

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Temp work: imposes total dependence on capital



by B. Ann Lastelle

"Law, morality, religion are to [the proletarian] so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests."

—The Communist Manifesto, 1847

President Clinton in his State of the Union address urged employers to provide jobs for welfare recipients who must find work under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act. He singled out five corporations as "established leaders in the effort."

One of those "leaders," Sprint, has been ordered by the National Labor Relations Board to rehire 177 workers fired when a subsidiary, La Conexión Familiar, was closed to halt a union organizing drive. Perhaps Sprint thinks that welfare recipients will prove more docile.

A spokesperson for another "leader," Monsanto Co., told the *Chicago Tribune* (Feb. 27, 1997): "We're a scientific company; we bring a lot of entry-level jobs." Instead, she said, the company will rely heavily on the temporary-employment agencies it utilizes...to provide jobs for those coming off welfare." Of the 271,000 jobs created in January, over 30% were at temporary agencies.

My employer, Helene Curtis, will not be a "leader" because it is downsizing, but last year, when we had at least the illusion that the company was growing, the vice president for operations rejoiced that the company had filled almost all open positions from inside and had hired virtually no one for two years. Who filled the jobs of those promoted? Temps.

Temps at Helene Curtis are expected to be on time every day and to work all the overtime, doing the most physically demanding jobs on the line. Any permanent employee can tell a temp what to do. They are excluded from company dinners and meetings, including safety

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Black World

The SPLM, war, and the new Sudan?



Editor's note: This is the last in the series of articles on the crisis in the Sudan by Robert Reed. —Lou Turner

Out of the chaos and poverty of Sudan has arisen a movement for liberation. It is the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Its goals are the "liberation of the whole country from any prejudices based on race, religion, culture, language, or gender."¹ It opposes ruling Arab Islamic fundamentalists and the military dictatorship. But what are its ideas? And how has it measured up to them?

"Our objective is to create a New Sudan." Those are the words of SPLM/A commander John Garang. The SPLM/A advocates the establishment of a democratic socialist Sudan that will allow the masses full participation in the running of the affairs of the state. Their literature states they are in favor of a secular constitution that would guarantee religious freedom. They are dedicated to the elimination of racism and tribalism. With regard to women's liberation, they see themselves as a "genuine movement for the liberation of all Sudanese—not just the half who are men."

The SPLM/A has stood firmly against Shari'a. It has demanded its suspension. They have fought against the *Murahalin* slave raiders and the slave trade, and for a

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(1) "New Sudan: Organ of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement," pilot issue, October 1986.

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Mexico in state of total crisis

by Mitch Weerth

Mexico today is in a state of total crisis. The Zapatista rebellion that began over three years ago in response to the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is ongoing, as are daily urban protests that oppose the growing militarization of society and efforts to privatize all sectors of the economy. While both Clinton and Zedillo like to pretend that nothing is amiss in the Western hemisphere, even official statistics from the Mexican government reveal a 100% increase in the number of organized protests in the capital last year over 1994, the year the Chiapas rebellion began.

On the 17th of March 3,000 Tzotzil Indians from the Emiliano Zapata Campesino Organization (OCEZ) occupied the mayoral buildings in the municipality of Venustiano Carranza, Chiapas. Their demands touch every critical issue in what has come to be called Mexico's "dirty war": immediate removal of the police and paramilitary thugs run by PRI (ruling party) militants and landowners; election of a "plural municipal council" in place of the old powers; cancellation of all efforts to divide communal lands; political prisoners; and a lowering of electricity prices.

While the urban rebellions have not attempted to seize power at the local level as peasant revolts in Chiapas have, two things reveal them to have much in common: the permanence of their efforts to stand up to an increasingly militarized state apparatus that is now torturing and assassinating demonstrators (400 were killed last year in Chiapas alone), and the ways both have sought to challenge the "neoliberal" effort to roll living conditions back to the days before the Revolution of 1910.

One of the best examples of this is the battle railroad workers have waged against privatization. Since 1990, 50,000 workers have been laid off, and today plans are going forward to sell the northeast lines — the most attractive in the system to North American investors — which will eliminate another 48,000 jobs, since the investors buy in on the condition that their companies come "without a single worker." Some 20,000 are being denied their pensions thanks to a ruling from the



Protest in solidarity with the Zapatistas in Mexico City.

Supreme Court, and last June the detailed labor contract which contained over 3,000 clauses was reduced to only 208 by the official union.

The opposition to this barbarism is continuous. A document prepared by the dissident Democratic Railroad Workers' Movement (MFD) refers to it as the "most monstrous mutilation of the labor history of our country, robbing us of the product of over 100 years of struggle...Surrendering the railroads to North American companies represents the loss of sovereignty over the development of our country."

So obsessed is the Zedillo administration with privatizing this sector in order to pay off its debts to the U.S. that even the law which supposedly limits foreign investment to 49% of a company is ignored if there is "express authorization from the Commission on Foreign Investment."

If we consider what has become of the agreements signed in February, 1996 between the government and the EZLN, we will see new thinking coming from below. The original agreements, which took ten months to complete, acknowledged, among other things, the "right to free determination" which was spelled out as granting indigenous peoples access to and collective use of natural resources, except those such as oil which pertain to the state. Although it was impossible to get the govern-

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Two faces of Chicago apartheid Bridgeport Cabrini-Green

Chicago — "If it jump, it jump," was the angry declaration of a young Black man among the 600 marchers across the Dan Ryan expressway from the Bridgeport neighborhood that has become the center of national attention ever since the viciously beaten and comatose body of 13-year-old Lenard Clark was found on its streets March 21. Some 100 hundred white Bridgeport residents had been sighted across the bridge on the other side of the Dan Ryan as dusk fell and the marchers, led by intrepid Black nationalist leaders like Rev. Al Sampson and National Black United Front leader Conrad Worrill, were led on every detour possible to avoid crossing the bridge into Bridgeport.

It was the evening before "Good Friday" and Chicago's fearless Million Man March nationalist leaders made sure nothing jumped. Young Lenard Clark had more courageously challenged Chicago's apartheid than the leaders of this long, meandering march. He did so with his young life—they find it more convenient to do so with the hot air of their rhetoric.

The whole thing seemed a dress rehearsal for the rebellion that is waiting to happen in this fiercely divided city. The segregationist mentality of Chicago's white ethnic enclaves remains intact even as neighborhoods like Bridgeport feel the pressure of Latino and Asian newcomers moving in. On the other side of the apartheid boundaries — an expressway, a street, or a park — the residents of Black neighborhoods, especially youth, more and more break out of their isolation.

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Chicago — Mayor Daley's plan to "Revitalize the Near North Side" — in other words, destroy Cabrini-Green, a housing project on some of the richest land in the city — has been met with protests by public housing residents from Cabrini.

On Feb. 22, the mayor held a press conference at Near North High School to push his plan. It was kept a secret from the community, but some resident activists found out about it. About 30 people met inside a community office in one of the high-rises to discuss the situation prior to marching on the press conference. By the time we got to the high school, at least 300 of Cabrini's Black residents packed the auditorium.

Both the mayor's officials and cops were taken totally off guard by the size, anger and boldness of the marchers, many of whom were students who go to that high school.

The city is trying to justify the destruction of public housing by using the slogan, "the days of isolationism are over with," and holding up their plan as a model for other cities in the country to follow. But the truth is that the days of racial apartheid are gaining new strength with this plan.

If they destroy Cabrini-Green, only 30% of the new apartments built will be reserved for public housing (but nobody even believes that), 20% will be made "affordable" and 50% will be sold at market rate — in a neighborhood that has become one of the richest in Chicago. The extent of the homelessness and displacement this will create is nothing but ethnic cleansing U.S. style.

The CHA has already demolished one building in

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Women, politics and the Black Panthers

by Laurie Cashdan

An important meeting on Women in the Black Panther Party took place on International Women's Day, March 8, in the heart of Chicago's West Side. Drawing about 30 participants—nearly all Black, ranging from teenagers to Panther contemporaries—it became a frank discussion on the interplay between gender, race and class in current issues and collective memories, if not always in their full political context.

The Ida B. Wells Forum, an organization of Black feminist and left intellectuals formed after the Million Man March, sponsors such meetings in its effort to foster links between Black radical intellectuals and the community as a challenge to Farrakhan's reactionary influence. The speaker, Tracye Matthews, who is writing a dissertation on Women in the Black Panthers, undertook this research because of its impact on the present:

We need to throw out the idea that we don't have to study gender, but just race and class. If we discuss gender or heterosexism, we're called divisive and Eurocentric. These views affect our collective memory—we see the Panthers as about redefining manhood. We need to see these issues as more complex or we will build movements today on shaky foundations.

The sharpest illustration of how current concepts of race and gender influence collective memory came with

Woman as Reason

her assertion—citing Panther leader Bobby Seale's 1968 statement—that women made up 60% of the Black Panther Party (BPP) nationally. When massive numbers of women began joining the BPP in 1967 after Huey Newton was imprisoned, the Panthers shifted from a self-defense organization of "the brothers on the block" to an organization with broader goals.

Women participated in every area of BPP work. Moreover, Panther women appeared in early interviews about Women's Liberation (Matthews circulated one from 1969) and Huey Newton publicly supported Women's and Gay Liberation.

Yet women in the BPP had to contend with serious problems regarding attitudes toward women that ranged from chauvinism to abuse. This came out, in part, in video clips Matthews showed from her interviews with well-known Panther women. Connie Matthews (the Jamaican Panther leader) and Assata Shakur described the male chauvinism BPP women

faced daily. Kathleen Cleaver asserted that women took on all revolutionary roles and were rounded up by the police like men, but did not discuss the domestic abuse by her ex-husband, Eldridge Cleaver—a point raised by a young woman in the audience.

Tracye Matthews analyzed the impact of the 1960s ideology which portrayed the Black community as suffering from patriarchy that robbed men of their manhood. In 1965, the notorious Moynihan Report labeled the Black community a "tangle of pathologies." This ideology seeped into areas of Black political life. Matthews also discussed Ron Karenga's cultural nationalism as a potent source of chauvinism.

The question not fully engaged in the meeting, however, was the relation between gender politics and broader problems of political-philosophic direction facing the BPP in the late 1960s and early 1970s. While Matthews asserted that gender affected everything about the party, the meeting didn't go far beyond actual relations between men and women in the Party. Yet the issues women faced were not unrelated to the Black Panther Party's turn to Mao's "Little Red Book" for a theoretical direction, nor from their unity with the Communist Party USA with the establishment of the United Front Against Fascism in 1969.

For example, women in one Black Panther chapter were denounced during drill practice by a male captain who argued the women were only there to find men and were "paper tigers"—Mao's term for counter-revolutionaries. Several women quit the BPP after bearing the brunt of this sort of ideological, sexist denunciation (See **Black, Brown and Red**, News and Letters, 1975 edition, p. 31).

More serious was the decision to eliminate the Women's Liberation session at the July 1969 National Conference for a United Front Against Fascism, so Communist Party theorist Herbert Aptheker could continue his long-winded lecture on fascism. Aptheker's speech ended when 200 women stood up and clapped until he stopped, leading to the physical ejection of a Black woman participant (See "Stalinism at Anti-Fascism Conference," **N&L**, August-September 1969).

Isn't the problem that attitudes toward women are fundamentally entangled with one's entire concept of revolution? These attitudes toward women betrayed a deeper problem, as the Party's revolutionary rhetoric failed to materialize a genuine philosophy of total liberation. Tracye Matthews has raised for us crucial questions about gender, race and class that can now go a step further; gender can open a window onto a full consideration of contradictions in philosophic vision.

International Women's Day marked with protests

San Francisco — The International Women's Week activities started with several thousands marching through downtown Oakland on March 1 protesting welfare cuts, which have gone into effect. Many mothers brought children to this march, under-scoring the fact that millions of children will be forced into dire poverty. There were also many unionists opposing workforce programs since their effect is not more jobs but lowering of all wages.

On March 7, hundreds of women held an evening march through San Francisco protesting violence against women, cuts in welfare and education, and the "war on drugs" which has put thousands of women in California prisons instead of treatment centers. A special dedication went to Judy Bari, the Earth First! activist who lost her battle with cancer. (See p. 11.)

On March 8, about 250 women and men gathered at San Francisco's Women's Building for the California Coalition for Women Prisoners' International Women's Day Celebration. A highpoint was the presence of Norma Jean Croy, a Native-American political prisoner who did over 18 years in state prison for a murder she did not commit.

The focus of the event was support for women prisoners' struggle for decent medical care in the state prison system. We heard a report on the lawsuit filed by Charisse Shumate and 70 other women. Cynthia Martin, a plaintiff, spoke about disabled prisoners in units with doors too small for wheelchairs. Cynthia, who had been severely burned prior to her incarceration, had been unable to get basic care. Upon her release, she had to go through several painful surgeries.

When women prisoners in the lawsuit talk about abuses in prison, they appeal to the absolute human right to medical care. As much as they ask us to help them, they help us sustain the passion to root out the entire system and create a wholly new, human society.

—Karen and Urszula

New York — International Women's Day featured a march to the British Consulate on behalf of Roisin McAliskey, daughter of Irish civil rights leader, Bernadette Devlin. She has been held for over three months without charges in solitary confinement at London's Holloway Prison. The German government opposes bail and wants her extradited on suspicion "for a mortar attack on an uninhabited section of a British Military Base in Osnabruck, Germany."

Identified as an Irish revolutionary by the demonstration sponsors, Friends of Roisin McAliskey, Roisin

is seven months pregnant, with severe asthma, an ulcer, and rheumatoid arthritis. She will give birth shackled to her bed and handcuffed to a prison guard.

Amnesty International and other participating groups are demanding full medical attention, granting of bail, no separation of mother and child (as threatened): "Stop German Cruelty and British Brutality."

Speakers discussed international movements on behalf of political prisoners, freedom fighters and oppressed peoples, and "solidarity in honor of the heroism of working-class women who have risked their lives in the fight for justice and freedom."

—Sheila G.

Chicago — Several hundred women celebrated International Women's Day at a conference on "Women Making History, Celebrating in the Struggle, Demanding Justice for the Future." This was one of the largest and most diverse audiences we've seen at a women's event here in a long time. While some presenters limited their talks to services, information and resources, many attending workshops would not let the discussion stop there.

"I thought you'd be talking about how terrible health care is for women," challenged an older white woman in the women's health care workshop. Young Black women from the Cabrini-Green housing project chimed in with how they fought for better care, making sure they knew exactly what to do and where to go for medical treatment for themselves and their children.

