMMIGRANTS

All this happened in spite of rampant rumors of immigration raids that would take place at the demonstrations. It was no accident that Homeland Security chief Chertoff conducted highly publicized raids right on the eve of the march at more than 40 work sites of the pallet manufacturer IFCO in which 1,000 employees were arrested.

One worker at a southern New Jersey nursery said, "People are worried. You wonder if the immigration Gestapo are coming to you." Officials from the INS (now called the "Immigration and Customs Enforcement" under Homeland Security) claimed that the raids, called "Operation Phoenix," were only part of their "standard day-to-day law enforcement" to "catch and deport fugitive illegal immigrants with criminal backgrounds." Elias Bermudez, talk show host for a Spanish language radio station, said many believe they are being punished for participating in recent protests in favor of legalizing the status of many undocumented immigrants.

To the protesting immigrants these raids are part of the effort, reflected in HR4437, to turn them all into felons. There's a new emphasis on disciplining and punishing workers, documented or not, for even daring to come out of the shadows and speak up. Most undocumented immigrants won't contest unfair workplace issues because they fear such retaliation. This is the reason undocumented workers are in such high demand and why they know the right wing's "rule of law" is a farce.

In other words, passed or not, the current "law mongers" in Congress know the concrete effects on the ground of such fear mongering. Recognizing this, many marchers wore T-shirts inscribed with, "we are not criminals," and "we are not terrorists." Refusing to be cowed forever, undocumented immigrants have only begun to emerge from the shadows. The price of "free speech" is only beginning to surface. At a foundry in Stockton, Cal., one woman was instructed to translate to the crew that "whoever didn't show up on [May 1] might as well not show up on Tuesday."

## THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

The massive immigration into the U.S. in the last 15 years cannot be separated from the impact of "free trade" agreements such as NAFTA. Capitalists demanded such open and free movement for commodities and capital, but not humans, in order to restructure production globally.

The opening of these markets to large U.S. agribusiness, with its heavy state subsidies, devastated rural communities all over the Third World, especially in Central and South America. Forced off the land, millions saw their livelihoods uprooted and became part of global capital's reserve army of the unemployed.

In addition, right-wing terror in the form of death squads in Latin America created countless refugees seeking a new home. One Salvadoran at a San Francisco rally said, "A lot of people here say, 'If you don't

like how you're treated here, go back.' The long war with the U.S. sponsored paramilitary destroyed everything for us. There is nothing left for me to go home to."

All over the world, from Mexico to China, from Korea to Africa, hundreds of millions of people are displaced by the onslaught of capital into every corner of the earth. As more and more of the rural populace is forced off the land, former farmers migrate directly to centers of capital, such as the enterprise zones in China and European centers like France, Germany, and England.

In the case of Latin American refugees, they migrate to the U.S. instead of (as in the '50s, '60s, and '70s) first taking jobs on the Mexican side of the border, in industrial centers, called *maquiladoras*. Those jobs are now disappearing in Mexico, largely because foreign capital has been pulling out of Mexico in favor of investing in areas with even lower wages, like China, where the average peasant has a level of agricultural productivity one-one-hundredth of a farmer in the



U.S. Bourgeois economists thus insist that "there are too many farmers" in China and elsewhere and would like to see half a billion more thrown off the land and turned into a source of even cheaper wage labor.

## FREE TRADE, UNFREE PEOPLE

At the same time, the billions of dollars doled out by the U.S. government in this era of "free trade" in farm subsidies keeps the cost of capital and mechanization of American agribusiness artificially low, giving them a further advantage over small family farms (American as well as south of the border), which in turn spurs greater migration.

Thus, the capitalist engine necessarily creates a massive army of unemployed in the form of immigrant labor. At the same time, representatives of capital who support this process claim that we should either restrict immigration or discipline it through a "guest worker" program. Such a program, which is supported by Bush and other big corporate backers in Congress, is a method used by two-faced politicians who on the one hand see the crucial need for low paid and easily exploitable immigrant labor, while on the other hand see the need to placate their right-wing base which is hysterical over the increasing population in their midst of people who "don't speak our language."

