

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

Merit raises + teams = piecework



by B. Ann Lastelle

Helene Curtis announced to its employees in November that 1994's 3% annual raise would be their last. The current wage structure, which includes both annual percentage increases and a series of job classifications with different starting rates, step increases and top rates, is to be abolished in favor of merit pay based on "skills, behaviors and performance."

An evaluation process will begin with an annual "developmental discussion" which will include "360° feedback." Team members, people who hold the same position on the shifts before and after yours, anyone who regularly works with you will appraise you and comment on how you might become a more valuable member of the team. Then you and your supervisor "will set goals and objectives."

How well you meet those goals and objectives will be the basis for a "performance review" by the supervisor six months later which will decide the amount of the merit increase. The evaluation is to be based on individual performance and skills development, individual contribution to the team and team performance.

My co-workers reacted immediately. Would people in the middle of step increases be allowed to reach the top rate they had been promised when they took that job? Would training be available? What about favoritism? "I don't think it will work," said one Black woman. "John (her supervisor) already has his picks and chooses."

Another woman saw merit pay as a way for the company to save money by denying raises to those who would have received them automatically. A Black male co-work-

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Black World

Haiti de-politicized



by Lou Turner

The under-reality of Black suffering and oppression has disappeared behind the right wing political facade of Newt Gingrich's "virtual America," or rather the liberal media's obsession with right wing political culture. Haiti is off the map. Rwanda is off the map. Somalia is off the map. Having lost its stomach for humanitarian crisis-mongering, the left liberal media has disappeared the wretched of the earth from our social consciousness. A look through *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *New Left Review*, *The New York Review of Books*, etc. in the months following the U.S. occupation of Haiti and return of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide reveals a troubling depoliticization of the Haiti crisis. Why?

Why, when the Clinton administration has begun the illegal forced repatriation of 4,000 Haitian refugees from their illegal detention camps at the U.S. Guantanamo Naval Base? This signals the resolution of the U.S.'s Haitian immigration crisis, which was the principal aim of Clinton's military occupation of Haiti.

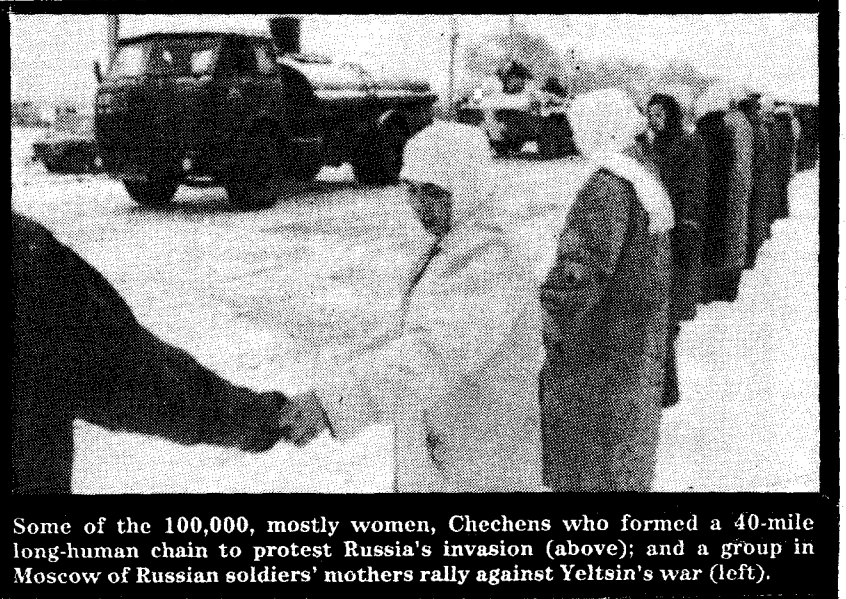
Why, when despite the fact that 5,000 of the original contingent of 20,000 U.S. troops are still stationed on the island, political violence against supporters of Aristide continues?

The U.S. military occupation has driven anti-Aristide paramilitary forces underground in urban areas and into the countryside, making the once indiscriminate violence against Aristide supporters more selective and organized. This is yet another example of the half-way measures of the Clinton administration's interventionist policy which results in the intensification of existing contradictions in civil society, on the pretext of enhancing discredited U.S. power. U.S. intervention in Somalia left that society whirling in a new spiral of fratricidal violence. The response of the U.S. in concert with UN and French policy towards the Rwanda genocide and refugee crisis has created space for a fresh round of atrocities.

However, unlike Rwanda and Somalia, where the more complex questions of inter- and intra-ethnic conflict animate the lethal contradictions, Haiti, from the beginning, has been a clear-cut class struggle. So why didn't the question of armed insurrection against the Cedras regime become a thinkable option among the Left here in the U.S.? As James Dunkerley asked in *New*

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Chechens resist Yeltsin pounding



Some of the 100,000, mostly women, Chechens who formed a 40-mile long-human chain to protest Russia's invasion (above); and a group in Moscow of Russian soldiers' mothers rally against Yeltsin's war (left).

by Olga Domanski

The fall of Grozny will not mark the end of Russia's war on Chechnya, 1,000 miles south of Moscow in the Caucasus. That is not only because, from the day that Yeltsin sent 40,000 troops to bring the tiny secessionist republic under control, the Chechen people have vowed that, even if their capital, once home to 400,000 ethnic Russians and Chechens, one-third of the whole population, was reduced to rubble by Russian bombs and rockets, they would simply move the battle to the mountains. It is also because — as against the promise of Yeltsin's Defense Minister, Gen. Pavel Grachev, that the war would be over "in one day" — the deep ramifications of the Russian invasion promise to be as intractable as the Chechen fighters immediately proved to be against seemingly impossible odds.

From the moment the Russian troops were ordered into Chechnya on Dec. 11, the entire populace took up the defense. In remote villages even teenagers and the elderly armed themselves with knives and Molotov cocktails. At the end of the first week of heavy fighting around Grozny, some 100,000 people poured to the western edge of the capital, to show their defiance by forming a 40-mile-long human chain all along the Moscow-Baku

Highway to the border with Dagestan, where Russian regiments were waiting. Factory workers and women with infants, grandmothers in shawls and old men with prayer rugs, all stood in a snow storm, holding banners denouncing Yeltsin and proclaiming: "Chechnya will always be free!"

It is not only that the Chechens knew every alley of Grozny and could lead Russian tanks into trap after trap. It is not only that many of the first Russian troops that were sent were untrained teenage conscripts, whose bodies literally began to litter Grozny's streets. Even when Yeltsin, a month into the war, decided to send his elite troops, the spetsnaz, and shells were falling on Freedom Square every three seconds, the Chechens fought on.

What the rulers seem always to forget is that you can destroy a country with superior weaponry, but to conquer it you have to be there with the infantry. It is the people who are there and not the high-tech weaponry that is the key.

YELTSIN'S U.S. ACCOMPLICE

As the carnage in Chechnya mounted week after week,

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Boston women fight anti-abortion terrorism

Boston—On Dec. 30 I was at work when my husband called to tell me a gunman had opened fire at two clinics where abortions are performed, killing at least two people. It wasn't Florida, it was here in Brookline, Mass. on a busy thoroughfare. No one knew why Brookline, whether it was the fact that RU-486 is being tested at one of the clinics, whether it was the hatred the anti-choice movement has for the three clinics located in such close proximity in that area.

As the day went on, we learned that seven people had been shot—five were in the hospital and two were dead. There would be a vigil that night. It was bitter cold, but I was shaken and furious. I had used a clinic like these; I had done clinic defense at a clinic like these; I worked inside a clinic like these. I wondered what had gone wrong. I went to the vigil.

Some 400 or so people gathered in front of Planned Parenthood, where the first round of shooting had taken place. We proceeded to a synagogue down the street that had opened its doors to the crowd for the occasion. There were tears, numbness, anger.

There were many speakers, but the one that struck me most was a speaker who was not present that night. A woman read a letter from an abortion provider, a doctor, who wanted to share her rage and her sorrow but felt it had become too dangerous to appear publicly. She had had only hours since the killings, but she managed to chronicle the ironic history of abortion over the last decades.

She wrote about how she had first encountered the limits on women's freedom to choose when she tried, unsuccessfully, to have an abortion as a young woman, before *Roe v. Wade*. Today, as a doctor who performs abortions, she is frequently threatened and has been instructed not to open large envelopes with no return address. She and her colleagues have been forced to adopt lifestyles of paranoia and self-defense.

In hospitals, she has seen patients go unattended by nurses and other staff because they have had abortions. She knew of a woman who lay bleeding in the Emergency Room due to post-abortion complications, and no one would attend to her. And although abortion is legal, medical schools and hospitals have effectively reduced access by omitting abortion from the procedures taught to medical students. How far have things really come

since the time when she hadn't been able to obtain the abortion she needed pre-1973?

I went back with friends the next night, New Year's Eve, to the demonstration of over 2,000 in front of the State House, taking place in the midst of Boston's First Night celebrations. Though the State Attorney General came out to announce they had just caught John Salvi, we went not knowing whether he or some other crazy person would open fire on us at the rally.

As I listened at this rally, I thought about my own life and wondered if experiences like mine would just become an historical footnote. I am pregnant now and ready to have a child. I feel lucky to be able to say I'm ready now, but that I wasn't ready nearly a decade ago when I considered having a baby impossible. Lucky and somehow privileged.

I came of age taking abortion for granted. I know other women do not and will not have the same choices I did. They are turned away by fanatics at clinics, denied medical coverage for abortions while poor women may soon be penalized for having children at all. Their health care providers do not perform abortions, and their state laws make some women have to risk far too much to get an abortion.