This was reiterated in the Youth Issues Workshop where 16- and 17-year-olds from Women's Health Education Project (WHEP) discussed rape, domestic violence and sexually transmitted diseases—and what to do in such emergencies. Girls as young as 12 from After School Programs spoke and a Latina from Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health felt the "Latina role" is the biggest problem to overcome.

In the workshop on immigrant rights, an elderly Korean woman, with the help of her granddaughter translating, said, "I felt that the world was coming to an end when I found out the benefits I had would be taken away. All the seniors who didn't pass the citizenship test are afraid of becoming homeless. This situation is one where Koreans can't work alone. Let's all live together in a different way."

It was refreshing to celebrate International Women's Day with so many women committed to making their lives better in spite of a system that doesn't give a damn about them. Now let's change the system!

—Participants

Sweatshops protested



Retired union textile workers protested outside Lord & Taylor at Palm Beach Mall in Florida, Feb. 23, against the parent company's use of sweatshops to produce their clothing line.

Bat Shalom peace journey

Jerusalem — Palestinians from the Har Homa area (and primarily from the tours of Belt Sahur) have kept a constant vigil in recent weeks in a tent encampment on the hill facing Har Homa. The original intent was to prevent bulldozers from destroying the peace process; now it's to get the bulldozers to stop before burying all hopes for peace itself. Twenty-one-year-old Abdubiah Salah was killed in the demonstrations on March 29. He had been a student at Bir Zeit University and is the first casualty of the protest inspired by the new Israeli settlement on Har Homa.

Women in Black continue to stand with signs protesting the construction at Har Homa. The three major peace movements, Bat Shalom, Gush Shalom, and Peace Now, have also been paying regular visits there. But the army has tightened its grip on the mountain in a wide, armed belt, no longer allowing Israelis or Palestinians to get anywhere in sight of the bulldozers.

BAT SHALOM SNEAKS IN

A group from Bat Shalom managed to infiltrate the area March 19, getting past army barriers by various ploys, with the imaginative cooperation of our Palestinian minibus driver. At one barrier, we were Palestinian women on our way to visit friends in the village of Sur Baher; at another, we were religious Jewish women on our way to the settlement of Tekoa; and at another, we were American tourists. With a sure hand, the driver drove us right onto the low valley road where 100 soldiers were guarding bulldozers shoring up the land.

Our small group got out, walked about 60 feet (20 meters) toward the bulldozers, and began to construct the tent that we had brought with us. It took the soldiers about 15 seconds to reach us, and demand to know what we were doing. "Building a tent" seemed obvious, but we said it. "What tent?" "A women's peace tent," we explained, "to protest the activities of the government on the mountain."

By then the major media had run over and began filming the scene—women setting up the tent, arguing with the commanding officer, and exhibiting peace posters: "Women Protest Har Homa." "You have five minutes to speak your piece to the cameras," said the commander, unable to stop the cameras from rolling. It was closer to 45 minutes, and we did speak our piece to all the major media.

SHOUTS OF SOLIDARITY

From there, we headed toward Faisal Hussein's "tent city." After more army barriers, we got to a point about 600 feet below Faisal's tent, but the bus could not plow through the mud any longer, so we got out and walked. As we were climbing a sharp incline, a troop of soldiers descended toward us with their guns ready.

"This is a closed military area," declared the commanding officer. "Yes, but we have an invitation to drink coffee with our friends over there," we explained. He was not persuaded. "Show us the order," asked one of the women, and he went off to find it.

By then, and completely uncoordinated with us, a small group of Christian Peacemakers appeared and the soldiers ran off to stop their approach. This allowed us to inch forward.

By now we were shouting distance from Faisal's encampment. Then we saw that the army had set up a fence to keep them in and keep others out! The Palestinians and we could only signal to each other, but the media were allowed through, and soon enough we were again facing a battery of cameras, explaining our point of view to the international and local communities.

The frustrated soldiers could do nothing to stop the hope for peace from criss-crossing right past their guns.

—Gila Svirsky

NEW EXPANDED EDITION

Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution

by Raya Dunayevskaya

To order, see page 7.



Strawberry pickers speak out for UFW

Oakland, Cal.—On March 9 a group of over 100 UFW farmworkers and their supporters came together for a support rally. We went to Lucky stores in small groups to pass out leaflets asking customers to support strawberry workers. We met with a group of strawberry pickers:

"We are fighting for respect, especially respect for the women workers, so that supervisors in the fields do not cross over the line. Our original strike was over sexual harassment. We want to organize all farmworkers, to stop the discrimination and to raise our wages.

"We need health insurance that covers everything. You have to go to only one particular doctor. He knows you are injured but sends you back to work so that you don't receive disability. We're in the struggle to get a medical plan with a neutral doctor.

"We want clean running water. The water we get is terrible. It tastes like petroleum. If you drink it, you get sick. It is the same water they use to spray the fields. Sometimes the water is warm and thick like soup. The bathrooms are three blocks away which is a problem because in this job you have to keep picking to get as many boxes as possible.

"Last year we got \$4.25 an hour plus a bonus per box. As soon as the union had a presence out there the wages went up by 25¢ an hour to \$4.50. When the picking is good you get a piece rate of \$1.35 per box. When the pickings are scarce, you get \$5 an hour straight. But they still demand that you pick four boxes in that hour. That is close to impossible when the berries aren't there.

"What is different about UFW organizing this time is that in the fields we were constantly watched by the supervisor looking to see who is a union supporter and who is not. Now we have home visits where five or six union members come over to meet at someone's house and there's no intimidation. Misrepresentations and lies from the bosses can be cleared up."

Chicago — I worked in the strawberry fields for seven years. Many times we are not paid for the hours we have worked. They make us pay for work materials

Delta Pride loses o.t. grab

Indianola, Miss.—It was a long struggle. We negotiated with the company since last September, but we finally ratified a new four-year contract at Delta Pride on March 4. By the time the contract ends, it will be the year 2000 and Delta will still be a union plant. To me, the most important fight we won was that when the company demanded that we give up time-and-a-half pay for overtime after eight hours a day, we told them that we had fought long and hard to get that, and there was no way we were going to turn that loose. Delta Pride management had to back down on that.

We have been working 55 hours a week for the last two months, sometimes more. In the ice pack department, about 40 workers have been working from 8 a.m. to 9, 10 or even 11 p.m., to keep up with production. We are getting good money, but this can't go on too long, because the company doesn't want to pay that much out. So the overtime rule in the contract is a way for women to protect our health and our child care situations.

We also won our first pension plan. The highest seniority workers here have 16 years in the plant now; that's how long it's been open. There are about 50 workers who were hired that first year who are still there. When we started, nobody thought or talked much about pensions. But now, when you have so many years put in, and we really are the ones who built the company, you start to think about the company helping you when you get old.

The pension plan is worked out with the UFCW; it starts in 1999, and it will pick up the years we put in before that. In Mississippi, workers, especially Black workers, don't usually get pensions at work. It's something that we are bound and determined to change.

Another good thing in the contract is that the Belzoni Delta Pride plant's contract and the Main and South plants' will run out on the same date. Ever since Belzoni was organized, they had a separate contract, with a separate expiration date. So if you are in negotiations, and you are getting ready to strike, the company could plan on running Belzoni while we are striking. Now they can't do that anymore.

What I don't feel so good about are the wages. You know we are still living and working in poverty wages in Mississippi. In the new contract, everyone will get 15 cents an hour the first year, then another 15 cents the second year, 10 cents the third year, and a wage reopener in the fourth year. It's wages like this that make workers willing to work overtime just to live like human beings. And then when you work all that overtime, you can't be with your family, and you risk your health.

What I feel we need to do now is to organize the three non-union catfish plants in the Delta, so they don't undermine what we have done.

—Union activist, UFCW local 1529

even though the state law says they must pay. All this we suffer, even though we earn only \$8,000–9,000 a year.

Once they sprayed the fields close to us and the breeze brought the pesticides to where we were. My head hurt, my eyes were irritated. All my co-workers felt the same way, but we didn't have the courage to stand up. Now we are going to fight and change conditions.

I was at a press conference in Washington, D.C. for the UFW. When I went back, my supervisor told me I was doing something wrong and that I would be beaten up if I didn't watch out. He also claimed to know my immigration status and said I would be deported if I didn't stop organizing. I'm here to say we are going to continue to victory.

—Celso Muñoz,
Watsonville strawberry worker



A national march on Watsonville, Cal., on April 13 will urge strawberry growers to recognize the United Farm Workers union. Here Chicago supporters rally at Jewel store.

The strawberry campaign started in 1995 when 400 workers went out on a sexual harassment strike. The union won, but the strawberries were plowed under. The message was clear — vote for the union and you're not going to have a job any longer. The only way to make them stop this tactic is to organize the whole strawberry industry.

There are 15–20,000 strawberry workers in an industry that saw revenues doubled, consumption tripled and wages worse than in 1982 and 1983. Farmworkers are only asking for a nine-cent-a-basket raise.

Monsanto, which made \$8 billion dollars last year employs 1,000 strawberry workers in California.

Before, when there was a strike, we resorted to the boycott which could go on and on for years. But Monsanto beat up and fired workers. So this time, before the election for union representation, we want a neutrality agreement. It says there will be no firing or intimidation. We will have an election campaign with a fair climate.

We are telling strawberry workers, "You don't have to wait." Their message to the growers is this: "If you don't want to sign a contract, you can't sell strawberries."

We are getting the chain stores heavily involved. Ralph's in southern California supports us, and so does Treasure Island in the Midwest. We have been talking with American Foods which owns Lucky's in California, Acme on the East Coast and Jewel in this part of the country.

Right now we are not saying boycott strawberries. We are just asking growers to obey laws: It's an unfair labor practice to intimidate farm workers and it's criminal to beat them up.

—Dolores Huerta, UFW founding vice-president
Celso Muñoz and Dolores Huerta spoke at a mass rally in Chicago, Feb. 27. The rally and other activities are part of a mobilization for a national march in Watsonville, Cal., April 13, in support union campaign by strawberry workers.

Back Price-Pfister boycott

Pacoima, Cal. — Hundreds of Price-Pfister workers and supporters held a "March for Justice" on March 23 in this economically ruined community just north of Los Angeles, to protest the shutdown of their plant and its transfer to Mexico.

One of the organizers of the Price-Pfister workers' struggle told **News & Letters**: "I worked for the company for six years until I injured my hand and a doctor stopped me from working. I was only one of those who were injured with no work and no health benefits. After Black and Decker bought the company it suddenly declared it is moving and there will be no more insurance and no benefits.

"In September we decided to begin a protest. In November five of us went on a hunger strike. Because of the large protests the company offered some minimal compensation, which it later withdrew. We said we will continue fighting because we worked hard and deserve to be treated with respect.

"We received no help from the Teamsters' Union representative either. At first he told us he is there to fight for us. In the end he was with them instead of us. He said 'according to the laws' there is nothing we can do. But we are not asking for 'according to the laws.' We want what is right. I'm sure after today's demonstration we'll hear from the Teamsters and the company again."

Another woman worker who is still working inside the plant said: "We have a lot of tensions psychologically. We don't know if we will be out of a job any day. On Monday they are moving me to another position. I am worried that if I can not do it they will use that as an excuse to fire me."

Several speakers addressed the rally. One worker said: "I was on hunger strike for 15 days. I feel bad because I didn't last longer. But now I am here with you and the struggle continues." A boycott of Price-Pfister/Black and Decker products was declared at the end of the rally. One speaker told the crowd: "We'll do whatever it takes, we'll take the streets, we are going to have to fight."

—Cyrus and Antonio A.

Fearful RPS fires workers

Chicago—I worked at RPS, the package delivery company that is like UPS, except that nearly all the workers are part time employees with no health benefits and no union. They tell you when you start so that they can fire you at any time.

I work in the SWAK department. The packages get unloaded from the trucks, and come on the belt up to us. We weigh them, and put the zip codes on them. We have to do this very fast, about 500 boxes an hour come at you.

On the graveyard shift, on March 17 they started calling us into the office one by one with a security guard. The boss over the shift, Butch, said that stuff is coming up missing—jewelry, cosmetics, watches. I said I didn't know about any theft in the SWAK department, that there were no open boxes that night, and when we do have open boxes, we put them on the floor. He didn't care what I said. He just told me I was "dismissed," after I had worked there for a year.

The same night they fired five other people, and they said they would keep firing people in other departments and other shifts. I know it's not because of theft. They search you every time when you are leaving the place; you couldn't get stolen goods out of there anyway.

One reason might be because they are worried that workers will bring in a union. About two months ago they fired a worker I know for trying to organize; I was helping him and so were several other workers. We know we have a right to a union, but they act like we don't.

The other thing I'm thinking about is that every worker they fired is African American. It seems like they are trying to get rid of Black workers, if they speak out. The truth is that RPS is a like a plantation. We need to have a civil rights investigation of the place, and we need a union.

—Fired RPS worker

Dobbs uses safety as club

Memphis, Tenn. — Anytime you hurt yourself at Dobbs, a company that prepares and loads food on airlines, you automatically have to take a drug test. A worker hurt himself protecting a young woman from falling off the truck. He grabbed her and pulled his arm out. Other than that, she would have hit the ground. He may have saved her life.

He took the breath test for alcohol, and they said he didn't blow hard enough because it didn't register, so they tried to fire him. The company gave the worker his job back, but he wasn't satisfied with how Napoleon Hayes, the union rep, handled it, because he wanted to take it to arbitration. They still say he didn't pass the drug test.

The same day, a worker was catering a 757 and fell off the platform coming out of the door. On a 757, that platform is at least 30 feet up. His tailbone hit the truck's metal guard rail; then he fell on his shoulder on the concrete. He was lucky not to be too badly hurt.

You're supposed to pull your truck up to the plane at least seven inches below the door. A lot of times the loader doesn't pull you close enough, so you use a ramp to walk across.

They bought some new, cheap ramps, way shorter than the ones we used to have. We complained about the old ones because they were so heavy and awkward we just couldn't use them. Now sometimes the ramp is not stable. This worker was coming out of the door and the ramp slid.

The company tried to say it was nobody's fault, or that he didn't do all the safety steps. They said he didn't have another ramp on the truck pulled out. Half of the pull-out ramps on the trucks don't work — you can't pull them out.

The rank-and-file workers were upset. When they first got the ramps we told them they were too short. It was an accident waiting to happen. —Black worker

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

meetings. If they have substance abuse problems, they get no help; they are fired. They are expected to be more virtuous than the permanent employees at one-half to one-third the pay.