In fact, Bush's repeated assertion that his "guest worker" program is "not an amnesty" program in his attempt to reassure his xenophobic base, makes sense because, in truth, the "guest worker" will be more like an indentured servant rather than a "guest," reminiscent of another era of primitive capital accumulation.

While many of the liberal politicians have illusions of being generous in their current proposals, as seen in their support for the Kennedy-McCain Bill, 20 years ago, it would have been unthinkable for even a moderate Republican to support a "guest worker" program, let alone a liberal Democrat. Such a return to a "Bracero" program was considered a province of the far right. It is a sign of how retrogressive politics have become in this country that an open attempt to use immigrants only for their labor power while denying them all basic human rights is considered part of a "productive compromise."

## THE HISTORIC CONTEXT

In another era, imported Chinese labor played the same role and the Chinese Exclusion Act was enacted by Congress to placate the fears of rabid xenophobes such as Dennis Kearney. Kearney headed the White Workingmen's Association, which objected to capitalist financier Leland Stanford's massive importation of Chinese "coolie" laborers to finish his project, the transcontinental railroad. Much of the rhetoric by Kearney then, echoed now against Spanish-speaking immigrants by demagogues like Patrick Buchanan, was not in support of native workers based on labor rights, but appealed to a "culture war," by scapegoating the non-English speaking "Chinaman and his heathen ways" and raising the specter of hordes of foreign workers overtaking American towns.

Fervent Reaganites may reminisce about his clarion call for Mr. Gorbachev to "tear down this wall," but in practice, they are calling for their own 700 mile wall across the U.S.-Mexican border.

The point of any immigration "reform" legislation is to placate the racist xenophobes and yet keep the supply of disciplined immigrant workers coming, while further reducing them to the status of "persona-non-grata." Such a fate is experienced by the millions of

Chinese peasants in their own country, which is the bargain basement global sweatshop for capitalism. Migrant laborers flow from rural China into the manufacturing urban centers, with no right to stay unless they can find work, which is precisely Bush's selling point for his "guest worker" program. The Mexican and Salvadoran rural migrant is not all that different from the Chinese rural migrant in the global context.

When Lee Kyang Hae, the former head of the South Korean Federation of Farmers and Fishermen, committed public suicide at the 2003 Summit in Cancun, protesting WTO's agricultural policies, demonstrators of many nationalities chanted, "We are all Kyang."

## FIGHTING 'DIVIDE AND RULE'

Some labor advocates feel compelled to answer the right-wing nativists who pose red-herring questions, like: "Does the illegal Mexican immigrant worker take jobs away from American citizens or not?" and "Are they a net benefit to our towns and cities or a liability?"

Undocumented workers do compete for low-wage jobs. They are also used to discipline all workers. In the past, waves of immigrants have been used to break strikes of organized workers. Capitalist interests benefit while both kinds of workers—native and non-native, organized and unorganized—lose.

Deporting Mexican workers does not mean the capitalists will raise wages and hire more Americans. They can and have simply moved to more disciplined and lower waged enterprise zones such as China's. That is why, currently, powerful sectors of the business right like the Cato Institute and the *Wall Street Journal* are against any restrictions on immigration.

Answering some inflammatory anti-immigrant signs which read, "You don't have rights, you're not even citizens" and "Go back and protest in your own country," a young African-American woman at the May Day protest in Oakland said, "They are speaking out of ignorance. They have obviously subscribed to some of the arguments made by some of our community leaders who claim to be advocates for us by blaming the Mexicans for our unemployment rate. They have fallen for the right-wing estab-

lishment's propaganda, which wants to pit one group against another. That's exactly what they planned. Divide and conquer. We must fight against this by uniting with each other, not falling for the politics of racial division. We've got to see the bigger picture. We have to think for ourselves. We're all human beings."