Now we live in a time when a doctor, other health care workers, a woman's partner and most of all the woman herself have to risk their lives for safe abortion services. Clinics are installing bulletproof windows, metal detectors and cameras. Some doctors are even arming themselves in the wake of recent murders and other acts of violence.

We have crossed a new threshold, and the future looks much like the past. Or worse.

—Elizabeth G.

ON THE INSIDE

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Anti-abortion barbarism reaches new stage

by Terry Moon

John Salvi III's gunning down of Shannon Lowney and Leeann Nichols, the shooting of five others in Brookline, the attack on a clinic in Norfolk, and the reaction to his killing spree by his anti-abortion fanatic cronies, are not just a continuation of the escalating violence begun 22 years ago when women won the legal right to abortion but a leap in barbarism.

Don Treshman, leader of Rescue America, whose member Michael Griffin murdered Dr. David Gunn in 1993, took the opportunity of this new slaughter to spew his "right to life" mentality. "We're in a war," he said. There have been 30 million abortions "and only five people [killed] on the other side, so it's nothing to get excited about."

Woman as Reason

When I read this, I thought of Shannon Lowney's co-worker who said, "Shannon is important to the world because of this event; but Shannon was important to us every day." But to Treshma, the murder of two women is "nothing to get all excited about." He's not the only "right-to-lifer" lust for blood.

Read Catholic ex-priest David Trosch's letter to Congress threatening "massive killing of abortionists and their staffs." See how outside Salvi's cell fanatics' signs read "John Salvi—Prisoner of War" and "God Bless John Salvi," while Rev. Donald R. Spitz, director of Pro-Life Virginia, yelled, "Thank you for what you did.... You are our brother in Jesus Christ." Hear Houston anti-abortion leader Daniel Ware threaten that "blood will run in the streets like nobody has ever seen," if Paul Hill is put to death for killing a doctor and a patient escort.

With the new right-wing climate in the U.S. after the Republican election sweep, these neo-fascist anti-abortion fanatics feel the time is ripe to turn their murderous rhetoric into action.

Newt Gingrich and his Contract with [Right-Wing] America are a disaster for women's freedom. He and his chums are rich white men who sound like neo-Nazis whining that they just want their own party to stick up for the white man.

While Gingrich embodies retrogression, Clinton must take his share of responsibility. The election brought into sharp relief his abysmal response to the rising violence. Clinton's call for federal prosecutors to study clinic security was too little, too late and pathetic.

When Attorney General Janet Reno broadcasted that "law enforcement does not have adequate resources to provide continuing protection for all threats," she told anti-abortion murderers there was nothing this government could do to stop them. Reno's statement is a lie. Federal troops could protect the 900 clinics nationwide offering abortion. Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority Foundation, was on the mark when she

Mississippi 'genocide' bill writ large for nation

Reactionary southern white politicians from Gingrich on down seem to have an open invitation from that "moderate" southerner, Clinton, to do what they want. James C. Cobb, author of *The Most Southern Place on Earth: The Mississippi Delta and the Roots of Regional Identity* (1992), captured a great deal about this climate when he concluded, "As socioeconomic disparity and indifference to human suffering become increasingly prominent features of American life, it seems reasonable to inquire whether the same economic, political, and emotional forces that helped to forge and sustain the Delta's image as the South writ small may one day transform an entire nation into the Delta writ large" (p. 333).

Thus I read with no small shock Cobb's account of a law that passed the Mississippi legislature in 1964 making it illegal for anyone to parent a second "illegitimate" child. This law, still on the books, when it was first introduced made such a birth a felony, punishable by a prison sentence or sterilization. After an outcry by Civil Rights activists, it was modified but nevertheless passed, making it a misdemeanor punishable by a prison sentence or fine or both.

Today, the discussion of cutting off welfare to women who give birth to "illegitimate" children is so caught up in debates over morality that it may be hard to see as clearly as the Civil Rights activists did in 1964. They called it the "Mississippi Genocide Bill."

The bill came at a time when Black sharecroppers were replaced by mechanized cotton pickers and chemical weed-killers. Many of these Black women and men joined the Civil Rights Movement, refusing to remain docile in the face of extreme poverty and political disfranchisement. The planter/politicians who ran the state were all too eager to get rid of them. Suddenly the planters lost interest in spawning more "illegitimate" child-workers, as they had done for 200 years—always, however, projecting "illegitimacy" onto Black women.

Thirty years after the Mississippi Genocide Bill, the hypocritical moralizing about women and "illegitimate" children has been so layered into the national consciousness that few oppose legislation either in state legislatures or in Congress that restricts childbearing of poor women while offering tax credits to "middle-class" families. Cobb may be right that "The Delta's image as the South writ small may one day transform an entire nation into the Delta writ large." —Laurie Cashdan

compared the attack on women's rights to the attack on the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, saying, "The last time this happened, we called out the National Guard."

The only way that will happen is if we—the movement—force them. How far this administration is from calling out the National Guard is seen in their inability, despite two decades of violence against clinics—including five murders and at least seven wounded in the last two years—to uncover any conspiracy.

Since 1977 there have been 129 bombings and arson attacks at clinics, well over 200 death threats against doctors and clinic workers and over 600 acts of vandalism, yet the FBI can't find a conspiracy.

In one week in California in 1993, deadly chemicals were sprayed into eight clinics. Two months later the same thing happened to seven clinics in Chicago. In *The New York Times Magazine* of Oct. 30, 1994, a huge article quotes supreme misogynist and Paul Hill's buddy, Roy McMillan, saying if "I were to do something like that [kill a doctor], I would do it clandestinely." Days later a Canadian doctor, frequently picketed by anti-abortion zealots, is shot in his home.

No one who remembers the 1960s will be comforted by the FBI assuring us that they are devoting as much of their resources to finding this conspiracy as they did to investigating the Ku Klux Klan. They didn't investigate the Klan, they watched it bomb and kill people and sabotage the Civil Rights Movement.

What forced the government to bring out the National Guard that Eleanor Smeal is calling for, was the strength and militancy of Black people in the Civil Rights Movement who didn't separate demands for protection from their demand for "Freedom Now!"

These neo-fascist fanatics want to use the space this reactionary election has created to crush women's fight to control our own bodies without which we cannot be free. What history reveals is that the only force and Reason with the will to stop them is us.

Women Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Women at Texas Woman's University participated in rallies and sit-ins in December protesting the school's decision to admit men. Wearing black armbands and carrying signs that read "Better dead than coed" and "Raped by the Regents," students and professors called for the school to continue providing a nurturing environment for women. They maintained that the new admissions policy "is the first step that can only lead to our demise."

* * *

The enslavement of Asian women in brothels is not limited to World War II's "comfort women" or Third World countries, but is alive and well in Chinatown in New York City. Four men and a woman were charged with smuggling Thai women with promises of restaurant jobs, then imprisoning them in a brothel behind locked doors, security cameras and armed guards. Their ticket to freedom was sex with 400 to 500 men each. New York police let this hell continue for at least a month after they learned of it, to "help" immigration officials complete their investigation.

* * *

The Sisterhood is Global Institute is calling for international support to stop the violence against Rwandan women and children in refugee camps in Zaire and Tanzania after the bloodbath in their country. While the women are struggling to return and begin a new life, the Hutu military is using them as political pawns, "terrorizing the refugees, stealing the little food and water they have and threatening those who attempt to return."

—Information from The Sisterhood is Global Institute

Kaiser nurses picket

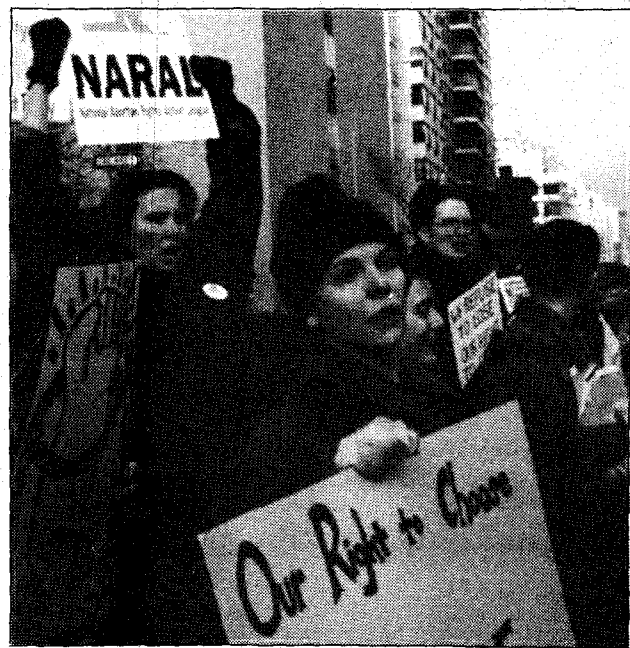
Oakland, Calif.—Registered nurses at the huge HMO Kaiser Permanente held informational picket lines to expose Kaiser's plans to increase profits by slashing one fourth of their hours as of Jan. 31. RNs are appealing to Kaiser members to send statements of support. They feel the massive layoffs are coming because RNs act not as profiteers but as patient advocates. According to a local business writer, Kaiser generated an "astonishing \$848 million in net income last year" and is awash in cash. One RN on the picket summed it up: "Kaiser's concern is not patient care, but market share."

He continued, "In Oakland they already had a wave of layoffs in the respiratory department. They gave them a voluntary severance package. Those left are getting double time and are overworked. Now they are going after RNs."

"Our education enables us to constantly monitor whether or not a patient's overall health status has gone awry. An older patient and friend of mine just got glaucoma and lost a lot of his vision. He said it would never have happened under the old Kaiser where they gave you a complete checkup every year. Kaiser now is not the Kaiser of the 1940s when they really practiced preventive care."

"Patients are now going to have to fight for every bit of care they get. We are trying to get Kaiser to realize that if they don't put the patient back in the center, it is going to be a disaster in the long run."