Clinton, a week after the State of the Union address, said, "I think we can do this. I think we can develop a work-based society that does not have people trapped in permanent dependence." What is temporary work but **total dependence** on the good will of permanent employees and supervisors?

Work in general in this society is alienated. It is not creative human activity, but aimed solely at increasing capital. Workers, bereft of the means of production, are totally dependent on capital for their means of subsistence.

"Personal responsibility," "work opportunity" and "ending dependency" are just so many bourgeois prejudices. As the **Communist Manifesto** says: "The laborer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only insofar as the interest of the ruling class requires it."

Creative human activity in this society lies not in work, but in the struggle against capitalism. "In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all." That is the ideal envisioned in the **Communist Manifesto**, whose 150th anniversary we celebrate this year. We must make that ideal real.

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

Editor's note

Raya Dunayevskaya, founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., analyzed Deng Xiaoping's consolidation of power in China as the 1980s unfolded. Her analysis, excerpted here, illuminates Deng's death on Feb. 18 and what may follow as well as the contradictions inside China which have marked every stage of his rule — and Mao's before him. The analysis originally appeared in Dunayevskaya's "Theory/Practice" column in the August-September 1981 *News & Letters*. Readers can find it in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, microfilm number 7217, as well as in *China in Revolt and The Idea of Freedom* (News & Letters: Chicago, 1989).

The 35,000-word document: "Certain Questions on the History of Our Party,"¹ is a rewrite of the entire history of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), whether we begin at its founding in 1921, at its concentration point since the gaining of power in 1949, or at its most extensive period — the "Cultural Revolution" — to which the Resolution devotes 19 of the 29 pages. This is just as clearly seen when the New China News Agency officially summarized it in 5,000 words issued to the world press.² In both cases, objective history seems to have been completely eliminated as if the history of the CCP occurred in a vacuum. Thus, there is not a single mention of the Vietnam War, and although, if you look very hard, you might find a reference to Korea, it is mentioned in such a way that U.S. imperialism is certainly not the Enemy Number One it was then. This is developed fully in the Draft Perspectives Thesis*... One thing, however, is never referred to at all in the excerpts, but is the center point of the theoretical revisionism beyond Mao. That is a direct attack on Marx.

The first thing to be noted is that the new revision occurs in the section, "The Decade of the 'Cultural Revolution,'" and comes after the "Cultural Revolution" is said to have conformed "neither to Marxist-Leninism, nor to Chinese reality," and is judged to have "negated many of the correct principles, policies and achievements of the 17 years after the founding of the People's Republic." Every ill is blamed on the Cultural Revolution after it has been made clear that though the "Gang of Four" had taken advantage of it, it was nevertheless Mao, himself, who developed it. Yet, after all these exposés of its "anti-Marxism," we are suddenly brought to nothing short of "historical causes underlying the 'Cultural Revolution,'" and find that there seems to be "a 'theoretical basis' in the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin."

'TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS WORK'

Once the cat is out of the bag, it turns out, in the tracing of this "theoretical basis," that it is Marx alone who is responsible since it is claimed that he used the expression, "bourgeois right" when referring to "the distribution of the means of consumption in a socialist society" so that the principle of "to each according to his work" led us to regard the error in magnifying the class struggle as an act in defense of the purity of Marxism.

Let us make clear, first, that the phrase, "to each according to his work," is no expression of Marx's. It is what Stalin, and what Mao, following Stalin, revised as the workers' state became transformed into its opposite, a state-capitalist society. It was then that Marx's magnificent vision of a classless society, articulated as "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need" became transformed into the capitalistic "according to his labor," and "labor" was further spelled out as capitalistic wages — preferably for piece work.

Secondly, the expression "bourgeois right" is deliberately taken out of context (a la Stalin and Mao) from Marx's great work, *The Critique of the Gotha Program*, without any direct reference ever being made to

1. See *Peking Review*, No. 27, July 6, 1981.

2. These excerpts were published in *The New York Times*, July 1, 1981.

* "China: deMaoization and heightening contradictions in state-capitalism" was the title of a section of the Draft of Marxist-Humanist Perspectives in the August-September 1981 *News & Letters*. She considered her "Theory/Practice" column that month, excerpted here, to be part of that Draft Perspectives thesis. There Dunayevskaya further discussed the Chinese Communist Party's rewrite of its own history including its "flirtation with U.S. imperialism." See *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, microfilm number 7127. — Editor

Deng revised not so much Mao, as Marx

it. Instead, a jump is made to the "inner-Party struggles" in China which they claim resulted "in magnifying class struggle as an act in defense of the purity of Marxism." But Marx's *Critique* was stressing how long inequality — "bourgeois right" — would persist in the scars we would carry over from bourgeois society when capitalism was first overthrown. Far from having any relation to "inner-Party struggles," Marx was warning the German Workers Unity Party that if we ever lose our goal of a classless society, we will never reach it.

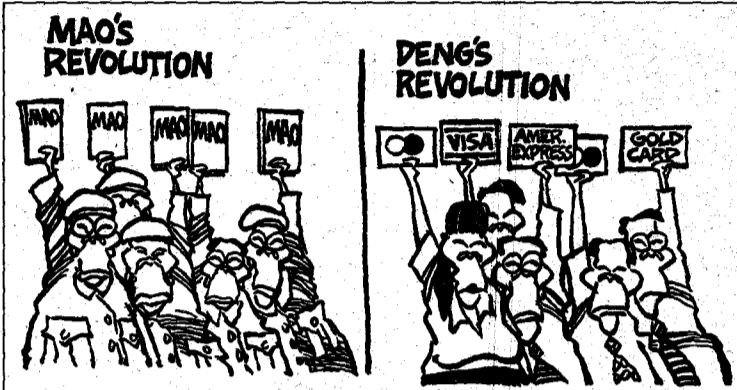
That is exactly what happened both in Stalin's Russia and in Mao's China. All this Deng Xiaoping is attributing to the "Cultural Revolution," is making sure at the same time that the alleged Left policies of exaggeration of the class struggles in "socialist" China are blamed on Marx having wrongly designated "the distribution of the means of consumption" in a supposedly socialist society as "bourgeois right."

After these "errors," the Resolution's assessment [is that] Mao's "Historical Role and Mao Zedong Thought" remains great, with emphasis that it is to remain the distinctively Chinese Thought to be followed. The periods in which he remains so great and wrote "Oppose Book Worship" are precisely when Mao, let us not forget, was so busy Sinifying Stalinized "Marxism" as to declare that: "There are people that think that Marxism can cure any disease. We should tell them that dogmas are more useless than cow dung. Dung can be used as fertilizer."

MAO, LIN AND THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

There has been, of course, some deMaoization; the "Cultural Revolution" has definitely been totally discredited and those it had designated as "capitalist-roadsters" have been brought back to power. But we must not forget that, far from the "Cultural Revolution" having lasted a whole decade from 1966 to 1976, as the document claims, it had run its course by 1968. And it was Mao and Lin Biao who destroyed it.

For that, Lin was rewarded by being designated as Mao's successor. Nothing short of constitutionalizing that feudal act was achieved at the 1969 Congress. It was in 1971, when Mao extended the invitation to



Nixon and prepared to roll the red carpet out for him, that Mao and Lin became enemies. There is no doubt that Lin's opposition to having the red carpet rolled out for Nixon is what brought about his death. And there is no doubt that the extreme crisis in the country brought Deng back into power, with Mao's help.

But the deMaoization recognized by bourgeois ideologues misses the fact that the present Chinese rulers are all Stalinist-Maoists and, just as it isn't a question only of modernization vs. Islam in Iran, so it isn't modernization vs. the "wild 'Cultural Revolution'" in China.

The over-riding truth is that there is no independent road between ruling class and oppressed class, whether that characterizes private capitalism or state capitalism not just the state-capitalism of Russia, or China, but the so-called private capitalism of the USA that is, multinational, corporate, private monopoly capitalism. The latter type characterized by state intervention called the "welfare state" came on the global scene when the Depression put an end to "pure" private capitalism. It was World War II that then extended state-capitalism, adding neo-colonialism to its imperialist nature.³

Like private capitalism, Chinese state-capitalism is suffering from what the Chinese like to refer to as "great troubles under heaven." That is to say, ceaseless class struggle. Deng may feel confident that, now that he has destroyed "Democracy Wall" and arrested the new youth leaders, the youth will peacefully co-exist with him. The truth is he has not destroyed them; he has only driven them underground.

3. An ironic proof of that appeared in the recent book, *Theories of Imperialism* by Wolfgang J. Mommsen, which attempts "eruditely" to move away from Marxist theories on the ground that Marx was allegedly "Eurocentric" and therefore didn't see neo-colonialism; in fact, didn't see imperialism "because" he was sticking strictly to Accumulation of Capital. In the end, however, Mommsen was forced to conclude: "Nevertheless it remains the task of scholars to seek theoretical models which will make it possible to interpret this important phase of history (imperialist expansion) which still to a large extent determines the condition of our present-day world."

Letter from Liu Binyan on post-Deng China

Since the death of Deng Xiaoping, several Chinese intellectuals abroad have expressed the opinion that China's political situation will not give rise to any upheavals, and that social stability and economic expansion can still continue to be maintained.

It has already become a common failing among many people that when observing China's problems, their eyes are always fixed on Zhongnanhai (residence of China's central leadership in Beijing — trans.), or look at the economic expansion, or only look at those who have profited from Deng Xiaoping's line; they don't look at society, they don't look at the real and potential disasters which this kind of economic expansion is creating for the majority of Chinese people.

Otherwise it's really hard to explain, how could such a major historical reality as the Chinese Communist Party's loss of its two main pillars, the working class and the peasants, the foundation of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" — the sudden transformation of the alliance of workers and peasants into the number-one threat to this regime — be, under the pens of many commentators, so insignificant that when discussing China's present and future they can disregard it completely?

Leaving aside the traditional disdain intellectuals have felt for working people, many "elites" firmly believe that the fact that workers in national enterprises have not gained a thing and have suffered extremely severe losses in the reforms is an "unavoidable" cost, and that hence the transformation of the working class into a conservative force and an obstruction to reform is also a necessity. And as for the peasants? These most early beneficiaries of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, why are they also unfriendly toward the reforms, rioting year after year, with as many as 130 million having abandoned farming and turned their backs on their home villages, becoming "China's living volcano"?

Avoiding or disregarding these two great classes, they then let another class off so lightly — the bureaucratic privileged cliques; and yet their existence is precisely the root of all evil in China; Deng Xiaoping's protection and toleration of these cliques was one of the greatest mistakes of his career as a reformer. People often use the word "corruption" to inadvertently cover up their enormous shadow, diluting the seriousness with which we view this omnipresent and unwieldy force.

The numbers of bureaucrats at every level have increased steadily in the reforms, with economic crimes developing from the individual to the collective, and transforming from the secret to the open. They have carved up national assets by the hundreds of billions of

yuan; just the shares that have been diverted abroad already exceed the total sum of offshore and foreign investments in mainland China. These people and their children are reform's principal beneficiaries, and at the same time are reform's saboteurs.

All of the dark forces in China are without exception under the aegis of the bureaucratic cliques, and by now the two have gradually merged. China's capitalist transformation has been carried out under the terms of the continuing control of the Communist Party. This is the "Deng Xiaoping miracle" which was acclaimed by the entire Western world in 1992 — with its autocratic regime and political system unchanged, China has unexpectedly brought about a high-speed economic expansion.

This, then, is "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics." Those Characteristics, under the very terms of the unchanged political system, let the unchanged regime use means that will most profit the bureaucratic capitalist class in putting into practice economic liberalization, that is, capitalism. To the peasants, intellectuals and workers respectively, these Characteristics give a few benefits so that they won't go so far as to rebel, even while practicing a variety of expropriation different from the Mao Zedong era. It is this that has been the core of Deng Xiaoping's strategy.

Those "benefits" include not only economic material benefits, but also include a certain amount of freedom, a freedom that could still expand. By the 1990s, a mainland Chinese could use every means and use every measure to satisfy every individual desire, but absolutely could not engage in politics, and was prohibited from organizing by oneself, even if for non-political purposes.

In praising the "Deng Xiaoping Miracle" (that is, the simultaneous existence of dictatorship and prosperity), intellectual "elites" cannot see that it is precisely this "miracle" that makes China's various crises — in comparison with the similar problems of Western or other developing countries — even more destructive and catastrophic.

All along, the Chinese Communist Party has been unable to open its eyes to truths which the Western capitalist class has long since deeply understood: the losses from labor strikes are smaller than those created by labor slowdowns, surreptitious sabotage, and long-term theft; freedom of speech and freedom of assembly contribute to real stability. Rather, the Communist Party prefers tranquil corruption, which can only postpone an explosion and conflagration, whose

(Continued on page 10)

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Essay Article

by Maya Jhansi

I recently came across a new book called **Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures** (1997) edited by Chandra Mohanty and Jacqui Alexander which tackles the problems that Third World feminism faces in the post-colonial world, a world structured by neo-imperialism, multinational corporations, IMF starvation programs and the rise of fundamentalist violence against women. In what seems a refreshing breath of fresh air in the world of feminist theory today, all of the women represented in this anthology recognize the need to engage feminism in an "anticolonialist and anticapitalist" agenda. As Mohanty and Alexander put it in the introduction: "Capitalist feminism is a contradiction in terms."

Alexander and Mohanty seek to re-constitute feminism as a movement drawing on "socialist principles," and seeking the revolutionary transformation of society. It is perhaps an ominous sign of the times that even this overtly revolutionary rethinking of women's liberation neglects to even mention Marx in a single essay. This glaring omission is significant, not only because it represents a willful attempt to theorize about socialism and revolution *ab novo*, that is, ahistorically, but also because it shows what Raya Dunayevskaya identified in her book **Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution (WLDR)** as the pitfall of all feminist thought reaching for the future: the abandonment of responsibility for the history of revolutionary thought. (WLDR is now out in a new edition by Wayne State University Press.)

Feminist Genealogies is divided into three parts that take up: 1) women's lives and struggles in the context of the increasingly feminized global and postcolonial economy; 2) Third World women's theories of cultural identity and feminism; and 3) an examination and critique of actual Third World women's organizations over the last two decades.

WOMEN AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Rejecting the exclusive focus on gender by white, First World feminists, Mohanty's essay, which opens up the book, looks at the way that global capitalism co-opts traditional ideologies of gender and race (e.g. Third World women's docility or the view of women's work as temporary and supplementary) to obfuscate women's identities as workers. Mohanty's essay is useful in dismantling the myth that capitalism somehow "liberates" women from their traditional roles in non-Western patriarchal societies.