Another African-American youth said, "How can anyone not see the similarities? They have already succeeded in making millions of us young Black men into felons. They are now ready to make 12 million Latinos felons. We cannot afford to buy into the politics of scapegoating."

Capital's consolidation and globalization pits one group of workers against another in its never ending appetite for ever cheaper supply of labor power. Recognizing and rejecting this "politics of division," a young speaker from the local NAACP at the May Day rally expressed solidarity with the immigrant struggle in terms of the need for "all individuals regardless of race or nationality to be treated with respect and dignity," invoking the legacy the unfinished Civil Rights Movement. Capitalism continues to turn back the clock on the conditions of life and labor for the broad majority of African Americans who have always challenged the racist character of American capitalism.

Today's marchers are taking many cues from the Civil Rights Movement, reconnecting with its high point, expanding from civil rights to include labor. Their demand to be recognized as human beings echoes the Memphis sanitation workers that Dr. King came to support when he was assassinated in 1968. Doing the work "no one else would do," the sanitation workers each had signs declaring "I am a Man."

The future of the movement hangs on recognizing this commonality. Many have been inspired by the rapid development of the movement of immigrant workers, which has reached a crucial point. Its humanism has asserted itself against the political system that reduces human beings to legal entities and is now confronting the inhuman domination of globalized capital. The undocumented immigrant worker today asks, "When do I become a full human being?" It is a beginning that demands the firmest solidarity from all.



May Day protests in Chicago

How to contact NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES	
<b>CHICAGO</b> 36 South Wabash, Rm. 1440 Chicago, IL 60603 Phone 312 236 0799 Fax 312 236 0725 <b>MEETINGS</b> Call for Information	<b>FLINT, MI</b> P.O. Box 3384, Flint, MI 48502
<b>DETROIT</b> P.O. Box 27205 Detroit MI 48227 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays 2 p.m. Write for information	<b>NEW YORK</b> P.O. Box 250657 Columbia University Station New York, NY 10025 212 663 3631 <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays, 7:00 p.m. 39 West 14th St., Room 205 (Identity House, Manhattan)
<b>LOS ANGELES</b> <b>MEETINGS</b> Sundays 6:00 p.m. Echo Park United Methodist Church 1226 N. Alvarado (North of Sunset, side door)	<b>OAKLAND</b> P.O. Box 3345 Oakland, CA 94609 510 658 1448 banandl@yahoo.com <b>MEETINGS</b> Contact for information
<b>MEMPHIS &amp; MISSISSIPPI</b> 1910 Madison Ave, PMB 59 Memphis, TN 38104 memphisnlc@gmail.com	

INTERNET	
<b>Email</b> arise@newsandletters.org banandl@yahoo.com (Oakland)	<b>WORLD WIDE WEB</b> www.newsandletters.org
<b>INTERNATIONAL MARXIST-HUMANISTS</b>	
<b>London Corresponding Committee</b> BCM Box 3514, London, England WC1N 3XX http://www.thehobgoblin.co.uk, hobgoblinlondon@aol.com	

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# Immigrant workers took to the streets on May Day

**LOS ANGELES**—There were two May Day marches here—with about one million taking part in each—because of a disagreement by organizers on whether to boycott work and schools for one day. The noontime march through downtown, a primarily Mexican shopping area, was attended by overwhelmingly non-immigrant laborers and students who supported the school walkout and work boycott.

The late afternoon march from MacArthur Park—primarily a Central American immigrant shopping area—through Koreatown and to the more affluent Westside, started after the school day was over. Though mostly Latina/o, there were more non-Latina groups visible than in the earlier march.

The workers in both marches wore white and carried many U.S. flags, although a few Mexican, Guatemalan, and Salvadoran flags were also visible. One group carried a huge banner with a composite of about 15 flags from around the world.