—Supporter



—News & Letters

Demonstrators in New York City joined thousands of pro-choice advocates in 29 other cities in 20 states, on the 22nd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, to demand an end to the increased violence against women and protection for abortion clinics.

Women, War and Peace: report from Jerusalem

Jerusalem—Women peace activists from five continents and 23 countries participated in the conference "Women, War and Peace: The Vision and the Strategies," organized by the Israeli movement of Women in Black. The conference, held Dec. 28-31, 1994, brought together activists to discuss what we as women can do to advance peace in our parts of the world.

This was an activist conference. In addition to workshops, it culminated with a mass vigil and prayer for peace at the outskirts of el-Hader, the Palestinian village in the occupied territories near which Israeli settlers are planning an expansion of their settlement.

A few highlights: Hanan Ashrawi, former PLO spokesperson, talked about the need for women to influence the peace negotiations; Sara Ruddick, internationally known author from New York, spoke of "revolutionizing motherhood" toward peace; Prof. Elisabeta Donini, one of Italy's foremost organizers of women against war, discussed how women from regions not in conflict have a role in making peace; and Israeli Knesset members Naomi Chazan, Tamar Gozansky, and Anat Maor shared their experiences in the Israeli corridors of power.

Particularly moving were peace activists from former Yugoslavia (Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia) who are helping victims of war in their countries. They were among the recipients of the Women in Black Peace Prize, awarded during an emotional part of the conference. Other recipients were the Jerusalem Center for Women, the Palestinian arm of Jerusalem Link, and the Visiting Difficult Places Project in Italy, in which women bring support to women in war-torn corners of the globe.

The Women in Black form of protest, which originated in Jerusalem, has become a format for women in other parts of the world. Women in Black in Germany struggle against neo-Nazism and rising militarism; Women in Black in Italy seek to end the Mafia; Women in Black in Belgrade protest their government's role in the ethnic conflict; and Women in Black in India struggle against Hindu fundamentalism. Women dress in black and hold a weekly silent vigil one hour long, carrying banners.

Underlying the talk about strategies and actions was an unspoken feminist vision: a world of equality for all peoples; a world where political power does not determine security or rights; a world where female values and culture are as legitimate as male values and culture. The presence of this feminist vision was vividly brought home to me by an incident at the prayer for peace, facing the troops who barred our entry to el-Hader. It was hard to hear the words of prayers spoken softly in foreign languages. One soldier looking on shouted: "God can't hear you; He needs more volume!" The women responded as one: "She hears fine."

Although there were high-ranking women (and academics) in attendance, this was a conference of grassroots activists at the forefront of the struggle for peace. It was inspiring to discover movements, to meet activists, to learn that we share a common language of peace. We did not have to preface political criticism with declarations of patriotism ("I love my country, but I disagree with its policies..."), as we must do with our compatriots.

If I had to think of one word to sum up the conference, it would be "empowerment:" knowing that others are doing what we are doing, that there is a network of women and men who believe that wars never end conflict. This solidarity can help us carry on the struggle. May women's movements such as these be fruitful and multiply!

—Gila Svirsky

Gila Svirsky is a Woman in Black from Jerusalem and a conference organizer. She is board chair of B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization that documents human rights violations in the occupied territories.

Dobbs turns up heat to erase union victory

Editor's Note: Feb. 22 marks the one-year anniversary of Memphis workers at Dobbs International, a worldwide catering company servicing airlines, returning to work after winning a year-long strike. Two months before winning their strike, the members of Teamsters Local 667 joined other workers in Memphis and Arkansas in a demonstration which stopped traffic on the I-40 bridge over the Mississippi River.

Memphis, Tenn.—We won the battle, but actually as of day one, we've been in a war. We blocked the bridge because we needed a coming together so that we would know we're not alone, to have the courage to go on. Then on Feb. 7, 1994, ten of us traveled to Minneapolis to have a conference with people from Northwest Airlines which has a big contract with Dobbs in Memphis. When we got their support, we knew we would win.

But now the company's plan is to get rid of the union and the striking employees. The things that we went out for, contractually we did receive. We went out on strike for seniority rights and the rights of the older employees. The company had taken the stand that the older women who prepare food were no longer an asset to the company. By overlooking seniority they could force the senior employees, most of which were and still are Black women, to lift weights of 75-100 pounds, climb in and out of trucks, and load airplanes.

Border workers organize

Tijuana, Mexico—Since NAFTA was passed, more and more maquiladoras [export factories] are being established, and not just in the border areas but all over the country. They come to the border areas first because they have the roads and services here. We know industrialists don't come here just because they love tacos.

They come because they are not held responsible when they pollute, and because salaries here are so low. The Mexican authorities haven't put a stop to all these violations of law.

We have had to do our organizing work clandestinely because our government doesn't accept that this work should be done. If we wait for the government to do it for us, we will definitely be marginalized and exploited and in many cases dead, as happens so often in maquiladoras. It is too soon to say that we made some headway with our health and safety workshops, but we can see that some of our companeros have lost their apathy, and they speak up to defend themselves.

The only fear we have in our organizing is retaliation against our companeros. The government unions are an industry within an industry, and if their interests are threatened, then they retaliate against the workers. But if workers organize themselves, and demand to learn, and defend their rights, then no one can stop them.

We want to form a legal maquiladora workers' association. Why shouldn't we form independent unions that really defend workers? Why should we have lawyers, lead workers, committees or unions represent us when they don't feel the same needs as a worker? —Eduardo

Now the company has taken the stand they didn't succeed in 1993, so '94 was hell. They've laid off senior employees with up to six years seniority. They're using guys that work in transportation with one year seniority to do the jobs the ladies would be doing. The flights come in and out at different times, and they'll take the guys and say, why don't you cut up lemons and limes, which at one time was one woman's job.

Mostly the women and men stick together. The younger guys don't want to see the older ladies just thrown away because they know one day they'll be old too. And they complain about the constant hassle they have every day.

When we write up grievances on these practices, just about every grievance, no matter how simple, winds up being arbitrated or deadlocked. And all of this takes months. People are beginning to ask, why is the company not living up to the contract? The blame now is being thrown at the union. It's a tactic to divide. The employees are at a point of low morale. This is how they're using our own grievance procedure to break us down.

These older ladies are tough now. They say to supervisors, "You don't talk to me that way! I respect you and you respect me!" One lady said to a supervisor, "You may be mad we were out there on that corner, but we'll do it again if we have to." Some of these ladies have been there 20 years, but they wouldn't have done that before the strike. It's like something got woken up inside.

What the company is doing is not just about labor, it's about racism, which is rearing its ugly head again in the South: "You do not defy me. You're Black and I'm white." The big bosses are saying: I'm going to put you back further than you've been before. They have a few token Uncle Toms working as supervisors who are making \$15 an hour more than us. But they're killing us because they're not Black anymore, they're white. Once we see that, we realize what we're up against.

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Harassment at Excello

Chicago—At Excello Unlimited, we repack towels from overseas. We put them in plastic bags and tag them with little hooks to hang them on store racks. We print designs on towels too. Excello then ships the towels to Sears, Kmart, Walmart, and to hospitals.

Management is trying to push people out because they don't like to give them vacation time, in some cases four to five weeks. That's why they are trying to replace the Black women, often with Mexican women, who they can pay minimum wages and give no vacation time.

The foreman and plant manager, Phil Noga, just suspended a lady for three days for not punching her time card. She forgot once before, but this punishment was unfair. In December one of the women with many years of seniority was suspended for 10 days. Noga had let a new woman take the experienced woman's job and basically she was punished for protesting. Noga sent another long-time employee to the laundry department to take somebody's place, but he didn't show her how to write up a work sheet, so naturally she did it wrong. He gave her a whole week off.

Another time, a woman who works on a bag sealing machine was on vacation. When her vacation was over, Noga was supposed to call and tell her not to come in because they were taking inventory. He didn't call, so she came to work. He sent her home without pay. You're supposed to get a half day's pay when you come in and there's no work. Then in November, she was supposed to come back from another vacation. She has more seniority than any of us and knows all the jobs, but he let one of the temporary women work and told her to stay home. He was just spiteful.

Noga does get on Mexican women too. If we don't get the production quota rates every hour, he writes us all up.

Our union is the United Steelworkers. Whenever there's a problem, we call our representative, R.L. Pace. His phone is always busy, or he's not there, or he never calls back. He has also told us, "When you write a grievance, it really doesn't mean anything." Pace promised to take the December suspension into arbitration, but we wonder if he is just fronting. Even though that woman might get ten days' back pay, the suspension will stay on her record. —Fed up

GM quickly cedes to 6,500 on strike at AC Delco



Flint, Mich.—It only took three days for General Motors to come to terms with the 6,700 members of UAW Local 651 who went on strike at the AC Delco Systems Flint East Plant. The autoworkers struck at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 18, the union and the company reached a settlement at about 8 p.m. on Friday, and the local union members ratified the agreement by a margin over 90% at 1 p.m. on Sunday. The new accord provides for GM to hire 907 new workers at the plant by July 1996. GM also agreed to invest \$72 million in the company in order to produce new products. Unspecified health and safety issues and limits on outsourcing were also resolved. An agreement reached last February had provided for hiring 500 new workers and investing \$19.3 million in the complex. It would have been much cheaper for GM to honor the first agreement.

The AC Flint East plant manufactures air meters, spark plugs, fuel filters, oil filters, air filters, fuel pumps, cruise controls and instrument panels for GM cars and trucks. It is the sole source for air meters for the majority of GM engines and a major source of parts for instrument panels.