In fact, capitalism perpetuates, indeed intensifies, traditional patriarchal hegemony, erasing women's social identity as workers. But, Mohanty argues, the feminization of global capital, means that "Third World women workers have a potential identity in common."

Whereas in her past essay, "Under Western Eyes," Mohanty emphasized the **disjuncture** between Western women's and Third World women's struggles, in this book, Mohanty seeks to work out a "transnational" feminist solidarity. However, she restricts the solidarity to women of color around the world, seemingly jettisoning white women as revolutionary subjects.

Though she has an in-depth critique of capitalist/

patriarchal practices and "the long history of domination and exploitation of women," Mohanty argues that, "vibrant, creative, collective forms of mobilization and organizing have also always been a part of our histories."

Mohanty's essay attempts to theorize these struggles without losing their specificity. Thus, though Third World women workers share what she calls an objective common interest, feminism needs to work out the "common social identity" of women workers in the context of a revolutionary movement. This, of course, is a difficult task since it means defining what you are fighting for.

Rather than assessing the **meaning** of women's specific struggles throughout history, Mohanty seeks to define women's "common social identity" through a feminist praxis grounded in alternative forms of collectivity and decentralized organizing.

Mohanty sees Third World women's collectives such as SEWA, an Indian working women's collective founded in 1972, as closest to articulating the revolutionary basis for struggles against capitalism because they integrate women's experiences of race, class and gender with a cooperative structure suggesting a new form of society.



POSTMODERNISM VS DIALECTICS

Contrary to what is usually seen as the postmodern attempt to disengage feminist thought from practice, Mohanty grounds feminism in the real life struggles of working women, going "lower and deeper" in order to revive feminism as a revolutionary project. And yet, her upholding of feminist cooperatives as the solution to the internal, theoretical difficulties of the Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) does little to challenge the abandonment of developing feminist theory into a full vision of human emancipation, an abandonment most evident in postmodern feminist theory, much of which celebrates the "end of philosophy" as the liberation of women.

That is, in rooting theory so closely to practice, Mohanty seems to suggest that the tensions of race, class and nationalism that ripped the WLM apart will be solved through practice. Here, like her postmodernist contemporaries, Mohanty refuses to **abstract** the philosophic meaning of women's struggles. The problem with a lot of postmodern feminism is not just that it does not speak to real women's struggles, but that it enacts a refusal to think beyond the contingency of those struggles—leaving the question of revolution up to "performance" rather than a consciously articulated philosophy.

Citing Black and Third World feminist critiques of feminism, Joan Scott, Judith Butler and other postmodern feminists seek to dismantle the concept of "Woman" as an abstraction. The concept of "woman," they argue, erases difference, and thus has no relationship to real women's lives.

One essay in **Feminist Genealogies** by Paula M.L. Moya, does critique this use of Black and Brown women's voices to legitimize the postmodernist project, arguing that in deconstructing concepts of women's iden-

tity and experience, they effectively silence women of color. Yet Moya's critique of the way postmodernists have used the works of Chicana feminists is precisely on the same grounds. She argues that they obliterate difference, by abstracting theory "from the flesh."

I think Moya is right in her critique, but it doesn't get to the crux, which is not just that feminist theory has moved away from real life struggles, but that it has refused **philosophic** responsibility for those struggles. And as the many contradictions confronted in this anthology make clear, feminist theory not only must root itself in practice, but as Dunayevskaya argues in **WLDR**, develop itself into the fullness of a philosophy of liberation. This is especially seen in feminism's confrontation with the struggle for national liberation.

TWO KINDS OF NATIONALISM

All of the feminists in **Feminist Genealogies** situate their feminism within a nationalist context, recognizing the integrality of women's liberation and national self-determination for a viable Third World feminism. One theorist, Geraldine Heng, notes that "feminist movements in the Third-World have almost always grown out of the same historical soil; and at a similar historical moment as nationalism."

However, because the often antagonistic relationship of nationalism and feminism remains underemphasized, the subtext of most scholarship on the subject, Heng writes, becomes "inadvertently the record of a triumphant nationalism that makes its gains and wins its accomplishments at the expense of a subordinated feminism."

Several essays in **Feminist Genealogies** examine the betrayal of women when nationalist movements gained power as postcolonial states. Where nationalist ideology once mobilized the masses in opposition to the state, now nationalist ideology all too often seeks to mobilize a mass national spirit in support of the postcolonial state.

Such realities disclose the transformation into opposite of the nationalist movements for liberation, which erupted so forcefully in the middle of the 20th century and in which women's liberation was integral.

As Dunayevskaya put it in the 1984 Introduction to the 1959 pamphlet issued by **News & Letters, Nationalism, Communism, Marxist-Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions**, "Once in power...the division between the leaders and the masses, whose revolutionary spontaneity had achieved power for them, widened. What increased the distance between leaders and ranks was the problem of how to industrialize non-capitalistically, private or state; of how, at the same time, to expand political liberties and maintain worker control of production and the state. What was disclosed was a void in the philosophy of revolution. The banner of Marx's theory of liberation, which had been so great a pole of attraction, so powerful a force of mobilization and solidarity, was now narrowed to staying in power. Indeed, all sorts of shortcuts and substitutions, religion included, were indulged in. The revolutions were aborted."

Now 13 years after this Introduction was written, this narrowing of nationalist vision has had some deadly consequences, especially the rise of fundamentalist nationalisms all over the world.

This is not to say that the liberatory potential of national consciousness has been exhausted — only that feminism can no longer be seen as an outsider to nationalism, a foreigner to the "real" national community which is not indigenously feminist. Without a serious engagement with women's liberation, which Dunayevskaya argues, raised in a profound way the question of "what happens after the conquest of power?" the boundaries of liberatory nationalism risk being erased.

After all, Dunayevskaya makes not only rabid rightwingers responsible for the crises we face today, but also the Left itself which has not worked out its relationship to nationalism, women's liberation and most importantly to the dialectic of freedom unleashed in Marx's philosophy of revolution, leaving a void being filled by narrow nationalism. Today, there is absolutely no room for "substitutions and shortcuts."

Feminist writers in India have also linked the rise in religious fundamentalism to the failure of nationalist and socialist movements to bring about actual liberation.

That is what makes the book **Feminist Genealogies**, and especially its introduction by Mohanty and Alexander so puzzling. On the one hand, they talk about the need for local feminist praxis to ground itself in a transnational feminism and a vision of feminism as "the transformation of relationships, selves, communities and the practices of daily life leading to self-determination and the autonomy for all peoples" (xxviii).

Yet, instead of situating feminism in the context of a total vision of freedom — they situate it in the context of "decolonization" or "education," which develops out of practical organizing: "The centrality of collective practice, in the transformations of the self and reenvisioning organizational democracy anchors feminist thinking." The essays in the last part examine in detail the contradictions within several women's groups and collectives around the world, including the radical feminist collective **Sistern** in Jamaica, **WIN** in Nigeria, and the **Stree Shakti Sanghatna** in India.

The question that this anthology raises but doesn't pinpoint in the discussion of feminist organizations is: Can there be an organizational answer without philosophy? That is, Mohanty and Alexander want to argue that

(Continued on page 9)

Announcing a series of classes

On the 150th anniversary of the **Communist Manifesto**

Marx's Philosophy of "Revolution-in-Permanence": Its Meaning for Today

"Our epoch is a birth time and a period of transition."—Hegel

Five years after the Los Angeles rebellion exposed the deteriorating social conditions characterizing "free market" economic restructuring, Marx's multidimensional critique of all forms of class society has taken on new importance. At the same time the collapse of an array of exploitative regimes which once called themselves "Marxist," as well as the profound crisis afflicting revolutionary movements and theorists worldwide, has made it abundantly clear that only an anti-capitalist perspective rooted in a vision of liberating the individual from all forms of racism, sexism and class domination can possibly speak to

humanity's search for an alternative to existing conditions.

To help unearth such a liberating perspective for the social struggles of today and those to come, this class series will reexamine Marx's body of thought with eyes of today, along with a number of writings on Marx by Raya Dunayevskaya, the founder of **Marxist-Humanism** in the U.S., who more than any other contemporary thinker has brought out the depth and breadth of Marx's concept of "revolution-in-permanence."

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Hegel's revolution in philosophy
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Before and after the 1848 revolutions

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The forms of value and the fetishism
of commodities

Class 5:

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Classes begin in CHICAGO—April 6; NEW YORK—April 13; DETROIT—April 17; OAKLAND—April 20; LOS ANGELES—April 20, and MEMPHIS—April 20. Admission is free. For further information and a syllabus of suggested readings, contact the News and Letters Committee nearest you—see directory, page 9.

UNCOVERING MARX'S UNPUBLISHED WRITINGS

Thank you for your remarkable article "Uncovering Marx's yet unpublished writings" (January-February N&L). For the first time I feel I have some understanding of the long and involved history of Marx's edited works.

**Librarian
Chicago**

I had no idea that Marx's reading notes were excluded from the **Collected Works**, which I have been buying as they came out since 1975. I hope you will keep all of us informed about the progress of translations into English.

**Sociology professor
New York**

Whatever may be said about the "Stalinist" edition of the MEGA, the only thing one could object to are the commentaries that have always been published in a separate volume. The texts themselves have been published in the language of the original. Both the Russian and German editors in the two Institutes of Marxism-Leninism in Berlin and Moscow were proceeding in a scientific way. Except for the commentaries this cannot differ from the approach the Amsterdam and German editors of the new part of the MEGA 2 will use.

**S. Steiger
Prague**

LABOR TODAY

I disagree with B. Ann Lastelle about workers' "complacency" (January-February N&L). It's the collaborationist policies of the union officials that has caused the alienation, despondency and even physical violence among workers. I've been a UAW farm equipment worker, merchant seaman, and bartender and I just turned 79 and live in public housing that is an insult. I always felt the Republican and Democratic Parties were one, that Russia had the same banking system, and that the national ownership of industry would not be socialism if the wage dividing pay system stayed the same. I think workers have to vote at the point of production where the seat of government resides, not in Washington, D.C. I always got a lot of support from other workers for my views.

**A fellow worker
Minneapolis**

The march planned for April 12 to take a "People's Charter" to Number 10 Downing Street actually follows the planned route of the Chartists in 1848. The event will also kick off the UK end of the Euro-march. And then there's the election.

**Dave Black
London**

The March "Black/Red" column was beautiful in not only showing who Biko was but why people are interested in him now: the actual conditions in the new South Africa which still exploits Black labor, and the revolt against it.

**Freedom fighter
South USA**

There are struggles going on here today over the attempt to take away the 8 hour day. Ordinary workers may not know explicitly about the capitalists' hunger for surplus value. I think we have to be out there explaining it. Without a liberating banner of new human relations competition for scarce jobs will drive us to the bottom.

**Ken E.
Berkeley**

I was fired from my job as a security guard for Burns International, on Jan. 29, 1994. The reason given was that I instigated a fight, but I did not fight. The person who instigated it was 20, I

Raya Dunayevskaya has written a lot about attitudes to Marx because she was deeply critical of what post-Marx Marxists did with his legacy. They let everything get in the way of publishing his works to bring them out to the world.

**Student of Marxist-Humanism
Tennessee**

Kevin Anderson's in-depth exploration of Marx scholarship is very impressive. I have two questions:

Was the influence of Morgan's anthropological findings different from the decisive influence Morgan had on Engels in his "Origin of the Family"? Does the Marx-Engels divergence have relevance to the ways these two men understood pre-modern cultures?

Does the fact that Marx became more attentive to non-Western cultures in his later years alter a deeply seated Eurocentrism of classical Marxism? I tend to agree with scholars who argue that Marx understood the West better than he comprehended the East. Should I be prepared to change that perspective after reading Marx's unpublished writings?

**Manjur Karim
Culver-Stockton College
Missouri**

was 54. He is still working there. I filed a charge of age discrimination with the Illinois Department of Human Rights, and a lawsuit against the company. After the hearing it will take 6 months to 3 years longer for a decision. I filed for unemployment but had to appeal to get my money. Anybody over 50 should start thinking hard about their job security. I'm 57 now and work is hard to find at my age.

**Robert Lapping
Normal, Illinois**

ECOLOGY AND DEMOCRACY



Environmentalists often have a perspective of "stopping corporate greed," i.e. reforming capitalism rather than uprooting it. They are separated from the working class and urban poor. Many white middle class people relate to the forests or birds but not to ghettos or immigrants. But sometimes the racial separation can change. I saw a group of Mexicans protesting together with young white American activists in Ensenada. The nearby factory was dumping its sewage directly into the ocean. And there are movements against environmental racism initiated by the forces themselves like the Filipinos at Clark Air Force Base, and the Mothers of East L.A. against the toxic incinerator. The consciousness of the environmental crisis is growing, but is the consciousness of its roots in capitalism?

**Activist-thinker
Los Angeles**

N&L is not afraid to tell it like it is when it comes to racism. It's what makes articles like "Environmental radicals fight Clinton's ecology double-talk" so important. I shared it with the other inmates at my unit. Thanks for finding a donor for my sub.

**Prisoner
Texas**

In "Ecology and Democracy" (January-February N&L), Dmitryev caught the number of a whole class of radicals in his criticism of the "intellectual activist"

Readers' Views

who always sees the "masses as backward" and therefore "advocates reforms so radical that the existing power structure would never allow them, yet fails to envision the overthrow of that power structure." This covers almost everyone I hear on Pacifica radio, the Jerry Browns, Helen Caldicotts, and all those who are doing great exposes of what is wrong and yet miss the point.

**John Marcotte
New York**

SCOTTISH RADICALISM

The book by James Young on Scottish Radicalism reviewed in March N&L was fascinating but I'd like to know why there is no reference to Harry McShane? If there's a reason for his omission, that should be told.

**Mary Holmes
Detroit**

Editor's note: The relationship between this extraordinary Scottish labor leader and Raya Dunayevskaya is told in **Harry McShane and the Scottish Roots of Marxist Humanism** by Peter Hudis, published by the John MacLean Society and available from N&L for \$2.

FIGHTING RACISM

The striking Detroit newspaper workers are building for the National Days of Action in Detroit June 20 and 21. They expressed concern about bringing out Detroit's Black community whom they know supports their strike. Recently I saw a local TV program about racism in the media. The speaker did not mention the newspaper strike. I thought the strikers and supporters could present the interrelationship between racism in the media and this strike. The Detroit Newspaper Agency hired some African-American scabs and publicized it as "affirmative action," trying to split Detroit along racial lines. What if the National Days of Action spoke with equal passion about ending the strike and racist reporting?