Many organizations and many individuals participated in both marches. At the end of the day, the division of whether or not to boycott work and school seemed forgotten because of the size and enthusiasm of the marches. The consumer boycott was successful as most small shops in downtown, Koreatown, and the west side were closed. The Grand Central Market and wholesale produce markets downtown were closed. Few port workers at Long Beach and Los Angeles showed up, and most truck drivers also honored the boycott. Most Korean businesses that depend on immigrant workers also closed for the day. The freeways were unusually closed in this city of cars.

"Si Se Puede, Si Se Puede!" and "El Pueblo Unidos, Hama Sera Vencidao!" were chanted loudly throughout the day.

—Basho

**MEMPHIS, TENN.**—This spring, Memphis has had three big rallies for immigrants' rights. The first one was stopped by the police before it started for lack of a permit, but many local youths and adults had been joined by people who came on buses from Nashville, Mississippi, Arkansas, even Illinois.

The most massive rally was on April 10. The local daily newspaper said more than 10,000 were crowded into the plaza in front of the National Civil Rights Museum. Some of the speakers explicitly evoked Dr. King's name and the spirit of the Civil Rights Move-

## Film documents 1916 Armenian genocide

The Armenian community and the world at large is observing the anniversary of an event which served as a milestone on humanity's road to barbarism in the 20th century. The 90th anniversary of the attempt of the government of Ottoman Turkey to eliminate its minority Armenian population in the midst of World War I is being marked by new efforts to familiarize the world with the story of the genocide—which may have taken as many as one million lives—and the depth of its historical significance.

**One important contribution to this effort was an hour-long documentary produced by filmmaker Andrew Goldberg and broadcast by PBS in April. Goldberg's film "The Armenian Genocide" describes the increasingly tenuous position of the Christian Armenian minority within the Muslim Ottoman empire as it dramatically declined in size due to successful rebellions of the Balkan nations. The Armenians, who had long militated for their rights within the empire, were perceived as a serious and growing threat by the Turkish nationalists in control of the government.**

When the Turkish government decided to participate in World War I in alliance with Germany, the extreme nationalists feared that the Armenians in Turkey would sympathize with Turkey's foe Russia. As a result, a systematic campaign to destroy the Armenians was launched in 1915 and lasted for several years. It was carried out both by outright massacres and by uprooting Armenians from their homes and forcibly marching them south to Syria, then a part of the Ottoman empire, to perish in the desert.

**The film movingly depicts the scope of the genocide through photographs, contemporary documents, and interviews with scholars from several countries, including Turkey. The inclusion of the Turkish scholars serves to powerfully undercut the ongoing efforts of the Turkish government and some academics to deny that what took place was a genocide.**

The impact of the film was diminished slightly, however, by the decision of PBS to produce and air immediately following the documentary a discussion hosted by National Public Radio's Scott Simon. The program featured two academics—one American and one Turkish—who deny that a genocide against the Armenians happened. Although not all PBS stations chose to air the follow-up program and the genocide deniers were ably debated by Armenian-American poet Peter Balakian and a Turkish scholar, their position was given a large audience that it did not deserve.

—Kevin Michaels

ment, which seemed appropriate given the location. Our sign in Spanish and English proclaiming that "No human is illegal," was enthusiastically received and stood out in the sea of signs protesting the claim that "We pray for America," and "We are all Americans."

There was a perceptible hunger for ideas when we handed out *News & Letters*. As we gave out copies, some around us requested more, breaking a language and cultural barrier just to see what we were all about.