Much of the dispute centered around whether the workers would be hired from a pool of friends and family members of workers at the plant, or from laid-off employees from other plants. The UAW is refusing comment on the specific issues involved in the strike, but it is believed to involve health and safety violations, line speedups, and outsourcing as well as GM's failure to honor the earlier agreement.

There were five similar strikes at GM plants in 1994, at Buick City in Flint, a truck plant in Shreveport, La., a parts plant in Dayton, Ohio, the GM technical center in Warren, Mich., and a parts plant in Anderson, Ind. Also, General Motors averted a strike at a truck plant in Flint by agreeing to start production of crew cab pickup trucks on Jan. 23 which requires hiring over 600 workers.

Unlike Ford and Chrysler, GM produces many of its own small parts. As with the Buick City strike in 1994, the manufacture of a few critical parts needed in many assembly plants has given a local union leverage it would not have otherwise, not only against GM, but against the

international headquarters of the UAW. "Just in time" manufacturing has caused immediate parts shortages and plant closings.

For this reason the strike closed all or part of 11 parts and assembly plants in the United States and Canada, causing the layoff of 32,000 additional workers.

More interesting than the material factors that have made GM vulnerable is the workers' revolt against overtime and speedup even though they mean more money in the pockets of the workers. General Motors has never been able to convince its workers that what is good for GM is good for them. —Dan B.

A.E. Staley lock-out—automation vs. solidarity

Decatur, Ill.—A caravan organized by hundreds of unionists and activists from the Midwest collected food, toys, and money and delivered them Dec. 20 to the embattled unions here—locked-out from Staley/Tate & Lyle and on strike against Caterpillar and against Firestone/Bridgestone. After the visitors and Decaturites unloaded the vehicles, they were treated to a banquet at the Staley workers union hall, featuring solidarity messages and some remarkable homemade dishes.

One of the Staley families on hand had just returned from Grayson, Ky., where they had visited Cook Family Foods workers on strike (see N&L, Dec. 94, p. 3). While many Staley people remarked that they didn't want to see this become an annual event—the holiday caravan was the second since the Staley lock-out began 18 months earlier—they would never accept Staley's "last and final offer" of work rules which would virtually control their lives. —News & Letters participant

Staley told us, on the day of the caravan, that they were spending \$20 million to modernize the plant and they would cut 760 jobs down to 225. We knew that adding a new wet mill for grinding corn has been in the works for some time. They needed the contract they are trying to shove down our throats to modernize the plant. Now they are trying to make the public think they don't need to negotiate with us.

Everyone knew that eventually they were going to have to modernize. When the Staley family had it, they took the money generated by the Decatur facility down to Tennessee to build a modern plant there. Even with a modern plant there, this plant produced more because the people up here knew their jobs. Down there they had that team crap.

Automation doesn't necessarily mean you have to throw out all your workers. Technology is technology. But it doesn't mean workers aren't needed. They are just trying to make people do more work.

It's like this cartoon I remember—the guy in it was using his hands, his nose, and everything else to work. And they want so many people unemployed that if they have someone who hits 40, they're fired and they can't do anything about it. But it's going to come around. Kids aren't going to work for nothing anymore. They are realizing that they are being used. —Road warrior

Workshop Talks

(Continued from page 1)

er saw it as a method of control. "My daddy told me that the ass you kiss to get something is the same ass you'll have to kiss to keep it, so don't start," he warned.

"The people who are going to be hurt are the ones who don't want to do anything," another woman pointed out. Who are these people? They are primarily older women who for years sat on hard stools, jammed up against lines with no proper work stations built into them, backs aching, feet swelling, putting bottles on the line and screwing pumps and caps on bottles by hand. These women—and the day laborers who worked beside them—built this company but, with the introduction of automation and team concept, people who perform that type of numbing, repetitive labor are being told that it's not enough.

I substituted on one of the antique lines for a day a few weeks ago. The operator, an older woman, lifted a box of pumps. "Let the guy (the stock worker whose responsibility it is under the old system of job classifications to supply pumps to the line) do that," one of the packers told her. The operator looked at the other woman and said, "You'll have to do this too if you want a raise."

This tighter tie between the personal pecuniary interests of the worker and the interests and aims of capital was one of the reasons that Karl Marx in the 1860s declared piece work to be "the form of wages most in harmony with the capitalist mode of production." "Given piece-wage," he wrote in *Capital*, "it is naturally the personal interest of the laborer to strain his labor-power as intensely as possible; this enables the capitalist to raise more easily the normal degree of intensity of labor."

Doesn't merit pay, this 1990s wage-form, function the same way? Helene Curtis intends to reward employees who become "multi-skilled proactive team members," who "work with ever-changing technology" and "solve problems through Total Quality Management and Statistical Process Control." That sounds like intensification of labor to me. No more waiting for stock workers, forklift drivers or maintenance mechanics to do their jobs; everything is your job. Make the decisions, fix the problems, eliminate downtime, and why isn't this line running? This merit pay scheme suits the interests of modern capital very well.

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

Editor's note: This winter marks the 40th anniversary of the birth of News and Letters Committees—an event precipitated by the breakup of Correspondence, an organization headed by C.L.R. James, Raya Dunayevskaya, and Grace Lee between 1951 and 1959. The emergence of a sharp conflict within Correspondence Committees over the analysis of political events and the role of Marxism—with James and Lee on one side and Dunayevskaya on the other—led, by early 1955, to a new divide in Marxism itself. We here reprint excerpts of Dunayevskaya's speech to the founding conference of News and Letters Committees, delivered shortly after the split, in April 1955. The full document can be found in The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection (Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs), microfilm #2410-29.

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Founder of Marxist-Humanism

We are gathered here for an historic occasion. The history is not out of any book. It will first be made here when the decision to issue a paper under our own power will have proven what has been evident for the past two months—that is to say, that the workers themselves are taking the leadership in establishing their own paper and building their own organization. Its start was this: When faced with a split on the part of the majority of the intellectuals, the worker-leaders and the workers in the ranks, instead of retreating, said: "Good, we'll go it alone because we know that other workers will soon join us. Starting from scratch all over again may be hard, but at least this paper will have our purpose."

That is a very different attitude than what seemed to be the case when the struggle first burst into the open and the feeling of the proletarians seemed to be, "Not another factional struggle! I don't know that I could go through another split..."

On the face of it this may seem to be of concern to no one but those involved, much less any substantial part of the working class. The opposite is the case.

The objective truth is that so total is the crisis of present-day society; so fed up are the working people—and I am including among them not alone the rank-and-file workers but the Negroes, the women, the youth and even the middle class that has no connection with any of the two bureaucracies, American and Russian, fighting for world power—so fed up, I repeat, are the working people with the present system of production where they are nothing but cogs in a machine; with the labor bureaucracy whose main concern is how to discipline labor whenever it strikes out on its own; and with the present administration which is daily blundering into war; so utterly in revolt are they against all this that it would take very little to unloose a torrent which would change all relations, beginning with the relations of men to men at the point of production.

There is only one thing that is holding back the torrent and that is the lack of confidence workers have in themselves, that they and they alone can do it.

The story of what happened to this small organization where the workers suddenly found themselves in the lead, and set their own course, whether in the leadership or in the ranks, is of the greatest concern to the workers as a whole for only the confidence in themselves will break the stranglehold of all leaders, including radical groupings who are always ready to tell the workers what they should do and never listening to workers, what they want done.

In this category of radical groupings not listening to workers either on the outside or in their own organization must now be included the former National Editorial Board majority and he who instigated the action, C.L.R. James...

We had previously made the American working class the foundation of all our thinking and perspectives not alone on the national scene, but as the axis of world perspectives.

It had nothing to do with anything subjective, just because we were American, that is. It had deep objective roots.

The American working class was the most technically advanced. It was the most militant in wildcats, with the greatest experience in fighting the labor bureaucracy. It was the only advanced industrial proletariat that was not shackled down either by the one-party state or the mass parties like the Labor Party in England and the Communist Party in France and Italy which held the working class in a stranglehold. The only other place, we

On the 40th anniversary of News and Letters Committees

A new divide in Marxism

argued, where no mass parties shackle the masses and the only obstacle to workers taking matters into their own hands, was Africa. That is why the Kenya situation can teach us so much.

But Africa has no great industrial working class and we would therefore again be confronted even on a graver scale than in Russia, with a proletariat of an industrially undeveloped country taking power and not being able to put into practice the need that the population "to a man" run production and the state. And Africa was not as strategically placed in world affairs as was the U.S. So that the American development was integral not alone to America but to the world...

The inescapable theoretical corollary to James' "new politics" is the conception that the American working class is backward. They are trying to sneak it. Watch how it is coming in by the back door.

Ever since her return from Europe, Grace Lee had been saying that it is not up to us, but Europe "to defend Marxism"—from there, not from me, should come the book on Marxism.

Why give up our position, first established in 1941 and re-established in 1951 and periodically thereafter, that each generation must reinterpret Marxism for itself, and we are the natural ones to do it?

This is not just a theoretical question. Watch.

The decision to publish *Correspondence* we proudly hailed as proof that we were one group that started not with theory, but with the results of theory.

The very method of publication, not from a center but by local committees, we pointed out is a blow to bureaucracy, the belief that only the educated can write, edit, publish.

This venture has uncovered the talents not alone of workers-leaders as editor and chief worker journalist, but writers from the deepest layers such as Jerry Kegg on the labor page, and Ethel Dunbar on the Negro page. But suddenly our erstwhile colleagues are ready to scuttle this at the drop of a hat, or I should have said the flip of a pen, from James.

Now the truth is they wouldn't have found it quite so easy to take with them some good rank and files if during this period we had alongside of this paper the book which has always been the foundation of any serious working class movement for the past 100 years. Not for pedantic reason, but because that is at the very root of all our activity, theoretical and practical, let us stop for a moment and see how America helped shape Marx's Capital. It is in truth the working class preparation for their own actions as their action is for his theories.