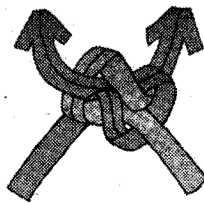
**Susan Van Gelder
Detroit**

I've worked with Hispanics and because of the language barrier they don't know how to ask for a raise. I try to teach them what to say in English. The employers try to play the race card, turning Black against white and against Hispanic. They're far away from home and are solely dependent on that job. It's like they're on automatic plantation. That's the nature of capitalism: exploitation pure and simple.

**Black worker
Memphis**

Added to all the police shootings of Blacks and Latinos in New York comes the latest — they now want half a million dollars for dum-dum bullets that shatter on impact, causing devastating wounds. They are banned for war by the Geneva Convention. The pretext is even sicker: to "protect innocent bystanders," since they shatter and don't ricochet! This is war, indeed.

**White worker
New York**



REVOLUTION AND THE DIALECTIC

What jumped out at me from Raya Dunayevskaya's Archives writing in

March was the Marx quote on time as the "space for human self-development." The early Greek philosophers had three different words for time. One was *chronos*, from which we get "chronology." A second was *kairos*, which is often translated as "a moment in time" and is an element that generates something new, and is not linear. Out of those two jammed together is *aeion* for which the word "eon" is a gross simplification. Each one of us has an *aeion*, a time and place for being and developing. Somewhere I think Marx picked all this up, and Raya understands Marx's sense of time as pertaining as well to space. Capitalism confines us in the sense of time and space, but throughout history, in all cultures, we find evidence of human beings struggling again and again to come to fullness and development.

**Dan
Los Angeles**

I could see something that relates to the "dialectic of development" that Raya wrote about, in the catfish worker who wrote in "Readers' Views" about how reading **Marxism and Freedom** helped her understand the meaning of her experiences. She recognized the categories Marx had made and how he analyzed capitalism, and it helps you see what needs to be uprooted.

**Student of Marxism
Tennessee**

The way Raya stressed the importance of the Populist movement in the Archives column in the January-February N&L reminded me of her critique of Engels on the world historic defeat of the female sex. Marx never considered any defeat historic because there was always one more revolution to make. The Populist movement wasn't a success, yet we don't file it away as a defeat.

**Jennifer Pen
San Francisco**

BRAINWASHING

Your paper is the only stateside source of what the international capitalists are doing all over the world to gain control of all people's ideology in capitalism's image. The paranoid effect of those spouting the "opiate of the masses" somehow needs to be counteracted. Maybe we need to prepare a socialist Constitution. Work, not pray, for our destiny!

**Steady reader
Florida**

Some men riding the Jackson line train were talking about the leader of the Heaven's Gate cult and the followers that killed themselves. "How could he brainwash them to make them kill themselves?" one asked. Another one spoke up, "They had to want to believe him." A Black worker jumped in, "I was brainwashed once. It was in the Army, when I was in Vietnam. They made us believe what we were doing was right." Now I understand.

**Straphanger
Chicago**

People are using "we've come a long way" to justify keeping us enslaved in an inferior position. We are entitled to the same freedom and the same share of the wealth as anybody.

**Activist for justice
USA**

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DENG, MAO AND THE CHINESE WORKERS

Deng's death is only a symbol of the end of Mao Zedong's time, a time in which the elites of China had been trying to make the country rich and powerful with a socialist revolution. After more than 80 years of struggle, the conclusion seems to be that "only capitalism can save China." That is the real tragedy of Chinese Marxists; probably also of the Marxists of the whole world.

In today's China the majority lay their hope heavily on the process of capitalization. The reason is simple. There has not been any theory to provide a socialist economic resolution for the new society. What we need is not a "negation of negation" because we have not yet had a real negation of capitalism. Passions and forces have had a great power to destroy, but not always construct the new. We saw passions and forces during the Cultural Revolution.

Deng's claim of a continuity with the original Chinese revolution was cut off in 1989 when the Army opened fire on the unarmed people. It changed the relationship of the Communist Party with the mass movement. Thereafter, the only force the Communist Party could depend on is capitalists and state bureaucrats.

The rulers are more afraid of Marxism than of bourgeois liberalism. The capitalists will have more freedom and political power but the working class will be pressed more strongly.

Chinese scholar in exile

Your editorial on Deng's death in the March issue was rooted in the revolt in China, intertwining that with the relationship between China and the rulers and masses in the U.S. It showed why the repression is harshest against those trying to organize independent labor unions. The U.S. capitalists are not selling to the Chinese as much as exploiting their labor and selling the products back to us, which makes them partners in the repression of Chinese workers. That's why there is a spin to the news, to keep us from knowing the real conditions, and

from thinking of others as human beings.

**Franklin Dmitryev
Memphis**



**PRISON
LIFE
AND
DEATH**

When workers in the U.S. kept fighting for human working conditions, the corporations simply exported the capital, technology and know how to countries where there were no regulations to stop them from maximizing their profits — using child labor in Bangladesh or India, prisoner/slave labor in China and other "most favored nations." But why ship all the manufacturing 10,000 miles or more when you can find the cheapest labor right at home in the explosively growing prison population? There the minimum wage is really cheap, as low as 23 cents an hour. Will the slogan "made by union labor in the U.S." now be changed to "made by prison labor in the U.S."? It would be more realistic.

**Correspondent
British Columbia**

"Prison culture" has become a metaphor for the whole of society. More than 20,000 jobs were added in the prison industry in California in the last year alone where more than 12 prisons were built in the last decade while only 2 new college campuses have been added to California's educational system. With over 140,000 prisoners, the Press is no longer allowed to interview prisoners since the passage of a new state law last year. It is a ticking bomb waiting to explode at any time.

**Cyrus Noveen
Los Angeles**

We need major exposure on death penalty injustices. Send reporters for exclusives from Texas Death Row. I will guarantee strong, powerful, sincere interviews from inmates whose efforts at solidarity are numerous. Be bold and get involved!

**Death Row prisoner
Texas**

REVOLUTIONARY FEMINISM

Maria Stewart, as Jennifer Pen put it in the March issue, "extended the dialectic of freedom to include a feminist perspective." She really included a lot of theory and practice in her work and ideas. Why is this the first time I ever heard of this woman? Ida B. Wells-Barnett was ahead of her time, too. Women — Black women in particular — are only now being brought into the light.

**Young feminist
Tennessee**

When I read about the Cambodian women garment workers making \$8 a month and trying to organize, it made me think of the U.S. garment workers making \$6 a month at the turn of the century, whose strike we celebrate on International Women's Day. When you realize that the sweatshops they fought against are back — and right here, not only in Cambodia — it makes it clear that what we are commemorating is that "the struggle continues."

**Women's liberationist
Chicago**

To say that the "dialectics of revolution" is what is missing from the book on **Feminist Interpretations of Hegel** is a devastating critique because a revolutionary goal was signified in the very name we chose in the 1960s: Women's Liberation Movement.

**Still a women's liberationist
Detroit**

I assisted in organizing the African Women's Leadership Institute in Entebbe-Uganda in March. It brought together women from all parts of Africa. Their commitment, determination and readiness for change was impressive. They know their changing situation has not been given to them. They won it and their mothers fought for it before them. They don't want to be seen only as women fighting for their rights but as people who belong to a society that is changing, and they are part of that change in the social, political and economic conditions of Uganda. It was a great experience not only for them but for me.

**African woman
England**

**DIALOGUE WITH
MARXIST-HUMANISM**

Insancil is a monthly Marxist-Humanist Turkish publication which is interested in the possibility of publishing some of Raya Dunayevskaya's works. We have already started to translate Kevin Anderson's essay "Uncovering Marx's yet unpublished writings" for them. We are also interested in your Afro-American, Afro-Asian, African, and other Third World studies and Bosnia-Herzegovina is also an important problem in Turkey.

**Karasin
Istanbul**

Your January 1995 issue reached me only in January 1997. While our Marxist Labor Party is small, it's the idea of the "state-capitalist character" of the preperestroika Soviet society which is the basis of our program. We are engaged in communist self-education and try to project Marxian ideas. The main thing I like in N&L is the Marxist-Humanism. I have been speculating in such terms for a long time and look forward to reading more of your works and contributing to your paper.

**New correspondent
Russia**

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Editorial

By mid-summer, all states will have customized their welfare laws according to the federal Welfare Reform Act. Far from tearing down the welfare state, the federal and state governments have conspired to reshape public assistance into a new labor regulatory system of the poor.

And hand-in-glove with welfare reform comes immigration reform whose bite will be felt as soon as April 1. From the impact of both sorts of legislation, millions of poor people, children and students, as well all immigrants, even those here legally, will fall into depths of exploitation not seen in this century.

'WORKER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM'

At the head of the pack turning back the clock is New York City. It has pioneered workfare which forces welfare recipients to toil for meager checks and subsidies. The new federal law passed by a Republican Congress and signed by Clinton during last year's election campaign, requires all states to have 25% of welfare recipients in work or training programs this year, and at least 50% by 2002.

In New York, this modern day slave labor system is called the "Work Experience Program," or WEP. The WEP workers call it the "Worker Exploitation Program." More than 125,000 WEP workers do jobs often previously performed by unionized municipal workers; the targeted number is 300,000. Nationally, over one million poor people will be herded into workfare. Already, some states are subsidizing the pay of new hires in private industry, an outright gift of free labor to the capitalists.

New York's WEP workers primarily do cleaning and clerical jobs alongside regular city employees. They receive no more than a little cash, food stamps and rent subsidies. Their jobs are changed every six months, and they have no chance of being hired permanently. Under

Central Africa upheaval

Without the help of opportunistic opposition leaders, Zaire's Mobutu would not have been able to survive the pro-democratic movement in 1991. Not only did he consolidate his power but he also divided the opposition parties and unveiled their true character. After 32 years of political leadership Mobutu was able to marginalise Zaireans to the lowest level of poverty and make himself one of the richest men in the world.

What is to become of the revolution in Zaire is yet too early to say. The Alliance of Democratic forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (AFDL) consists of two main forces, the Maoist and the Lumumbist (a Pan Africanist Force). The fact that these forces have so much in common does not in any way guarantee any revolution.

There is no doubt that the Zairean rebels are enjoying great support from their neighbouring countries, especially Uganda and Rwanda. The ideological relationship between the leaders of these countries and the rebel leaders is no hidden fact. Uganda is now almost seen as the ideological center for Pan-Africanism. The Central African region is so full of political dynamism that its consequences will have to go beyond the level of the pro-democratic era.

Now the SPLA of John Garang in Sudan is awaiting a final assault on Jaba, following the victories in Kurmuk and Yei. What will happen to the opposition front (NDA) in Sudan after the awaited victory in Jaba is yet to be known. Any vision to divide Sudan will be in the interest of the Islamic fundamentalists in Khartoum. It is also said that Savimbi has about 2000 men in Zaire to support the demoralised soldiers of Mobutu, proof that the fall of the dictator will also be celebrated in Angola.

The fall of Kisangani is not only of military significance for the rebels. It was here that the Maoists, under the leadership of Mulele in the '60s, were defeated militarily and morally. Here the pro-democratic movement was crushed in 1991 and it was here that the Zairean army was in mutiny and General Mahele was the man who put an end to mutiny in 1993. This is the same general who was appointed as the commander-in-chief before the fall of Kisangani, but he failed this time even with the presence of Serbian mercenaries.

The first foreign diplomat that visited Zaire after the recent return of Mobutu from France was the South African foreign minister in the name of peace negotiations, a sign of the revisionist tendency that is gaining more and more influence within the ranks of the ANC in South Africa. A South Africa that is aware of its historical role would openly support the liberation struggle of the Zairean people and not talk to a dictator who is falling apart.

The hysteric cries of France for military intervention in Zaire must be seen in the light of its interest in the country and not for the love of peace. France is among those countries that have not only been trying to give the struggle in Zaire a tribal conflict profile, but they have also been spreading lies that there is an ongoing systematic murdering of refugees and other ordinary people, an effort to mobilise opinion against the rebels.

It is without doubt that only a disciplined liberation force can register such great victories in a very short time. One thing is certain and that is, the Zairean people are not going to forget their historical past. It was the UN forces that were responsible for the arrest and murder of their young leader, Lumumba, and the dirty history of foreign forces, who have always the task of sabotaging the struggle of the people, will always be fresh in their minds. The fact that Mobutu will fall before he dies is about to become truth. —Ba Karang

Welfare, workfare, and immigrants

the new federal law, no one can receive welfare longer than five years.

If WEP workers are fired for any infraction of the rules or for demanding minimal rights such as a clean place to eat lunch, they are cut off welfare. Add to this horror the racism that makes Black and Latino welfare recipients the continuous targets of politicians.

WEP has been implemented with the complicity of labor leaders who made a devil's pact with Mayor Giuliani to allow WEP workers to perform the work of laid-off union workers, with the vague promise that some welfare workers may eventually be hired into regular jobs.

Municipal workers have felt threatened by their leaders' suicidal short-sightedness. Stanley Hill has faced rebellion in his own AFSCME locals, and when the Transit Workers Union president accepted a contract that would allow WEP workers to replace subway cleaners, there was tremendous rank-and-file anger and the contract passed only narrowly.

What neither the mayor nor the labor leaders counted on was the rebellion of the WEP workers themselves who formed WEP Workers Together!, a grass-roots, self-organized, self-conscious resistance to sweated labor conditions. They insist they are not going to work for nothing, doing the same work as — or replacing — others making a decent living. (See WEP stories in October, November



Chicago poor protest slave-wage future in workfare.

and December 1996 N&L.)

DRIVEN UNDERGROUND

Recent immigration "reforms" are tightly related to the assault on people receiving assistance. Forty percent of the expected savings in welfare will come from cutting off all benefits to residents (legal immigrants).

Dramatically new and relatively hushed-up in immigration law is that as of April 1, the "permanent resident" status of "legal" immigrant workers is not worth much anymore. Suddenly these workers are worse than second-class. They have no more access to social security benefits, including for disability, and their "green cards" can be seized and they can be deported for the slightest brush with the law. Many will go into the underground economy, their labor cheapened all the more, rather than face separation from families or destitution and repression in their home countries.

The results of workfare and of punishing undocumented immigrants are the same — they tie the hands of workers now subject to greater exploitation on the job and in their communities.

Capitalism gets an ideological bonus. When echoed or left unchallenged by labor leaders, politicians or even parts of the rank-and-file itself, the racist demonizing and scape-goating of welfare recipients and immigrants divides the working class.