Some local Latino media also took on a positive role in the weeks leading up to the demonstrations. One radio station postponed regular programming to become a talk shop for everyone to call in with their ideas on the new movement, such as whether or not to make the decision to stay home from work on May 1. The day of the demonstrations, people were calling in to announce spaces in their trucks or cars leaving from certain areas, so that anyone who didn't have a vehicle could attend. This self-organization of transportation from below resembled some aspects of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

On May 1 there was a large vigil at Nuevas Direccionces church, with several hundred present. The varied content of speakers' messages reflected the contradictions within the new movement's leadership. The "official" message from all of the community groups and churches was that everyone should go to work, and for the children to stay in school on May Day, international workers day. One speaker's explicit encouragement to "work hard to earn the respect of Americans" sounded to me like Booker T. Washington's ghost was present. The whole crowd didn't necessarily share these views, as some had stayed home from protest, and some speakers demanded rights that they

## Genocide in Darfur

Angry Darfur refugees voted May 8 with their feet to reject a peace agreement recently orchestrated by U.S., United Nations, and other diplomats in the large Kalma refugee camp, thousands greeted UN diplomat Jan Egeland, holding up signs like "No, no rapes and genocide," and others calling for UN intervention. Instead, they heard platitudes about the peace agreement, which had been signed by only one of the Darfur rebel leaders, and according to which the Sudanese government again promised to halt the genocidal violence that has resulted in 200,000 deaths, thousands of rapes, and the displacement of millions. After hearing Egeland, the crowd clashed with the diplomats. Along with the international press, they had to beat a swift retreat out of Kalma.

The peace agreement has changed nothing on the ground. To take one example, on May 11, three days after it was signed, the pro-government janjaweed militia attacked 50 unarmed members of the Fur ethnic group, a non-Arab group that has been a prime target of the genocide. The janjaweed killed one man, raped 15 women, and stole all their food and livestock. "You are slaves, we will finish you," the janjaweed reportedly shouted.

The Bush administration purports to support strong action on Darfur, but at the same time retains close links to the Sudanese government, which has supposedly shared key information on Al Qaeda, which once maintained its headquarters there. The European Union has done even less. The European Union has sent a small contingent of troops, which has made some efforts to protect the refugees, this in the absence of credible international pressure on Sudan. For their part, radical Islamists—from the Iranian regime to Al Qaeda—have sought to portray the genocidal Sudanese government as a victim of Western imperialism, calling Sudan the next Iraq.

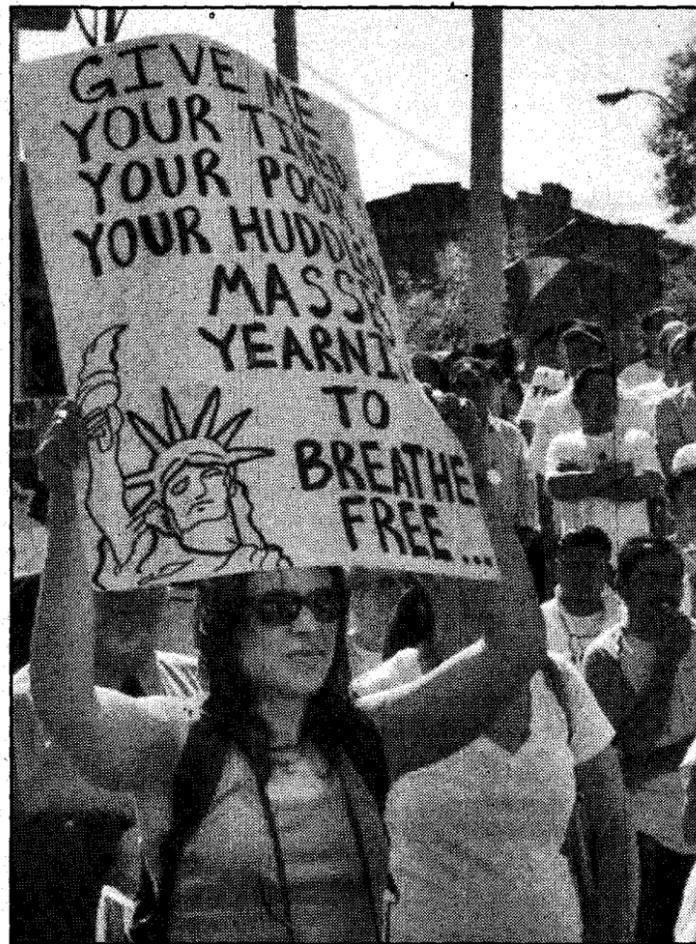
In recent weeks, however, international pressure has begun to build for a United Nations intervention to roll back the genocide. On April 30, the Save Darfur Coalition held rallies in 20 U.S. cities, including one that drew thousands in Washington, DC. Speakers included African, African-American, and Jewish activists.