Marx, as you know, was a German and early in his youth broke with bourgeois society. He is the founder of modern socialism and contains within himself the three main strands of 19th century thought.

Each of these however he incorporated into his system in a new, a proletarian way. For example, regarding the classical political economy which finally recognized that it was labor that was the source of all wealth, he added: Not labor, but the living laborer. What Marx insisted was that once you put the worker in the center of your thoughts, as he is in fact the center of production, you will see at once that you are dealing not with things like wages and profits, but with relations of production, relations of men at the point of production. And it is there where everything must be torn from the roots up if you wish to overcome crisis. Only the working class control of production can do that.

So after the manifestos and the 1848 revolutions in Europe, Marx returns to study and write a book on economics. But even the genius of Marx had the limitation of all intellectuals, and that is that they can resolve problems only in their heads, whereas where it is necessary to solve them is in life. Until the workers themselves would show the form of revolt it was impossible to solve even "simple" theoretical problems.

That is the core of Marxism which is a theory of the liberation of labor from all tyranny and that is why it is not a theoretical question merely. And Capital, hard as Marx worked at it, could not take shape until the workers were once more on the move, which was begun with the great divide in mid-19th century—the Civil War in the United States.

It is only then when Capital takes shape and it is only out of the actual struggles of the workers for the shortening of the working day that the basic foundation of the historic section of Capital is laid. Right into Capital Marx brings in the early trade union in the U.S. following the Civil War which phrased the whole question of

the working day correctly, instinctively, what it took him so many years to work out.

At the present time with Automation being at its most advanced stage here, and the American proletariat being least encumbered by mass parties which shackle it—and therefore the spontaneous outbursts, which are sure to come, will first reveal the full stage of liberation from capitalism and the establishment of a new society—there is no better climate to restate the fundamentals of Marxism than here.

The Resident Editorial Board feels it is time we put a definite date for that work—a year from now. It will be done as a collective effort.*

Another central activity will, of course, be the newspaper. A paper that is not just "for" workers but by the workers, that aims to be a weapon in the class struggle, must have more workers than those in this room, and not only as readers, but writers, editors, distributors, financiers. It must be their weapon, and their total outlook in opposition to that of the capitalists, the labor bureaucrats, the planners, the leaders, totally theirs and interested in everything.

For the doctor, the lawyer, the professor, the writer, the historian, each stands in a certain relationship to the working class and must enter as part of this paper. Once the class basis is firmly laid, they not only have a place in it—nowhere else can they find a solution to their own problems. The crisis of society is total and includes all but the bureaucracies fighting for world power...

It is not true that, because our principle is that what the average man says is what is important and we create a forum for him, we have no other function.

We are not out to lead or order others about and write programs for them to carry out.

But we have a function. It is to clarify workers' politics. We don't only talk and listen to workers. We introduce subjects to them. We give a logical organization to their instincts, impulses, gripes, desires.

Thus the page which carries the worker's story carries other workers' stories and he sees his problem is not an individual one. And the next page carries an editorial, or "Two Worlds" contains a page of history, or the front page lead article, which, while based on what interests the worker, takes him a step further than his own thoughts led him to. So that this logical organization of his impulses, this form in which his articles are printed, gives the story he tells a new quality.

The new quality is our contribution and he recognizes it as such, for he experiences a development in himself which disentangles his proletarian instincts from some of the bourgeois ideas that cling to it because he lives in this society...

In a word, workers must take the lead in building their own organization and its paper, and it must begin right here with talk as to how you mean to do it, and the day after you adjourn. Workers taking the lead in every aspect of the work, from getting a hall to speaking in it, has to be our foundation.

You know the last thing anybody ever talked about in the other group is building the organization. You would think that because we broke with the concept of a party to lead and thirst for no such thing, that therefore there is no reason for our being.

It is time surely we broke with this concept for without breaking with it we will be as isolated as they and as doomed to failure...

We are a serious group and we mean business. The point is to get down to it. The historic necessity of a group like ours not out "to lead" but only to clarify workers politics is not in history alone, nor in the fact that we will bring Marxism theoretically up to date, but in the daily class struggle, beginning with the form of our own committees and the paper...I'm sure everyone has thought hard since the break of what we mean, has many thoughts of how to build. Let's begin there.

* This refers to the book-in-progress which would become, by 1957, *Marxism and Freedom, from 1776 until Today*—the first book-length study of the humanism of Marx.

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1986

Essay Article

by Peter Hudis

Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory, by Moishe Postone (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

The meaning of the new reality which has emerged with the collapse of the Communist regimes, the decline of socialist movements worldwide and the alleged move from a "Fordist" model of standardized mass production to a "post-industrial information era" has confounded thinkers on both the Left and Right. Reality has changed so fast and unexpectedly that many feel as if the floor has come out from under them. Yet most pundits agree on one point: that Marx's critique of capitalist production has become increasingly irrelevant.

The value of this book, written by a critical theorist influenced by the Frankfurt School, is that it takes the exact opposite approach. Moishe Postone argues that we are now facing the living embodiment of what Marx traced out theoretically in his *Grundrisse* and *Capital*.

Postone's approach centers on a critique of the central premise of what he calls "traditional Marxism": the notion that private property and the market are the defining features of capitalism. This, he shows, was not Marx's view at all.

To Marx the defining feature of capitalism is that labor assumes the form of value. The value-form of labor does not depend on the market or private property, but rather on the reduction of the concrete dimension of labor to an abstract, routinized kind of activity through the medium of socially necessary labor time in the production process. Whether surplus-value is appropriated by the state or the market is of secondary importance; capitalism exists wherever labor becomes reduced to an abstract, value-creating activity.

Capitalism's trajectory is therefore to assume ever more impersonal and abstract forms of domination. The emergence of a high-tech Western capitalism increasingly characterized by "virtual reality" in the media, arts and political life can thus be seen as a logical outcome of the value-form of labor traced out by Marx.

The growth of abstract forms of domination, Postone notes, reaches the point where capitalism can no longer be directly controlled by either private entrepreneurs or the state. In this sense, "far from demonstrating the victory of capitalism over socialism, the recent collapse of actually existing socialism could be understood as signifying the collapse of the most rigid, vulnerable and oppressive form of state-interventionist capitalism."

ROLE OF LABOR IN SOCIETY

To Postone the reason so many view the market and private property as defining features of capitalism is that they have what he calls a "transhistorical" view of labor.

By this he means that "Marxists" have taken for granted that labor as an instrumental activity, into which all social relations are ultimately dissolved, is the natural, species-essence of humanity—when such labor actually characterizes capitalism alone. Only in capitalism, he insists, does labor become the medium through which all social relations must pass.

This is because only in capitalism does labor have a dual character, as expressed in the division between concrete and abstract labor. As concrete labor becomes absorbed into abstract labor through socially necessary labor time, an undifferentiated, abstract, "universal" form of activity emerges which defines all forms of human interaction.

Therefore, those "Marxists" who pose industrial labor as the essence of socialism unknowingly elevate what Marx viewed as the core of capitalism into the principle of the "new society."

While Postone's critique of those who fail to grasp the historic specificity of Marx's concept of value-producing labor—which ranges from orthodox Marxists to non-Marxists like Habermas—is on target, it is hardly original. Marxist-Humanists long ago showed that labor assumes the form of value only in capitalism.

But Postone goes further, arguing that any effort to use labor as a socially constitutive activity necessarily leads to posing the market and private property as the defining features of capitalism. But this gets him into trouble with Marx, beginning with the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*.

In 1844 Marx posed alienated labor as the hallmark of capitalism. Yet he also spoke of labor in a second, unalienated sense: as "conscious, purposeful activity," which he called humanity's "species-being." Since Marx used labor as a socially constitutive activity independent of the capitalist value-form, Postone accuses him of giving a "transhistorical" view of labor in 1844 which was later dispensed with in *Capital*.

But Postone here falls into a logical contradiction. If "transhistorical" views of labor necessarily lead to posing private property and the market as the defining features of capitalism, then Marx's "transhistorical" view of labor in 1844 must mean he did so too. Yet he clearly did not. Marx made it crystal clear in 1844 that private property and the market is a result of alienated labor, not the other way around.

Marx's position in 1844 was no different than in *Capital*, where he also referred to labor as "purposeful activity" and "the universal condition for the metabolic interaction between man and nature." In both 1844 and *Capital* Marx was distinguishing between two kinds of labor. One is the instrumental kind of labor so evident in capitalism, where everything is reduced to "having."

The other is the unfolding of the richness of human consciousness. "The forming of the five senses," Marx wrote in 1844, "is a labor of the entire history of the world down to the present." In this sense "for socialist

Is Marx's critique of capitalism still valid?

man the entire so-called history of the world is nothing but the creation of man through human labor."

This notion of labor refers neither to an ahistorical human essence nor to an "instrumental" mode of labor which "comes into its own" under capitalism. It rather refers to how alienated labor is confronted by the subjectivity of the corporeal, sensuous individual who is in need "of a totality of human manifestations of life."

Marx's concept of humanity's "species-being" is the conceptual lens for grasping what escapes those whose minds are imprinted by the commodity-form—the formation, in the struggle against alienation, of the humanism of the laborer in her/his effort to become whole through "conscious, purposeful activity."

Yet it is precisely this

dimension which Postone seeks to remove from Marxism. He is so overburdened with the way "traditional Marxism" has fetishized relations of distribution by failing to grasp the historic specificity of value-creating labor that he wants to eliminate any notion of labor as a socially constitutive activity—even when it contains a vision of new human relations. As a result we get a subject-less "imminent critique" which, in the name of avoiding the errors of "traditional Marxism," shares with it an aversion to confronting the actual human dimension.