And such rhetoric and the laws it advances intimidate those workers who may still have a few rights and want to exercise them to struggle against their own bosses. This makes it all the more tragic that the labor bureaucracy's response to both prongs of this regressive legislation has been too little, too late and too reluctant.

Just as New York City is in the vanguard of developing the workfare plan, so the magnificent WEP Workers Together! is showing all workers the way. When immigrant workers organize themselves and make their voices heard, whether in their march on Washington last Fall or new labor struggles, they too challenge the labor movement to wake up and rise to its full height.

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

unified Sudan. But lofty words don't always find their equal in deeds.

To begin with, its ideological roots are as soggy as the swamps of The Sud in the South. When it was consolidated in 1983 with help from the Ethiopian Stalinist Mengistu Mariam, it appeared to share the ideology of that regime. But in later statements the SPLM "dispels all ideas that [it] is a Communist Party with a rigid ideological outlook...[and] makes clear that [it] is a socialist movement, with a pragmatic outlook."²

Perhaps it is this "pragmatic outlook" which has led the SPLM/A to now accept military supplies from the CIA? Or perhaps "pragmatism" led it to form the National Democratic Alliance with the Umma and DUP parties, both of whom have been architects of the genocidal war in the South?

The SPLM/A has at times acted more like an army of occupation than of liberation. The famine deaths of over 200,000 southerners in 1988 was clearly the fault of the government. But the SPLM/A had a helping hand also. Their troops prevented relief trains from getting to besieged towns and many of their soldiers looted trains and villages.

In May of 1991 the Mengistu government of Ethiopia was overthrown. The SPLM leadership had refused to conduct talks with the Ethiopian rebels prior to their taking over. They subsequently lost their rear bases and lines of supply.³ Commanders Riak Machar, a Nuer, Gordon Kong, also a Nuer, and another leader, Lam Akol, a Shilluk, had been chafing under John Garang's autocratic leadership. Allegedly wanting more democracy within the movement; desiring the separation of the South as opposed to national unity; and sensing a possible winding down of the war, they led a coup against Garang, a Dinka. Garang's other 12 commanders stuck by him and the coup failed but caused the first of several major rifts.

The liberation struggle has since degenerated into tribal warfare. There is now a Machiavellian mosaic of militias in the South. This fratricidal bloodshed has cost thousands of civilian lives, southern civilian lives, the very people the SPLM/A was supposed to liberate.

The SPLM lacks a broad collective leadership. Most of the power is concentrated in one man—John Garang. What seems to be developing is a nascent cult of personality. Examples of this can be seen in the SPLM's treatment of internal dissidents. Suspected dissidents have been jailed, tortured and summarily executed without trials. Is this the "New Sudan"?

In the Nuba mountains, surrounded on all sides by the Sudan Defense Forces and Arab militias, subjected to high altitude bombings, and facing shortages of food and water, are a detachment of the SPLM/A under the leadership of Yusuf Kuwa Makki. They have been holding out for the past ten years. There are now only about

(2) John Garang, The Call for Democracy in Sudan (London: Kegan Paul International, 1992) p. 18

(3) Douglas H. Johnson and Gerard Prunier, Civil War in the Sudan, The Foundations and Expansion of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, p.138

SPLM and the new Sudan?

250,000 Nuba remaining in the mountains. The rest, some 2 million people, are scattered. Over 1 million face genocide in concentration camps in Khartoum. And untold thousands are dead.⁴

The Nuba are composed of not one single ethnic group but over 50. They comprise Christians, Muslims, and animists. These religions are not completely separated. There is much syncretism. Muslims and Christians are accorded equal respect. In fact, Commander Kuwa is a Muslim and his wife is a Christian. Kuwa expressed the concept of freedom of religion beautifully and succinctly when he stated, "Me, I am Muslim. My wife is Christian. Our children, we will let them decide for themselves what they want to believe."⁵

Despite the differences in religion and ethnicity, the Nuba are working and fighting collectively within the SPLM and outside it. They have formed a constituent assembly to represent the interest of all the ethnic groups, religions and remaining towns. In the Nuba mountains the peasantry have a democratic voice in conducting the struggle.

The Nuba are also reviving their culture and using it as a weapon in the struggle. As Kuwa said, "We dance so that we can fight and we fight so that we can dance."

What is unique about the Nuba is that they offer one of the few visions of what the Sudan could be. They are a diamond in a dung heap.

Then there is the Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace. It is a Southern Sudan women's organization. There is little information about them. But from the name of the organization it is obviously an expression of ideas counter to the carnage of this war.

We can only hope these very small diamonds are found, cut and polished for the rest of Sudan and the world to see.

—Robert Reed

(4) "The Tears of Orphans," Amnesty International, 1995, New York, p. 93

(5) "The Nuba: Sudan's Secret War," a BBC Documentary, Producer Julie Flint, 1995.

**Achilles Heel
of Western
'Civilization'**

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Cost of living + budget trickery = scam the working class

Caught between the campaign of some prominent right-wing economists and politicians to revise the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and his fear of strong opposition from the elderly and labor unions, President Clinton announced last month that he would delay deciding whether to form a commission to revise the CPI.

This decision represents a temporary victory for the opposition. Yet the campaign to revise the CPI has been accelerating in the past few months, winning the strong support of Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and House Majority Leader Trent Lott.

The immediate goal of this campaign, spearheaded by Michael Boskin, chief economic advisor under President Bush, is permanently to cut Social Security cost of living increases which are based on the CPI. A revision in the CPI would also lead to tax hikes and provide something of a quick fix to the government's budget deficit.

Yet the most insidious effect of the campaign is to make it acceptable to rewrite history by monkeying with official U.S. government statistics. For instance, neither the capitalist system nor its politicians would bear responsibility for the quarter-century-long decline in working people's standard of living, for the simple reason that the CPI revision would make the decline "disappear." Although political interference with official statistics is not new, the current campaign is interfering to an unprecedented degree.

The supposedly "objective" economic basis for the revision is that the current CPI is said to overstate the annual inflation rate by 1.1 percentage points. This number was obtained by Boskin hand-picking for his own commission those economists whose allegations of overstatement of inflation were the largest, and then

averaging their numbers; the Boskin commission did no independent research.

The mainstream press has almost invariably reported the Boskin commission's estimate without comment, thereby tacitly endorsing it. However, if inflation were overstated to this degree, this would imply that the increases in money incomes during the past third of a century actually represent such a large rise in living standards that, whereas today less than 15% of the U.S. population is officially poor, a majority of the population was poor back in the early 1960s!

It is not hard to see through the reasoning that arrives at this absurd conclusion. The whole issue boils down to how to deal with "product quality." Boskin and his allies argue that increases in product quality need to be taken into account — because the higher prices of, say, the cars of today as against the cars of thirty years ago partly

reflect "more for the money" instead of inflation.

Yet they quite conveniently disregard that their very own logic implies that decreases in product quality must also be taken into account. Thus, they argue that our cost of living really doesn't increase if we manage to keep our money expenditures down by, say, switching to SPAM when beef prices rise. They thereby ignore the fact that a lower standard of living for the same monetary cost is equivalent to a higher monetary cost to maintain the same standard of living.

Were one to argue consistently that product quality matters, or that product quality doesn't matter, we'd have some cases in which the CPI currently overstates inflation more or less balanced out by the cases in which it understates inflation. The Boskin commission is trying to lie with statistics by having it both ways.

It is not President Clinton alone who fears opposition to the CPI revision. Those behind the campaign to revise it have been proceeding cautiously and methodically, and hiding their politics behind a screen of "objective" technical gobbledegook, precisely because they know that their actions could ignite widespread opposition from present and future Social Security recipients and from workers whose incomes are tied to the CPI. But it is politics that is motivating the campaign to revise the CPI, and it is politics that will decide this issue, one way or another.

— Andrew Kliman

Essay Article

(Continued from page 5)

these feminist organizations are "the few collective spaces available for envisioning and enacting alternative futures," but yet the internal contradictions pointed to by those writing about the collectives show the need for more than just decentralized organizing — they show, indeed, the difficulty of transcending class and race hierarchies, of confronting the various ideological guises of nationalism and globalized capitalism, of working out the relationship between intellectuals and working class women without some unifying philosophy grounded in what you are for.

In a time when feminists have all but abandoned the idea of revolution, **Feminist Genealogies** is an important contribution to the battle of ideas, especially its candid examination of the pitfalls of nationalism, classism, racism etc. that continue to plague the women's movement. Ultimately though, its exposure of the contradictions we face as feminists of color, shows the need for us to grapple with the totality of the dialectics of revolution, not only by refusing to make false separations between categories like race, gender, class — but also by going back to the history of women's struggles and to a philosophy that can both find meaning in those struggles and absorb our own struggles for a free future. Can anything less ensure freedom as our vision and our goal?

Bridgeport

(Continued from page 1)

And when such lynchings happen, for lynching is the name racist incidents like the beating of Lenard Clark by three white Bridgeport youths are known by Chicago's Black Mississippi-rooted population who compared it to the lynching of Emmett Till, the public shock and amazement is that things like this continue in 1997. Behind the public shock and amazement lies some sort of metaphysical assumption that time should have cleansed the heart of racism even if many of Chicago's neighborhoods have themselves remained ethnically neighbored.

What comes on the scene at such times — and the Good Friday/Easter holiday season provided natural timing — were the hypocritical appeals to the heart for racial harmony from the very leaders who maintain Chicago's apartheid barriers, or who have ideologically pimped them.

Mayor Richard M. Daley, until recently a resident of Bridgeport, was shamed into making a holiday appeal for racial harmony though he inherited and reinforces the apartheid legacy passed down by his father, former Mayor Richard "Boss" Daley. Chicago's archdiocese does little to challenge ethnic apartheid either in its educational institutions or in its places of worship but spoke sweetly about racial harmony Easter Sunday. Bill Clinton, who has an uncanny ability to feel everyone's pain, especially Black folk, denounced as a "vicious crime" the attack on Lenard Clark while aiding and abetting the vicious crime of stigmatizing Black youth as a menace to society.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson and Minister Louis Farrakhan, for their part, called for racial healing this Easter '97 instead of righteous confrontation with Chicago's apartheid. Farrakhan went so far as to oppose any marches and demonstrations that would break down Chicago's racial barriers. And on the evening before Good Friday, that was exactly what his nationalist epigones did their best to carry out as the intensity of the protest grew with the expectation that the militant, integrated march was about to cross the 35th Street bridge.

Heavily monitored by a hapless bevy of Black patriachs whose frustration ran high as the march took on a life of its own, and a cordone of Chicago police, the marchers were fired up nonetheless by the interaction amongst themselves and with the Black residents that encouraged them on. Although momentary, the intensity of this anti-racist march with its chants of "No Justice! No Peace!", and the march the next day that did go through Bridgeport, revealed a militance that has grown ever more discontented with the rhetoric and hypocrisy of racial healing and harmony.

No more Lenard Clarks!...or next time it will jump.

—Lou Turner

Cabrini-Green

(Continued from page 1)

Cabrini. Last year, in another area of the city, they leveled buildings in Henry Horner Homes in "preparation" for the Democratic National Convention. Meanwhile, residents in the Jane Addams Homes, near the University of Illinois, are being subjected to an intense effort by the city to force them out.

The residents at Cabrini and other projects may not have a specific plan, but they know that what is in their best interest has nothing to do with this "redevelopment." They know they will be made homeless or shipped into other communities that accept Section 8 housing, which is harder and harder to find nowadays.

At the press conference, protesters said, "We want to be heard. We're tired and fed up and ain't gonna take it anymore. This is our day!" This was enough for the mayor's office to "invite" the residents to stay. They went so far as to say "this is your meeting," which was met with, "None of us were invited, so how is this our meeting?"

With every lie told by the mayor's office, the residents shot back the truth. When a Daley stooge said, "We'll build schools, parks, child care and new housing to replace the isolation of the highrises," the residents yelled back: "For everyone? It's not for everyone; we know who you're doing it for." When the stooges said, "It's about improving the quality of life," the residents shot back: "It's about making money! If it was about improving the quality of life, why have you already pushed people out onto the streets?"

All this will not go unchallenged. The fact that Fernanda Royal, a resident of one of the buildings in Cabrini, was shot point blank by CHA police for arguing with a cop less than a week after this demonstration, where cops busted down residents' doors and tore up residents' apartments, raises the possibility of mass rebellion in one of the country's most segregated cities.

—Sonia Bergonzi and Peter Wermuth

Prize for prison hell

Joe Apayo, sheriff of Maricopa County, Ariz., won an award for the "Most Efficient Prison system of 1996" from President Clinton. He shouldn't have won it.

He deliberately overcrowds the prison; he says he can feed people for 30 cents a day; he believes it doesn't matter if they have baloney sandwiches three times a day, or if the baloney is green. He says it isn't rotten.

He says there's television in his prison: they get to watch Newt Gingrich's college course or the weather channel they have to know what the weather is like when they go out to work on the chain gangs.

He does have chain gangs who work when it's 120 degrees outside. He's being investigated because last summer someone died on the chain gang. Apayo says that was the prisoner's own fault because he broke the law and became a criminal.

To keep prisoners from escaping, he has armed guards guarding the chain gangs. Sometimes if they are working too far away to make it back to the prison at night, he supplies tents for them to sleep in. It's an armed camp; if they try to escape they are shot down.

Also to prevent escape he has the prisoners wear pink underwear. This is not to prevent escape; this is humiliation. All it does is intimidate and demean the prisoners. He tries to take away their dignity and self-esteem.

The prison-industrial complex does not allow prisoners to work for even the minimum wage. The government thinks it's cutting back on the military, but all it is doing is going from a military machine to a prison industrial machine.

Much of the office furniture in politicians' offices is made by prisoners. We did away with slavery in 1865, but our new slavery is the impoverished, the minorities, and our prison population.

—D.P.

'Nasty' immigrant code

Los Angeles — A new immigration law passed last year and scheduled to go into effect on April 1 is wreaking havoc on the lives of many immigrants in southern California. On that day people without legal documents will be given six months to leave the country unless they have initiated some legalizing process as a waiver.

Immigration reform will be a lethal blow to a population that is by no means prepared to confront the new level of nastiness. Anyone who is here without a visa will have six months to leave unless they have a waiver. A waiver is any litigation they initiated to obtain legal status.

The law is so poorly put together that they are going to have many lawsuits. As **La Opinion**, the Los Angeles Spanish daily, put it the other day: "A glance at this law shows that it will make it next to impossible to apply as a political refugee, putting more than 200,000 Central Americans at risk of deportations."