—Kevin A. Barry

are due as workers and human beings regardless of nationality.

Some African Americans were scattered in the crowd, which is important here in the South, especially since some are trying to divide them from the immigrants. There was also a group of immigrants from Mauritania who made no separation between their struggle in Africa and the Latino struggle. This spirit of universality and human solidarity can become the touchstone for the growing movement if it is not channeled into mere status-quo "respectability" by its leaders.

—Participants



Demonstrator at Memphis rally for immigrant rights.

Memphis News and Letters Committee

**LOS ANGELES**—For two weeks following the huge demonstration on March 25, students from various high schools, forming out of their classes, walking rallies downtown in front of City Hall. This process culminated in a march of over a thousand, initiated by high school and junior high school students, on April 8.

They had taken public transportation or gotten rides in Los Angeles county, most without their par-

ents, and expressed seriousness about the problems of immigrants.

Some were children of immigrants from Ecuador, Mexico, Argentina, El Salvador, the Philippines and India. Some were supportive friends from non-immigrant families. These youth, who were mostly junior high students, said they were concerned with the different ways the U.S. government has been taking control of peoples' lives. One commented on how embarrassing it was for him to see recent TV interviews with students who were clearly uninformed.

This event had no dress-code, and styles represented included hip-hop, Anarchist/rocker, Mexican indigenous, and various other genres and individual variations. One teenager told me, "White T-shirts are OK to show unity and to represent amnesty, but we should also show our variety."

One slogan was "Migrant, Not Immigrant!" This was explained as differentiating between the human tendency to migrate from place to place according to need and desire, and the image of an unwanted individual crossing a national border.

—Anna Maillon

## Activists rout racist anti-immigrant militia

**MEMPHIS, TENN.**—Five of us from the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center confronted the Minuteman Project, a right-wing, pseudo-militia "citizen vigilance operation" on May 8. This group harasses immigrants, organizes armed vigilante border patrols, and tries to stir up anti-immigrant sentiments everywhere they go. Currently, they are staging a caravan across the U.S. to Washington, D.C., to confront the Bush administration and Congress from the Right, demanding more conservative leadership to toe the Minuteman line.

We showed up, unanticipated by them, with signs that read "In the struggle for justice there are no borders!" and "The only outsiders in Memphis are the Minutemen." For once, the cops walked right by us and went to the leader of the Minuteman Project and told them that they needed to leave, because they didn't have a permit. If we hadn't brought attention to these reactionary nationalists, they would have said their piece to the media—uncontested—and moved on.

Now we have notified the broad peace and social justice network that lies on the Minuteman Project's route, and they're going to meet them with the same determination at every stop. We can't allow these anti-human elements of society to pretend to speak for all of us.

—Brown Douglas

Watch for the next  
**NEWS & LETTERS**  
which will feature Claudia Lucero of  
Durango Unido en Chicago on  
"Immigration, globalization and the  
reserve army of labor."

## OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Kevin A. Barry and Mitch Weerth

This spring's student-worker protests in France constituted the largest popular mobilization of the Left in over two decades, at least in the industrially developed world. Not since the beginnings of the Reagan-Thatcher era in the early 1980s, when millions came out in Britain, the U.S., and Germany to oppose their militaristic and anti-labor offensives, have we seen such numbers hitting the street. While the 2006 events were confined to a single country, France, the issues were connected to the wider anti-globalization movement.