CAPITALISM WITHOUT A SUBJECT

This is expressed in Postone's view that Marx did not root his categories either in class struggle or in the worker as subject of revolution. He even assumes that posing the worker as subject necessarily entails a "transhistorical" view of labor which fetishizes the market and private property!

Postone makes this unexamined assumption by equating the proletariat with the alienated form of its laboring activity. Since the proletariat cannot be separated from the value-form of its labor, he argues, to critique capitalism from the standpoint of the proletariat is to pose the content of the value-form as the aim of liberation. It apparently has not occurred to Postone that there is a difference between the content of the value-form and the human content of the laborer who breaks from it. Nor has it occurred to him that at historic turning points workers have challenged the very mode of labor in centering their struggle on the question, "What kind of labor should man/woman perform?"

Postone sees none of this, for class struggle to him is only concerned with the unequal distribution of products of labor. He removes class from any internal connection to the value categories and then tries to read this into Marx, by "reinterpreting" *Capital* through the eyes of Marx's *Grundrisse*.

But Marx's *Capital* is very different from the *Grundrisse*. Though it is a key work, the *Grundrisse* was written in the quiescent 1850s when the masses were not in motion; therefore, the role of revolutionary subjectivity is not as tightly tied into the value categories as in *Capital*, which was written under the impact of the Civil War in the U.S. and the struggles to shorten the working day.¹

Yet Postone makes no distinction between *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*. He centers his approach on a passage of the *Grundrisse* where Marx spoke of how the replacement of workers by machines reaches the point where "Labor no longer appears to be included within the production process; rather, the human being comes to relate more as watchman and regulator to the production process...instead of being its chief actor."

In the 1960s Herbert Marcuse used this passage to argue that the replacement of workers by automated production means we have entered a "one-dimensional" society. To his credit, Postone rejects Marcuse's approach, arguing that capitalism remains a system fraught with internal instability and crisis.

Nevertheless, Postone's interpretation of this passage shares a defect common to Marcuse's position: he thinks Marx is talking about the laws of existing capitalism, when Marx is in fact discussing the effects of "the automaton" when production is no longer based on value. By confusing Marx's discussion of "a higher phase of communism" wherein freedom arises "outside the sphere of material production" with the laws of existing society, Postone thinks he has found confirmation for his view that Marx did not pose proletarian subjectivity as internal to the law of motion of modern society.

A NEGATIVE DIALECTIC

Though it appears only in the form of a "cursory outline," Postone tries to ground his argument in a view of the dialectic. He especially focuses on Hegel's concept of the "Absolute." To Postone Hegel's "Absolute" is that which unfolds as the result of its own development; it is the self-moving substance which "grounds itself." It is

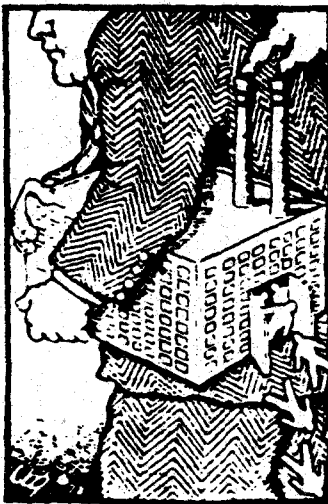
1. Raya Dunayevskaya's tracing of the impact of these and other struggles on the writing of *Capital* is indispensable for comprehending its dialectic. See *Marxism and Freedom*, from 1776 until today, especially Part III: "Marxism: the Unity of Theory and Practice."

therefore "subject"—a self-referential, self-grounded entity.

Postone notes that Marx saw capital as a self-moving substance which likewise "grounds itself," since it is "self-expanding value": "Capital, as analyzed by Marx, is a form of social life with metaphysical attributes—those of the absolute subject." He concludes that Marx used Hegel's Absolutes to say that capital, not the worker, is the "subject."

This implies the rejection, not just of the proletariat, but also the subjectivity of philosophy. Postone notes that capital, as self-expanding value, is a "totalizing," abstract universal which absorbs human contingency into itself. Since philosophy centers on universal categories of cognition, to Postone it is likewise a "totalizing," abstract universal. He therefore infers that the very idea of a total philosophy expresses the capitalist value-form.

Though he differs with him in other respects, Postone's peculiar reading of "dialectics" rests upon a direct application of Georg Lukacs' thesis, articulated in *The Young Hegel*, that "externalization" or alienation is the "central philosophical theme" of Hegel's dialectic and Marx's appropriation of it. But there are major problems with this position. Though alienation is a central theme in Hegel, no less central is his concept of the transcendence of alienation.



Multiracial rally during L.A. rebellion, 1992.

Yet, Postone, like Lukacs before him, ignores this dimension of Hegel in order to argue that Hegel's Absolutes express the logic of abstract, value-creating labor under capitalism. The deficiencies of this one-sided reading of Hegel become clear when Postone tries to impose it upon the categories of *Capital*.

THE ABSTRACT AND THE CONCRETE

We see this from chapter 1 of *Capital*, where Marx discussed the dual nature of the commodity-form. The commodity-form is no mere "mental abstraction," let alone a "thingness." As the unity-in-difference of use-value and exchange-value, the commodity-form contains the material body of value as well as the abstraction of value from all materiality.

Marx expressed this in his "Marginal Notes on Wagner": "According to Mr. Wagner, use-value and exchange value are to be derived at once from the concept of value, not as with me, from a concretion, the commodity....neither 'value' nor 'exchange value' is the subject of my work, but rather the commodity."

The importance of this lies in the fact that although the value of a commodity has nothing to do with its physical properties—since its value is determined by the amount of socially necessary labor time needed to produce it—the commodity-form is not utterly lacking in materiality. As the unity of use-value and value, which expresses the unity of concrete and abstract labor, the commodity-form contains an internal tension between a "logic of abstraction" and concrete contingency. By making the commodity-form, and not value, the subject matter of *Capital*, Marx was able to trace out abstract forms of value-creating labor without ever losing sight of the side of the concrete human dimension.

This comes out in the open in the famous section on the "Fetishism of Commodities." The reduction of concrete to abstract labor reaches the point where living labor seems detachable from the living person; we are in the realm of the "non-sensuous sensuous." The value-form now assumes a "ghostly" character, starts to "dance on its own initiative," and becomes an "autonomous figure endowed with a life of its own," said Marx. With commodity fetishism we have reached capitalism's self-referential, self-grounded "Absolute."

Yet precisely because the secret of the fetish lies in the commodity-form itself, in the "peculiar social character of the labor which produces it," the all-enveloping mist of commodity fetishism can only be penetrated, Marx insisted, by "freely associated labor." In countering the value-form to a totally different kind of self-referential, self-grounded activity which emerges from within to uproot it—"freely associated labor"—Marx splits Hegel's Absolute into two. As Raya Dunayevskaya showed, this is both a return to Hegel and a break from him, as "freely associated labor" is an "Absolute" based not on a dehumanized "logic of abstraction" but rather on concrete, human corporeal sensuousness.²

But just as Postone sees the dialectic one-sidedly, as only expressive of alienation, so he reads commodity fe-

(Continued on page 9)

2. For Dunayevskaya's discussion of the impact of Hegel's dialectic on Marx's *Capital*, see "A Decade of Historic Transformation: From the *Grundrisse* to *Capital*" in *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, as well as her expanse of writings on the subject in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of Its World Development*, available on microfilm from the Wayne State Labor Archives in Detroit, Mich.

GINGRICH AND COMPANY: PHASE II OF REAGAN'S RETROGRESSION

To me, 1994 was a lot like 1984. I never fully understood what Raya Dunayevskaya meant then by the concept of "Reagan Retrogression" and the "Changed World" we live in, until the new speaker of the House Gingrich said he considers his emergence to be merely "Phase II of the Reagan Revolution." He is right, except Raya accurately called it not "revolution" but retrogression.

There are plenty of examples of Orwell's "1984" everywhere. Newtonian politicians will piously lament the "breakup of the family," while supporting that breakup by punishing mothers who want to take care of their families. Add to that how Clinton wants to implement his newfangled "family values program" which says find a job in two years or you're out. The welfare issue of 1994, which comprises 1% of our national budget, has received 99% of the blame from our "new thinking" Congress, while in only one day that same amount is raised to "prop up the peso." We have increasingly moved into a netherworld where goods and products are able to move freely in a "global free market," while we have discriminated against certain children precisely because they are seen as "foreign."

One does not have to begin as a revolutionary to see the true nightmare of our 1984/1994 society.

Htum Lin
Oakland, Cal.

* * *

Let us hope the Republicans will only get themselves into trouble if they insist on interpreting the election results as an expression of popular support for their policies. Surely they know that today everyone votes against a candidate, not for his/her opponent.

Ivan Bachur
Warren, Mich.

* * *

We never were taught labor history in school. If working people knew what conditions were like at the turn of the century, people would know what we're in for and would be up in arms about it. The turn of the century was full of horror stories like federal troops being called out against the unions. It's going to happen again.

Dominick's supermarkets had a help wanted ad—\$6 an hour. How can people live on that? What does it mean that they can get away with paying such poverty wages? The next thing the Republicans will say is that child labor laws are big government interference.

G.K.
Chicago

* * *

I had to laugh when I saw how appropriately the spelling checker on my computer wanted to change "Gingrich" to "Jingoish."

Computer literate
Illinois

* * *

Structuralism may sound like stuffy academese, but it has won over Newt Gingrich. He believes that some new words will change what we think about reality! Gingrich has hired "corporate psychotherapist" Morris R. Shechtman to help convince Americans that they truly want Congress's retrogressive agenda. He suggests that by substituting "caregiving" for welfare, the public will take it as paternalism and long to see it ended. Will we soon hear the poor are "food abusers" or "stress deprived"? How will he sell OSHA cuts? Are workers "overly long-lived"? For clean-air cuts, will we consider ourselves "breathing dependent"?