This law was supposed to go into effect on Nov. 1 of last year, but as an act of compassion Clinton extended it till April 1. Those who are fooled by Clinton's "kindness" should know that civil rights laws protecting immigrants from police have been eroding under Clinton.

Since 1994 the U.S. and Mexican governments have agreed to placing the Army on the borders. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has received \$50 million to develop a computer program to keep track of people in cooperation with other police agencies.

During the last three years local prohibitions against such cooperation have slowly been changed to apply the new immigration regulations without any legal barriers. One Spanish network recently reported on legislation that gives police the right to act as INS agents in California.

The new immigration reform increases the level of nastiness on the part of the well-to-do and best organized influential people to enact the legal tools needed to eradicate people who are no longer useful to them.

—Antonio

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Mexico in state of total crisis and mass resistance

(Continued from page 1)

ment to consider repealing the earlier changes to Article 27 of the Constitution, which allowed communal lands (ejidos) to be privatized, this was a step forward. Other parts of the agreements stipulated greater local autonomy in distributing government resources, and freedom to exercise ancient forms of self-governance, "guaranteeing the participation of women under equal conditions."

ZAPATISTAS IN REVOLT

After eight months of Zedillo's war maneuvers, the EZLN broke off further negotiations in September. The Cocopa (the commission mediating the dispute, made up of representatives from the four parties in the legislature) then drafted a shorter version of the agreements that would serve as a constitutional reform proposal, which was to be either rejected or accepted by the government and the EZLN. The Zapatistas accepted it, since it included the points mentioned above, while the Zedillo administration offered a counter-proposal which effectively nullified the original agreements it had signed nearly a year earlier.

On January 11th the EZLN rejected the government's proposal, pointing out that each right "won" in the earlier accords was now postulated in such a way as to give the federal authorities discretionary powers over them once again. On March 4th Cocopa said they would not fulfill their original intention of presenting their proposal to Congress because with the President's opposition it "had no viability of legislative approval."

Since January, Zedillo still speaks about his interest in "dialogue" even as he increases the flow of troops into the region. This total breakdown of confidence in the government has led the EZLN to alert its supporters of an imminent crackdown.

The government has grown increasingly unwilling to offer a peaceful solution to any of the crises it faces. At the end of January in the capital, for example, 200 police violently evicted the street sweepers on hunger strike from the state of Tabasco who have been demanding their jobs back for over two years now. (Several hundred were fired when they refused to do favors for their local political bosses.) Another contingent of the same workers immediately came to replace them, and it is this militancy which explains why over 2,000 army troops now patrol the streets of Mexico City every day, despite the government's claim that it is to "root out corruption" in the police force.

FRACTURED RULING CLASS

The ruling class has also found itself buried in a new internal battle, which appears as serious conflicts in the "battle against drugs," the scuttling of long-promised electoral reform, and the flight of stalwart PRIistas from the party. While it is no surprise to the Mexican people that General Gutierrez Rebollo, the nation's drug czar, was in cahoots with one of the most notorious drug kingpins, Carrillo Fuentes, it no doubt came as a surprise to Gutierrez Rebollo to be singled out as a fall man, as he was comfortably living in splendor right in Mexico City.

On nearly a daily basis the bourgeoisie offers up a new scapegoat, both to tie the blame for the spiraling crisis, as well as to make it appear as if the nonexistent "rule of law" is just around the next corner. Even the once-universal call for nominally breaking the PRI's monopoly on power is disappearing from their discourse, as Zedillo recently fired the Attorney General, who had been the only token member of an opposition party in his government.

All of this has increased the possibility of another capital flight such as the one that accompanied the assassination in 1994 of presidential candidate Colosio. The infighting among the bourgeoisie will continue so long as they cannot find a solution to the rebellion,

Liu Binyan letter

(Continued from page 4)

results would be even more terrifying.

However Deng Xiaoping's death appears already to have broken the surface stability of China that followed the suppression of the 1989 democracy movement. The rioting of Xinjiang's Uighurs has not yet subsided; in Beijing and several southern cities there still continue to occur incidents of explosions. Recently in Beijing, Shanghai, and Harbin there have occurred successive incidents of self-immolation and the suicide of entire families of unemployed workers, which also indicate that the patience of workers is nearing exhaustion.

From now until the Fifteenth Communist Party Congress is convened this September, internal Party struggles and struggles among all kinds of social forces will all develop fiercely. The working class has already replaced the university students of 1989 and have become a tremendous force influencing China's future development.

—Liu Binyan, March 21, 1997

Liu Binyan, China's foremost journalist for the past 25 years, was forced into exile in the 1980s because of his penetrating critiques of Deng's policies.

which makes Zedillo more anxious by the day to put a lid on the revolts.

THE ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

The opposite, in fact, is the case, as is evident from the fact that other rebellions have appeared in the country in the past year, most notably in several southwestern states. The Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) and other armed rebellions there also pose a threat, though we should point out that none do so on the level of the Chiapas revolt. Carlos Montemayor, a writer who has researched Mexico's guerrilla warfare history, has said that "the isolation the EPR needed to develop its military skills has prevented them from developing their ideas."



Occupation of town hall in Chiapas

Clearly, it is the idea of profound social change that inspires the Chiapas peasantry. Consider the fact that on February 1st the largest Zapatista march, since the initiation of the conflict, took place in the streets of San Cristobal de las Casas. Nine thousand came out, principally to demand that "Cocopa not allow itself to be intimidated by Zedillo," and that their (Cocopa's) proposal be taken directly to Congress.

It is not only the amount of support the EZLN receives that differentiates it from groups like the EPR, but the extent to which the EZLN can be seen at times to be not so much a single organization as an idea. For example, several weeks ago, on Feb. 25 in the municipality of Ocosingo four villages formally declared the establishment of the "autonomous region of Tzotz Choj." Thirteen commissions were formed that would deal with such things as security, education, health, etc. "with the aim of beginning to work on the solution of our problems" and "to have the freedom to self-govern ourselves." The coordinator of the Coalition of Autonomous Organizations of Ocosingo stated at the opening meeting that, "the government may pretend not to acknowledge the autonomy we already have in the Constitution, but the communities through their actions have been developing it for many years."

The debate between the EZLN leadership and Zedillo, on the one hand, and the EZLN and Cocopa, on the other, becomes the rallying point for new revolts that break out. There is a confidence among the poor that the very (wrong) idea upon which the PRI government rests is being explicitly rebuked, on a national level, by the articulation of another idea, that of their mass movement.

This relationship between the EZLN leadership and the movement that has developed over three years is

Miladin Zivotic (1930-1997), Serbian philosopher-activist

We mourn the death and honor the memory of Miladin Zivotic, who wrote on Marxist humanism and who was an opponent of the single party state, of racism and of genocide.

Attacked by both the Milosevic government in Serbia and its nationalistic opposition, which never invited him to speak at any of its mass rallies, Zivotic, himself a Serb, stated just before his death: "The first act any new president of this country must do is travel to Sarajevo and beg for forgiveness, just as [West German Chancellor] Willy Brandt did when he traveled to Warsaw. This is the only way we can begin to heal ourselves" (*New York Times*, March 6, 1997).

A supporter not only of Bosnia but also of the persecuted Albanians in Serb-ruled Kosovo, he also founded the Belgrade Circle, a large group of opposition intellectuals and youth.

In an earlier 1967 essay, "Between Two Types of Modern Culture" (published in English in *Praxis: Yugoslav Essays*, Boston: D. Reidel, 1979, pp. 187-97), Zivotic attacked both Tito's Communist authoritarianism and Western consumerism. That essay also included a prescient attack on particularistic forms of nationalism which he saw as a false alternative to Tito's rule:

The reactions to such an authoritarian cultural policy may appear in the form of a particularist conception of cultural pluralism, that sort of cultural pluralism which emphasizes whatever separates man from man, that pluralism which serves as a

very new, and not only for Mexico. It suggests there is a possibility of getting beyond the mistakes of a radical Left that has historically not known how to listen to the voices from below.

At the same time we should point out that without a firmer coalescence of the two forces of revolt, the peasantry and the urban workers, there is the threat that the new passion released will merely expend itself rebelling against the superior military might of the governments of Zedillo and the U.S. The Zapatistas have known this all along, but they have also uncritically reached out for support to a "civil society," no doubt because they fear being isolated, which has very different aims than those of the most oppressed. Their alliance this past year with the upper middle-class debtors movement, known as "El Barzon," is an example of this.

Over 100 years ago Karl Marx pointed out that while peasant revolts which defend their communal relations can serve as a "regenerative force" towards a new society, they will not succeed in getting there without the "complement" of the proletarian revolts. (See the drafts of his 1881 letter to Vera Zasulich as well as the 1882 Preface to the *Communist Manifesto*.) The greatest solidarity we can express with Mexico at this critical moment is to show that there are others with confidence in this concept of total freedom.

Is Latin America's foreign debt illegal?

New York—At a conference entitled "Is Latin America's Foreign Debt Illegal?" held March 14-15, a number of experts put forth the idea what it is, and explained why. Put on by North American Conference on Latin America and The New School, it was a forerunner to an international conference taking place in July in Venezuela, sponsored by the Latin American Parliament. The organizers hope to declare the bulk of the region's debilitating foreign debt illegal and challenge it in the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

The speakers explained that "the debt crisis" of the 1980s is no longer news because the Latin American countries are paying their foreign debts. The crisis now is how those payments are hurting their populations. Latin America has been forced to give foreign capital access to its markets and to pay high interest rates. Debt is being paid by gearing their economies for export, by privatization, short-term investments, and drug money. Social services are being slashed and unemployment and poverty are growing. In short, their economies are being run for the benefit of international financial institutions and the high-income 20% of the population, at the expense of the 80% who are poor.

Many speakers called the debt a form of political control. On March 2, Venezuela had its largest demonstration in 30 years against poverty conditions. In Peru, one-half of all tax revenues go to service the foreign debt; instead of fighting this, the government got the IMF to promise loans for social services right before the last election.

The idea of declaring the debt illegal is based on the fact that it is immoral, as well as the fact that much debt was incurred by corrupt and/or dictatorial past governments, and was increased recently by unethical dealings between current governments and the banks.

—Anne Jaclard

front for special, selfish interests...

Under these conditions intellectual, cultural, and particularistic pluralism appear as a form of the struggle to strengthen rather than to transcend national characteristics, as a form of glorification of whatever is special and indigenous to a particular national culture rather than of what is universally human in it...

Rooting this critique in Marx's analysis of bourgeois egoism in his 1843 "Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*," Zivotic also wrote that "only in the degree to which the class structure of society and the class separation of man into an alienated, authoritarian sphere and a private, selfish sphere is truly transcended... will it be possible to overcome all cultural separatism and to develop a universal culture."

In 1975, Zivotic and seven other prominent philosophy professors connected to the Marxist humanist journal *Praxis* were fired by Tito from their university positions, and their journal closed. This group, dubbed the Belgrade Eight, included Mihailo Markovic. But Zivotic's path later diverged from that of Markovic, who in the 1990s betrayed everything he had once stood for by joining forces with Milosevic.

Zivotic's life and death should remind the world of the deeply revolutionary and humanist tradition within Yugoslav and Serbian thought and culture, a tradition which needs to be renewed today if Serbia is to find a way out of the abyss into which it has fallen.

—Kevin Anderson

Youth

by Kevin Michaels

"School reform" is a point on the agenda of many of those in power at all levels of government today. These critics argue that standardized test scores are declining (a contention not borne out by statistics) and that faith in public education has disappeared. Whether it is argued that the cause of the problem is the power of teachers' unions or a national decline in moral values, school privatization is more often than not offered as the solution. The goal of school reformers is to achieve a radically privatized education system, one in which religion plays a prominent role. In short, to destroy the idea that education is a public responsibility.

The ideological drive to demonize public schools has been underway for a long time. Milton Friedman contributed to it in the '50s and '60s, but the event which seemed to crystallize things was the Reagan administration's release in 1983 of a paper called "A Nation At Risk." The document purported that the quality of the public education system was so low that it threatened the ability of the country to compete in a globalized economy. Privatization advocates basked in the attention the report received, without mentioning the fact that a short-lived privatization experiment in several cities called "performance contracting" failed miserably in the early 1970s. Plans for vouchers which parents could use to send their children to private schools became popular.

The push for privatization gained momentum

Capital consumes the forest

Memphis, Tenn. — Fifteen of us attended an educational multimedia presentation on March 2 by activists from Media Rights and from Katuah Earth First!, a group involved with the Dogwood Alliance. The presentation, the first in a tour of Southern communities, included speakers, video, live folk music, discussion and a literature table. To say that the presentation was about the clearcutting of mature and old growth forests would be too narrow. It was also a critical look at the exploitation of the workers and their communities by the timber industry.

In the latter half of this century, we have seen an extreme shift in the practices of the timber industry. This shift has occurred on two levels. One is the increased use of resources by an increasingly international capitalism driven by short-term profits. The other, closely related, is the development of more "efficient" systems of tree "harvesting" and processing.

International capitalism is not concerned with the development of a sustainable society. Rather, it is concerned with the efficient use of natural resources, in this case people, trees and metals for machinery. These "resources" are to be extracted and used for the further development of corporate profits, generally stated as "economic development."

In the past forests would be selectively cut by timber workers based on the quality of the wood, the needs of a local or regional economy, and, to some degree, forest health. This timber industry employed many people in all stages of tree harvesting and processing, resulting in high-quality whole wood products.

As the capitalist system has changed, however, there has been a shift to a highly automated system in which whole forest ecosystems are quickly and completely removed from the earth's surface by just a few workers. The trees, regardless of age, size, species, and so on, are sliced down by bladed vehicles, transported to a chip mill, debarked, chipped, loaded onto barges and then shipped to Pacific Rim countries for processing into paper, which is then sold in the global market at a very high price.

The majority of timber-related jobs have been or are being eliminated as the diverse forest ecosystems are being replaced by neatly lined rows of just a couple species of trees — tree farms which are basically void of the previous biological diversity.

The good news is that much is being done to oppose this social-ecological destruction. Here in the Southeast a vibrant resistance has grown. The Dogwood Alliance, perhaps the newest voice, is diverse and may prove to be very effective. Katuah Earth First! and Media Rights seem to be presenting a radical, well thought out analysis of corporate capitalism.

—Eli Walker

School privatization threatens future

throughout the Reagan years, however, until in 1990 a company called Education Alternatives Inc. (EAI) secured a contract with the Dade County, Florida school system to run an elementary school. In 1992 the company made a bigger splash when the Baltimore school system asked it to begin running nine of its schools. Around the same time a company called the Edison Project — co-directed by an ex-Yale president — announced plans to create a nationwide chain of private schools.