The French protests began earlier this year, when the rightist Chirac-Villepin government made a two-fold response to last fall's ghetto revolts by Arab and African minority youth. First, the government proposed a series of racist anti-immigrant laws. Second, they voted to remove legal protections for workers under 26 years old, claiming that such "flexibility" would put a dent in youth unemployment, which stands at 20% overall and 40% for ghetto youth.

The anti-immigrant proposal has met with some determined protests, the latest a march by 20,000 in Paris, May 13. These relatively modest demonstrations have been organized by United Against a Disposable Immigration, a new organization comprised of leftist and immigrant rights groups.

It was the second proposal, for a First Employment Contract (CPE) that would have allowed employers to

# French labor unrest challenges capital

fire young workers on short notice, that touched off a mass mobilization of students and workers. On March 7, over 800,000 demonstrated against the CPE—students, workers, and leftist groups. The next mass demonstration, March 18, grew to a million. Then, on March 28, came the largest demonstration in decades, as around two million people hit the streets, even more than in the mass labor demonstrations of 1995.

With public opinion solidly behind them, students had by then also occupied 1,200 high schools (out of 4,300 in the country) and 69 universities (out of 84). Karl Stoeckel of the National Union of High School Students declared: "The high school students are becoming aware that they can win."

Jean-Claude Mailly of Workers' Force stated: "The unions haven't been this united in 20 years." These workers were evidently part of the 64% of the French population who, in a recent international survey, rejected the proposition that "a free enterprise system and a free market economy" is the best economic model. Such anti-capitalist sentiment is stronger in France than in any other industrialized country.

To the French dominant classes, these are mistaken views, in need of correction. For example, Interior (Police) Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, a likely presidential candidate in 2007, is both a notorious racist—he called the anti-police rebels who burned cars last fall "scum"—and a proponent of "free market" economics.

If elected, Sarkozy would rule with a strong hand, creating more "flexibility" for capital by doing away with hard-won gains by labor. He would try to gain support for this by continuing his racist demagoguery on crime and immigration, taking advantage of the fact that a third of the French people have described themselves in recent polls as "somewhat" or "very racist."

The labor gains being challenged by capital and its representatives include a legal right to strike, for which a worker can lose a day's pay, but not be fired. There are also restrictions on layoffs for economic reasons. However, Sarkozy is only the brutal face of a larger consensus among the political elite, here including the Socialist Party leadership as well. This elite consensus holds that the French economy needs to be "reformed" in a neo-liberal direction. This forms the larger context of the spring 2006 protests.

After another large mobilization on April 4, again over a million strong, President Jacques Chirac capitulated, agreeing to withdraw the CPE. This came after this last mobilization drew large numbers of strikers in the government, telecommunications, media, banking, automobile, and energy sectors, but also after students began to blockade key economic institutions, like railroads and food distribution.

On April 24, in one last action, radical students briefly re-occupied the Sorbonne, seeking to link the anti-CPE protests to those over the racist immigration laws that will soon be voted on. Unfortunately, this occupation did not garner enough student support and was quickly broken up by police.

The failure of the April 24 action also points to a big contradiction: the inability of the student-labor Left to forge strong links with the most oppressed sector of French society, the immigrants and their descendants, who now form an impoverished ethnic minority in the suburban ghettos of Paris and elsewhere. And, as the corporate media have repeatedly noted, the spring 2006 protests were not marked, as in 1968, by an effervescence of openly revolutionary sentiment.

## Crises pervade Mexico as election approaches

The July 2, 2006 Mexican presidential election is taking place in a climate of an ongoing social crisis that is wreaking havoc on the lives of working people. Six years of a disastrous Fox administration is coming to an end amidst frequent worker revolts, increasingly more brutal repression of those revolts, and deteriorating conditions for indigenous peoples and campesinos, despite the prior gains of the Zapatista uprising.