Shechtman is so good at pulling the wool over eyes that he told company execs that they can't keep employees by "throwing money at them...People won't stay in dysfunctional cultures." When was the last time a boss threw money at you? Okay, but what about "dysfunctional cultures"? Maybe he has to throw in some truth to make the lies work!

Jim Mills
Chicago

* * *

With Mr. Gingrich and Company now in the saddle, the N&L Editorial Board must have its hands full. Your letter box must be jammed with a flood of mail and your phone must be ringing off the wall! In a strange way, I consider some of their openly declared policies a blessing

in disguise because they are bound to speed up the destabilization of the whole system. Exposing their anti-democratic doctrines is bound to mobilize the masses sooner or later. We are living in tragic but exciting times, and it is good to know there are those like N&L who are still fighting.

Laszlo Gati
Vancouver, B.C.

ISRAELI PALESTINIAN DIALOG



As part of the attempt to have peace dialogues, the Israeli Islamic fundamentalist leader was invited to speak at a meeting sponsored by the "Gush Shalom," an activist Israeli peace group. His performance reminded me of Jimmy Swaggart, though in different words and manners. His cordial manner was because he sees in democracy the path to reach political power. But when, in his enthusiasm, he shifted from local grounds to international ones such as Algeria and Afghanistan (all in the name of democracy), it was a little too much for me. When I asked my simple question—whether he is for separation of State and Religion—it was enough to uncover his undemocratic views. He preaches to be tolerant to Jews so long as they accept his rights in accordance to his views, similar to those Jewish zealots in the territories who claim they do not hate Arabs so long as they know their place.

Israeli Humanist
Tel Aviv

* * *

In the December "Our Life and Times" column Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes observe: "Israel has also closed off Gaza in response to fundamentalist terrorist attacks, causing unemployment there to rise to a catastrophic 50%." That statement sums up the current political impasse between Israel and the Palestinians and identifies the problems which have brought all the residents of this troubled corner of the world into seemingly intractable conflict.

It is the workers who ultimately suffer, even as it is they who make life in this region possible. There is insufficient labor power in the Israeli population to sustain a regional economic super-power such as Israel has become. It was the construction industry that convinced the government to lift the closures. Israeli employers use a great many undocumented workers. There are regular police sweeps through all the major cities which inevitably net thousands if not tens of thousands of such people. Palestinian workers are exploited easily on account of their obvious economic vulnerability; average Israelis fall victim to Islamic fanatics who exploit the system of exploitation. And yet the mutual dependence of Jews and Arabs in this part of the world could not be plainer to see.

Ted V.
Jerusalem

WELFARE FOR CAPITALISM

Something is going to have to happen to make people realize what is going on behind all the talk about welfare. Just because people own a house and a car and make \$9 an hour, that doesn't mean you're going to get any farther. And there is no guarantee that you'll have that tomorrow. As for cutting welfare, what I want to know is where are the jobs? People need jobs and they need good ones. Maybe having these Republicans in will make people see what is really going on.

Black woman labor activist
Memphis, Tenn.

* * *

I work with a job training program for women on AFDC in Boston, and all the people I work with just got a letter saying their last welfare check will be in February. Last year Governor Weld allocated funds for only 8 out of 12 months

Readers' Views

of AFDC. My program may be cut, but it's much scarier for those who depend on welfare as their sole support—even if the legislature decides to bail them out this time.

Weld just hired a Human Services Secretary from Wisconsin who won a reactionary welfare reform bill there. Weld wants to make people work at community service in exchange for a welfare check for six months before they are even eligible to enter a training program. It's like retribution.

Feminist job trainer
Boston

* * *

With the horrible attacks particularly on poor young Black women on welfare, the truth is that the real welfare goes to the companies. In the North the government wants to pay companies to hire women on welfare for minimum wage jobs. In the South, welfare pays just enough benefits to poor women to allow industry to pay them the minimum wage and have them barely get by.

Terry Moon
Chicago

UNFOLDING LABOR STRUGGLES

I went to N&L's showing of *At the River I Stand*, a documentary of the 1968 Memphis garbage workers strike. The documentary covered the strike, the movement it sparked and Dr. King's assassination. It laid bare the dynamics between race and class. One could see the complexities of the relationship between a leader and the masses. The unfolding dialectic of struggle was inspiring. But the best summation of the film came from my ten-year-old son. When I asked him, "What did you learn from the film?" he was quiet for about 20 seconds. Then he let out emphatically, with his fists balled up, "That we must struggle for our rights!" And that is the beauty of this film.

Black worker-student
Chicago

* * *

Many readers may have seen the "60 Minutes" program in December on the garment industry in which they focused on the two-year-plus boycott against manufacturer Jessica McClintock who refused to pay 12 Chinese immigrant seamstresses \$15,000 in back pay owed to them. That boycott campaign has succeeded in spotlighting the sweatshop conditions of most garment factories, and McClintock's resistance is because she doesn't want to set a precedent for holding manufacturers accountable for these wretched conditions. We are encouraging those who want to support us to call Jessica McClintock to say so. Their toll-free customer hotline number is (800) 333-5301. Their headquarters number is (415) 495-3030.

Support committee
Los Angeles

* * *

We read an article, "Every worker is an organizer" in your paper and found it important. In Italy a self-organizing workers movement named SLAI (Sindacato Lavoratori Autorganizzati Intercategoriale) is growing in opposition to historic trade unions which compromise with the bourgeoisie and don't defend the workers. The movement is developing in industry (Fiat, Alcatel, Ansaldo), in transport (the railways), and in public administration. We would like to know more about the movement in the U.S. and how to contact it. We think the movement must be international to defend workers' conditions and eventually demolish capitalism.

Iniziativa Comunista
Milan

* * *

Members of Teamsters' Local 283 have been striking the huge Marathon Oil Refinery complex since Nov. 16, 1994. They have constructed shanties at all gates and posted signs requesting vehicles to "Honk loud and long" in support. Several workers said that the company was trying to take away a lot of things that they had worked hard to gain. There have been no reports of this strike in local media, and several workers felt that the company was silencing

the press. Nevertheless, they were encouraged by widespread support from other Teamsters' locals and other unions. Those wishing to lend support or find out more details can call Local 283 at (313)282-8850.

Supporter
Detroit

* * *

The stories on the catfish workers in Mississippi made me see that even if we're in different places, making a bit different wages, we're all facing the same thing.

At Somerville Mills they told us if we didn't sign a decertification petition against the union, we wouldn't have jobs come Jan. 1, because they'd move the plant to Mexico. The Labor Board ruled it illegal for them to circulate the petition. We'll see what happens now.

Black woman garment worker
Somerville, Tenn.



Just when I thought I'd heard about every disgusting way to exploit the murders of Nicole Brown and Ron Goldman, I saw that the International Collectors Society had bought all of the remaining series of postage stamps issued by the Republic of Guyana in 1993 to honor international sports stars (including O.J.). "I'm not sure they actually knew what they had," said the buyer, "so I just played along, not mentioning that I was really after the O.J. stamps." Anything for a buck—or in this case big bucks!

Appalled
Chicago

* * *

In one day in December, 1,852 home carbon monoxide detectors went off in Chicago. What to do? There was much talk of adjusting the "overly sensitive" devices. But what the city called "false alarms" were caused by air pollution. If this poisonous gas builds up inside your home, it's an emergency. If it permeates the city, forget about it! Even our dear Mayor Daley had nothing to say about the health hazard. No wonder asthma and other respiratory diseases are on the rise.

Revolutionary environmentalist
Chicago

* * *

The situation in the Caribbean is terrible and getting worse. "Free Trade" smells of Slave Trade in the islands. The major commodity that the Caribbean offers, besides unemployment and cheap labor, is human traffic—people coming from China, Ecuador, Iran, Russia, West Africa—all trying to reach the U.S. This flow is the history of this part of the world. Today it has acquired monumental proportions and renders more profit than any other business, including tourism, drugs or maquiladora "Free Zones." It is an uncontrollable world exodus in face of the total economic-political crises.

Sin Ma
New York

* * *

What is horrifying is not just the reports we have received of the immense damage from the earthquake in Kobe but the way the U.S. press is reporting that the quake may become "the spark" for new economic growth in Japan since most of the buildings which collapsed "were old anyway." The inhumanity of capitalism comes out sharper in such moments as these.

Revolutionary internationalist
Chicago

WHY N&L? WHY NOW?

The backwardness of mass media filled to the brim with Orwellian language promoting the fetishism of commodities—that is, the negation of humanity—is sickening. A philosophy of liberation unseparated from humanity's concrete struggle to negate that negation is healing. Please find enclosed my subscription renewal and an additional do nation.

College instructor
Kansas

HEGEL, MARX, AND DIALECTICS TODAY

In the piece on "Hegel, Adorno and dialectics today" (December 1994 N&L), Peter Wermuth showed Hegel's thought as a very liberating way of thinking. What is hard to understand is how Adorno—who sees absolute negativity in relation to the Holocaust and relegates negation to "Absolute freedom and terror"—could relate to Hegel in such an original way elsewhere? It makes a challenge out of working out your own relation to reality and thought.

Mitch Weerth
Oakland, Cal.

It is amazing how much of Dunayevskaya's later critique of Lenin is already present in her 1974 lecture to the Hegel Society of America published in the November and December 1994 issues of N&L, especially her warning that the Absolute Idea reaches a new unity of opposites of the theoretical and practical idea, which means Hegel cautioned against imposing an old duality on the new unity of opposites reached.