Neither EAI nor the Edison Project has met with the success privatization boosters hoped for. The students in EAI's Baltimore schools have not shown the improvement the company led parents to expect and few other systems have invited EAI in. Edison Project plans have not materialized yet.

Privatization can take other forms though, and one that seems to be increasingly more prevalent is the charter movement. Charter schools are private schools operated by an entity such as a religious group which has received permission in the form of a "charter" from a state's government. They receive public funds but exist independently of public school structure and regulation. At least 20 states now have laws which permit charter schools.

Despite what its backers say, privatization fails to produce results. The school boards of Milwaukee and Washington, D.C. backed away from plans to bring EAI in

after reviewing its performance in Baltimore. It hurts, too. Wages paid to school workers such as cooks, bus drivers and janitors who have been privatized are substantially lower than those traditionally paid by public schools. Teachers' jobs are threatened by the use of "interns"—in EAI's case interns are paid only \$7 an hour.

There is a real danger that the pace of privatization, in whatever form it takes, will begin to quicken soon. Without question, those who will be hurt the most are those who are already underserved by the current system—Black and Latino students in urban areas with no real tax base. The potential for profit making in these areas is slim, so the question becomes this: if there is no social commitment to education, how will these students be educated? It's not one the forces for privatization are concerned with. The future they want is one in which the have-nots will be walled off from the haves, without having to live nearby or having to send their children to the same schools. It's a future that is becoming more real every day.

Voices of Ogoni youth

New York — Goodluck Diigbo, president of a national youth council of the Ogoni people in Nigeria, spoke at a meeting sponsored by the New York branch of the environmentalist Sierra Club in late March.

Beginning by stating that, "What is happening in Nigeria should concern a human being no matter where she or he is," he emphasized that 19 Ogoni are still in prison a year and a half after the military regime (backed by the Shell Oil Company) executed eight activists along with poet Ken Saro-Wiwa. According to the American Committee on Africa, two of these prisoners have gone blind because of maltreatment.

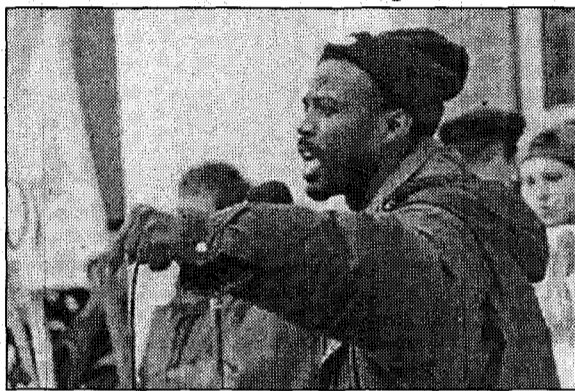
The jails were further crowded late last year, and at least two people killed, after activists spoke to Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan during his visit to Nigeria. (This did not deter Farrakhan, upon returning to the U.S., from endorsing the military regime of General Sani Abacha.)

Another speaker was Hafsad Abiola, the daughter of Moshod Abiola, who won the Nigerian presidential election in 1993, and has been jailed since. She described how her mother (also campaigning against the military regime last summer) was shot in the forehead on a Lagos street at mid-day, 200 yards from a police roadblock.

She described in detail the spreading democracy movement of the period up until 1993, precipitated by the thousands of workers and students who took to the streets in 1988.

—Victor Hart

Amherst occupation



A six-day building occupation by students demanding support for minority education at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst ended successfully on March 8. Students and university officials signed off on a list of 21 administrative commitments to increase recruitment and retention for minority students and faculty. A major unmet demand of students was the provision of on-campus child care.

Life of Judi Bari, eco-revolutionary

Judi Bari, who died on March 2, will be remembered as a leader in militant ecological activism and as the person most responsible for bringing Earth First! together with timber workers to fight giant corporations razing the old-growth forests of Northern California. Creative and gutsy a fighter as she was, it is just as important to remember her as a revolutionary not only in practice but in philosophy.

In her youth in Maryland, Bari "majored in anti-Vietnam war rioting," as she put it with her famous sense of humor. As a postal worker she did union organizing and led a wildcat strike at a bulk mailing center. After moving to California in 1979, she was active in solidarity with Central America's revolutionary movements.

In the late 1980s Bari's work as a carpenter moved her to oppose the destruction of old-growth redwoods. She never lost her passion for justice, and for labor in particular. Rather, she helped transform Earth First! by making her passion for social justice organic to environmental action. Seeing the struggle for freedom as all-rounded, Bari not only fought anti-abortion fanatics, she battled male chauvinism and macho attitudes in Earth First!.

In a part of rural California where many people's jobs depend on logging, she argued that "The interests [of forest defenders and timber workers] coincide because both the forests and the workers are exploited by out-of-town corporations, whose policy is to liquidate the forests and then leave" (interview in December 1993 *Capitalism Nature Socialism*). Bari was a prime agi-

tator in the campaign to disavow tree spiking, a form of sabotage that could have killed sawmill workers.

Such uniting of workers and ecological activists under a radical banner brought two attempts on Bari's life. After the second, a car bombing, Bari filed suit against the FBI and the Oakland Police, uncovering evidence of an FBI cover-up and disinformation in an attempt to disrupt Earth First!

The disability and constant pain Bari suffered the rest of her life could not stop her activism. She played a vital role in organizing the massive actions for Headwaters Forest in 1995 and 1996. She also published a book, *Timber Wars and Other Writings* (Common Courage Press, 1994).

In the years after the bombing, Bari put a new stress on the need for a "theory of revolutionary ecology," as seen especially in her article "Revolutionary Ecology." She wrote, "This system [of global corporate capitalism] cannot be reformed. It is based on the destruction of the earth and the exploitation of the people...This is why I believe that serious ecologists must be revolutionaries."

Unfortunately, while she took pains to dissociate deep ecology from its right wing, she equated Marx's Marxism — a philosophy whose concept of all-sided human liberation called for transforming the relationship between humanity and nature as well as labor and the man/woman relationship — with its opposite, the totalitarian state-capitalism of Russia and China.

Bari thought that Marxists and socialists assume that "the relationship of the society to the earth...will stay the same as it is under capitalism..." What would it have meant if such a creative activist/thinker had been aware that Marx expressed a totally different attitude? Of private property in land, capitalist or otherwise, he wrote: "instead of a conscious and rational treatment of the land...as the inalienable condition for the existence and reproduction of the chain of human generations, we have the exploitation and the squandering of the powers of the earth..."

Despite her misconceptions about Marx, Bari held that socialism was not inherently anti-ecological. She espoused "biocentrism" with a humanist bent: "finding a more human way to decide what we need and how to produce it."

Therefore, her appeal to "the ecology movement" is "to stop considering itself as separate from the social justice movement....A revolutionary ecology movement must also organize among poor and working people....[A] revolutionary ideology in the hands of working people can bring the system to a halt." —Franklin Dmitryev

"What makes the press the most powerful lever for promoting culture and the intellectual education of the people is precisely the fact that it transforms the material struggle into an ideological struggle, the struggle of flesh and blood into a struggle of minds, the struggle of need, desire, empiricism into a struggle of theory, of reason, of form."

—Karl Marx, 1842

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Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

As we go to press, rebel forces, having taken the last large city in the east, Kisangani, stand poised to move on Kinshasa, the capital. The French and American military have each gathered forces nearby, ostensibly to evacuate their citizens, but one never knows... On the other hand, the sense of exhilaration felt by the masses at their impending liberation from 30+ years of brutal dictatorship is palpable everywhere.

As with all revolutionary changes, whole pages of history, long dormant, spring to life once again. For example, even the name of the country is now in question. The name "Congo"—an African kingdom, the Bakongo, was already long in place when the Belgian colonialists first put their blood-stained hands on the

Nigeria charges Soyinka

The illegitimate and barbarous Nigerian government of General Sani Abacha charged the exiled writer and freedom activist Wole Soyinka with treason in connection with a series of bombings that have recently plagued the military. The charge came after Soyinka challenged Abacha for calling him a "terrorist." Following are excerpts from Soyinka's statement:

*When I wrote in my latest book, **The Open Sore of the Continent**, that "the judicial murder of the Ogoni nine and the continued decimation of Ogoni people was...Nigerian experimentation with ethnic cleansing, authorised and sustained by the Nigerian despot General Sani Abacha," some critics in foreign ministries described this as the language of an activist given to dramatising his opponents' action.*

Prior to this grotesque display of savagery by Abacha, he had acceded to the plot of the chieftain of his Ton-Ton Macoutes...to fabricate a coup d'etat. Those who succeed as, or are suspected of acting as, couriers of details of the secret kangaroo court proceedings of those alleged to be involved in the coup, are rounded up, tried in minutes and sentenced to stretches varying from seven years to life imprisonment...

Now that Abacha has prepared a list of 14 people, myself included, for a charge of "levying war against the Federal Republic of Nigeria by conspiring with others to explode bombs" and "causing explosion in several parts of Nigeria," perhaps some will see why Ogoniland is only the model for the actualisation of a totalitarian onslaught on politically sophisticated sections of the Nigerian polity which have dared expose and confront the power obsession of a minuscule but obdurate hegemony.

The full statement by Wole Soyinka is available electronically via www.mg.co.za.

Unemployment march

A few weeks ago, some 600 far left activists from throughout Europe gathered in Brussels to continue their efforts for a "European march against unemployment and homelessness" which will culminate on June 14 in Amsterdam outside a meeting of the European Union. Demands include the 35 hour week throughout Europe. The march will begin symbolically on April 14 in Tangier, Morocco and in Sarajevo, apparently to call attention both to the war in Bosnia and to anti-immigrant racism.

Congo-Zaire: What is next?

country in the 19th century — was good enough for the left revolutionary and independence fighter Patrice Lumumba and his Congolese National Movement. Why then, the rebels are asking, should we go on using the name "Zaire," created out of thin air by the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko?

One page of history, however, is not being mentioned by rebel leader Laurent Kabila, himself a longtime follower of Lumumba. That is the CIA's role and that of President Eisenhower, admitted even by a 1975 U.S. Senate report, in the murder of Lumumba. The U.S. colossus, so fearful of revolution in Africa, poured over \$1 billion in aid to Mobutu after they helped him come to power in 1965, ostensibly cutting off that aid in the last few years.

Congo-Zaire, besides its strategic location—it has borders with nine other countries—contains 60% of the world's cobalt, plus substantial deposits of uranium, diamonds, and gold.



Zaireans celebrate rebel takeover of Kisangani.

Middle East cauldron

Israel's reactionary Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, ever the provocateur, has once again brought the Arab-Israeli cauldron to the boiling point. In March, he made three moves, each a calculated insult to the Palestinian Arabs: (1) He began construction of a large new Jewish housing complex in predominantly Arab East Jerusalem. (2) He ordered Palestinian Authority (PA) offices in Jerusalem to close. (3) He announced that he would evacuate 9%, not the expected 30%, of the West Bank territories Israel still controls.

The reaction from Arab fanatics was all too predictable, something Netanyahu may even have hoped for. Within days, a Jordanian soldier, apparently mentally unbalanced, slaughtered seven Israeli schoolgirls at the border. Jordanian King Hussein's condolence call on the bereaved Jewish families, an unprecedented act by an Arab ruler, seemed to calm the waters.

Then, a Palestinian terrorist suicide bomber, apparently a Muslim fundamentalist, murdered three Israelis at a cafe in Tel Aviv by setting off a suitcase bomb while he sat drinking coffee. The bombing was carried out on Purim, the Jewish holiday, which in 1994 was marked by Jewish terrorist Baruch Goldstein as the occasion to murder 40 Arabs at a Hebron mosque.

Street demonstrations and pitched battles by Palestinian youths against Israeli troops have broken out in Hebron, restrained by Palestinian Authority (PA) police. In response to this and the terror bombing in Tel Aviv, Netanyahu has stoked the fires of resentment even further by his incendiary statements blaming, without offering any evidence, PA leader Yasir Arafat for having allowed the attack in Tel Aviv. Before this, Netanyahu's standing among Israeli voters, Israel's Arab friends and the U.S., was sinking rapidly. Will Netanyahu and his tacit allies among the rejectionist fanatics win the day? In these recent events, they have definitely been the victors.

This is what motivates France to cling to Mobutu, and the U.S. to play the other card, tacitly backing the rebels

The rebels are also supported by Rwanda, Uganda, and probably Tanzania. Much has been made by Mobutu and France of this "foreign involvement," but

it should be remembered that Lumumba and other African revolutionaries always called for African unity, never accepting as permanent the old arbitrary colonial borders.

The key issue is whether after victory the rebels will allow all of this vast country's ethnic groups and political opposition tendencies to have a voice in determining the future. At the moment, Mobutu's brutality, plus that of his army and his bizarre last-minute allies among the Rwandan Hutu *genocidaires* plus the

Serbian mercenaries he brought in, has probably united the masses more behind Kabila and his forces than at any time since the Lumumba era.

A big test will come in Kinshasa, however. How will the rebels respond to claims by other longtime oppositionists with strong popular followings such as Etienne Tshisekedi, repeatedly jailed by Mobutu? Will the old elite and corrupt officialdom be allowed to continue under new leadership, keeping their stolen land and property while the masses starve, or will there be a real revolutionary housecleaning?

Albanian protests escalate

The protests by hundreds of thousands of Albanians against their rulers' complicity in "pyramid" schemes which stole \$1.5 billion from the entire population has now become a direct challenge to the regime of President Sali Berisha. Nearly every large population center in southern Albania has come under the control of armed "citizen" groups. The former army and police have either fled, joined the opposition, or simply disintegrated.

For the moment, the capital Tirana is still under control of Berisha's shrinking state apparatus, especially his secret police thugs. Berisha was formerly a high ranking official of the draconian Enver Hoxha Maoist-Stalinist Communist Party mold, who became a born-again capitalist-free market booster, and rose to power after the Communist Party collapsed in 1991. His opponents include ex-CPers like himself, as well as monarchists, right-wing nationalists, and CPers, together with students, journalists, human rights activists and other independents.

The pyramid schemes which began five years ago promised at least 8-25% return on peoples' investments. With so many people robbed of so much money, it is pointless to say they were "flim flammed." The phony funds were irresistible to people who currently earned, at best, \$65 a month, and lived for decades in poverty, industrial pollution and rigidly enforced isolation. What's extremely murky now is the outcome of the current crisis, as no voices are being heard to talk of where a non-Communist, non-capitalist Albania should be headed.

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.