Two miners were killed and 41 injured April 20, when 800 police attacked about 500 workers who had been occupying the Sicartsa mine in Lazaro Cardenas, Michoacan since April 2. The occupation was part of a strike of 3,000 miners, organized partly to prevent Fox from replacing the head of their union with someone more to his liking (Elias Morales), and partly to show their current leaders that their 30-year struggle for a truly independent union is ongoing.

Despite the fact that the brutality of the police led the Mexican Senate to condemn the action, 3,000 police cracked down on another movement in the town of San Salvador Atenco, in the state of Mexico, May 4, resulting in the death of a youth and more than 200 jailed.

This town has been at the forefront of the effort for the past five years to stop Fox's Plan Puebla-Panama, which would make all of Southern Mexico and Central America one miserable inter-connected string of maquiladora factories. So far that plan has been a failure, thanks to the residents of San Salvador Atenco, who have successfully fought against the construction of a \$2 billion airport that would displace more than 4,000 families from ejido (communal) land.

The PRD candidate for president, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (aka AMLO), has been making a weak effort to maintain his populist image. To the workers he says he will not continue the practice of appointing union leaders. To the campesinos he says the solution to conflict is dialogue rather than police repression. But he refrains from actually embracing these movements, as he once did as governor of Tabasco.

Into the election fray has marched "The Other Campaign," up from Chiapas, passing through the entire country in its effort to "unite" all of the struggling social movements, and through them to "unite all of the Left." The tour has been successful in expressing soli-



Police brutally invaded San Salvador Atenco, May 4.

arity with the many ongoing struggles in Mexico, but Marcos, unarmed and re-named subdelegado Zero, is leading the Campaign's effort to chastise all the presidential contenders, insisting that there is really "no difference" between any of them.

He says this despite his admission that AMLO is an "honest" politician who made genuine improvements in the lives of ordinary folk as mayor of Mexico City, one who represents an effort to administer the crisis in the manner of Lula of Brazil, while PAN candidate Felipe Calderon represents nothing but further state repression of all social movements, the "mano dura."

In an interview with *La Jornada* (05/10/06), Marcos states: "The administrator can be whatever, the business is the same: Mexico, Inc." To the nonviability of bourgeois politics he offers "The Other Campaign" as the "only really leftist national movement...the only possibility that the needed change be nonviolent."

In a talk to workers in Mexico City the day before May Day, Marcos/Zero spoke of the need to "destroy the capitalists and deprive them of their ownership of the means of production," but said nothing of what would replace the decayed system.

## Nepal revolt

In April, Nepal experienced a mass revolutionary upheaval that has restored parliamentary democracy after more than a year of absolutist rule by King Gyanendra. The protests maintained themselves for three weeks, despite pervasive police violence, which resulted in the murder of 19 freedom fighters. By the end of April, the daily demonstrations, even in the face of curfews and "shoot to kill" orders, were beginning to draw 100,000 people in the capital, Katmandu.

The protests were called by parliamentary political parties (from Gandhians to Communists), by students, and by the Maoist guerrilla movement. Last fall, the Maoists signed an agreement with the parliamentary parties, calling for a republic.

The real strength of this movement came from below, however. As the *Nepali Times* wrote in early April: "This is a surprising uprising; even without the parties, neighborhoods have got together to set up road blockades, stoning police and pouring into the streets to defy curfews. Each day that passes, the pro-democracy chariot is picking up momentum."

By the end of April, as the king was forced to restore parliament, the parliamentary opposition began to assume power. While parliament has reached a truce with the Maoists, it is unclear if the royalist army will follow its orders. Elections for a constituent assembly that could form a republic are also in the works.

But the mass movement of April has definitely created a new political and social dynamic. This is a country wracked by poverty, landlordism, caste and class oppression, and the subjugation of women. It is unclear if a merely political change will be accepted.

## 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.