Today we are faced everywhere with thought which subsumes the subjectivity of the masses within the limits of the given. Adorno, who devoted his life to dialectics, represents the sharpest contradiction in not recognizing the subjective breakthrough on the part of the masses, beginning in the 1950s, and in directly attacking the dialectic "positive in the negative" in Hegel's absolute negativity. Today the death of the dialectic and "end of history" are practically clichés, but Dunayevskaya anticipated them in Adorno. When you strip negativity of its positive content, there is no hope for the future beyond the given of capitalism.

Student of philosophy
California

I appreciated Ron Brokmeyer's essay on "commodity fetishism" (December 1994 N&L). The question it raises is: What is the principle that drove Marx to pose that absolute opposition between two conceptual moments of organization, commodity fetishism and freely associated labor. It is important to understand how things human beings make can take on properties independent of human activity. Capitalism is different

from feudalism and other previous forms. You seem to be free in that you can choose to work where you want. Capitalists are caught in a way of thinking that can reproduce only this reality. It is not a conspiracy.

Through a keen dialectical approach Marx shows how one class performs all labor, including all the surplus labor for another class to live. This is a relation between people. It is confiscatory. Economic textbooks speak of labor, capital and land as each getting their reward according to what they add to the total output. That makes relations between people appear as the relations between things, hiding exploitation.

Graduate student of economics
Berkeley, Cal.

In American Civilization on Trial we are told that we have to discover the historic link between philosophy and action. I think that means that without knowing the history of struggles for liberation in the past we can't work out our philosophy of liberation for the future. What may help us work it out is to look at the painful history of the South and the labor struggles going on there now against state-capitalism—and I look at the struggles in Decatur, Ill., the same way. These workers are the ones who have suffered the most negative of the negative.

Martin Almora
Illinois

FARMING AND FREEDOM

Felix Martin's column in the December N&L shows how important is the question of what's happening to the environment, but he doesn't fragment that from everything else that is going on. He talks about the unnatural things that are happening in nature, like his tomato plants blossoming in October. It's more and more like this. Marx wrote about how capitalism drains everything. I think that applies to the way corporations farm, how they are deadening the earth, and the effect that also has on the people who have to do the farming.

Environmental youth
Los Angeles

Felix Martin committed an amazing error in your December 1994 issue, which your fact-checker apparently did not verify, by stating that "Up to World War II, about 70% of the population lived on the farm." According to the 1995 Information Please Almanac, the 1995 World Almanac and 1995 Universal Almanac, 21-25% of the American population were engaged in farm labor in 1930. Not even in the early 19th century did the farm population include 70% of the American people. It is one of the positive aspects of American history that the U.S. has always been a primarily urban society. Any Marxist must understand that it is the working class, not the petty-bourgeoisie, which includes small farmers, which are capable of instituting socialism.

Fact checker
San Francisco

The early Kibbutzim were egalitarian communities in which women and men, adults and children, lived together, sharing work, meals and sometimes living quarters, as they attempted to fulfill their vision of a humane existence on the land. These early communities were incredibly successful in their efforts to "make the desert bloom." They became famous around the world for the quality and sheer volume of what they produced. But their true success lay in the "human sphere" of education, health and general welfare.

Today, the founding principles of the movement are all but gone. What remains is a system of interconnected agricultural factories with a shrinking, and increasingly dissatisfied labor force. It may well be little more than a chapter of history, yet we can learn a lot from the past for the future. The kibbutz represents an awesome challenge to the capitalist view of the land, which excludes humanity. It proved that the market is not an agricultural necessity any more than it is a human one. It is necessary today to try to think about the land and bring the Idea of Freedom together with the idea of agriculture.

Correspondent
Israel

SOCIETY'S FORGOTTEN?



Please include more information and articles on prisoners, as we are society's "forgotten." We need free world support as much as possible. Please also thank the donor who paid for my first year's subscription. I'm enclosing \$1.45 in stamps to help pay for my renewal and will send more later if possible.

Prisoner
Texas

Editor's note: See page 8 for one of the many important articles we have recently received from prisoners throughout the U.S. Readers will want to know that N&L has a special Donor's Fund for subscriptions for those who cannot pay themselves. Can you help?

THE BRITISH SCENE

I thought last year that by this New Year the Tory government here would have collapsed under the weight of its own fatuities. I was wrong, though it has lurched from crisis to crisis, sleaze to scandal and back again. Media pundits all assume if Major survived until Christmas, he'll survive until Easter.

The Criminal Justice Bill is aimed to make even the most constitutional protest action illegal, whether a strike-supporting march, an action of the environment, anti-racist or peace movement or whatever. It is coupled with new rules that allow dole offices to withhold any payments from unemployed who have long hair, beards, or unconventional lifestyles. It is all aimed obviously to reduce everyone to obedient automatons. With luck it may provoke the same sort of resistance as did the Poll Tax a few years back, although the protest still seems confined to a small minority.

Laurens Otter
Britain

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Editorial Gingrich, Clinton rolling back history to Black Codes

Republican congressional plans for so-called welfare reform, grouped together in the grotesquely named "Personal Responsibility Act of 1995," have done more than surpass in viciousness President Clinton's own retrogressive proposals. They have raised questions about the ideological and economic meaning of the increasingly feverish government drive to coerce and control the nearly five million adult recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

The Republican-sponsored legislation would force 1.5 million adults—and more than five million children—off AFDC within five years, ban payments to unmarried teenage parents, and strip welfare and food stamp programs of their status as "entitlements," preventing them from expanding in times of economic crisis. Whether the Republican congressional proposals, or the competing Republican governors' plans for "block grants" to states which would have a free hand to formulate their own repressive measures, are finally enacted, it is clear that what is involved is a lot more than Newt Gingrich's widely publicized comments on orphanages.

So quickly has the debate shifted to the right that liberal like Donna Shalala, Clinton's health and human services secretary, told Congress: "If able-bodied women refuse to comply with work requirements, they should lose their welfare benefits and the children could be taken away from the parents by state authorities."

Both Democrats and Republicans are poised to profoundly alter a crucial piece of the "New Deal" economic package which ushered in U.S. state-capitalism and stabilized class rule in the wake of the massive 1934 strike wave. AFDC, along with Social Security and the National Labor Relations Act, were seen then as necessary barriers to social upheaval. Why such drastic changes after 60 years of "success"? It isn't for the purpose of saving money; both parties agree that "workfare" will require more, not less, government money.

Nor can it be that poor mothers and children no longer need much assistance. On the contrary, over 14 million year-round, full-time workers now have annual earnings below the poverty line; the national average income for a family of three on AFDC has fallen to \$373 a month, the lowest real income level in 20 years.

MISSISSIPPI'S EXPERIMENT IN SUFFERING

A look at the situation in Mississippi, one of several states recently granted "waivers" from the Clinton administration to conduct "welfare reform experiments," may help shed light on what is new. Mississippi, already the state with the lowest average AFDC cash benefits—\$120 a month—was granted federal permission last month to begin implementing "WorkFirst," a program which would force 5,000 AFDC recipients, most of them Black women, into minimum wage jobs. Republican Gov. Kirk Fordice called the approval of the plan "one of my most memorable days as governor."

"WorkFirst," to be enforced now in six Mississippi counties, would order women to accept jobs at the \$4.35 per hour minimum wage. The corporation would pay them \$1 an hour; the state would pay the remaining \$3.35 for one year. Medicaid and food stamp assistance would be terminated. If a woman refuses to accept the job, welfare is cut off; if she begins work and quits or is fired, welfare is cut off.

Charles Tisdale, publisher of the *Jackson Advocate*,



Prison voices

Editor's note: With this issue we begin a regular feature of voices of opposition from within U.S. prisons.

Ft. Madison, Iowa—"Human warehousing" is a term I'd use for this capitalist gulag where misery penetrates the atmosphere, where idle time and loneliness is its true essence.

The entire prison is locked down in some form. The general population of prisoners spend their entire days in their cells except the two hours a day the prison officials let them out into the yard. If they hold a slave job then they may be out for longer periods.

Rehabilitation programs are quite limited with only GED classes provided by the nearby community college. Other educational programs, such as high school and college courses, are not provided. Their plan is to keep the working class uneducated.

Out of the 550 prisoners within our walls, 170 of them are in some form of lock-up status. These prisoners spend their entire days in their cells and are only allowed out for one hour a day five days a week to exercise in a 30 by 8-foot dog pen.

These prisoners receive no treatment or rehabilitation programs such as job training, education and psychological services. Religious rights are blatantly violated, since only Protestant and Catholic chaplains make rounds once a month. We are not allowed to participate in religious services, because the prisonrats say we are "security risks"—the administrative catch-all phrase to keep us oppressed.

Some prisoners do years at a time in lock-up status, and they can use almost any excuse to lock you up. Some are mentally ill; the state finds it convenient to lock them up instead of treating them.

These are just a few of the many injustices which we endure on a daily basis. When this goes on year after year, seeming never to end, what is one to do? I keep strong and hope that my freedom may one day become a reality in a socialist society that does not oppress the working-class individual.

—D.A. Sheldon

the state's leading Black newspaper, charged that WorkFirst "gives the state the ability to indenture African-American women because they receive AFDC and have no other visible means of support. These women cannot leave the poultry houses and textile mills to which they have been assigned without the concurrence of the state." Tisdale characterized the law as "the most oppressive piece of legislation enacted in the U.S. since the hated Black Codes were put into place shortly after the Civil War ended."

Far from being a rhetorical extravagance, Tisdale's recollection of the moment in 1865 when plantation owners and merchant capitalists sought to re-enslave the freedmen and women in all but name, locates Mississippi's "welfare reform" concerns where they truly lie—in the realm of the workplace. W.E.B. DuBois's study of the Black Codes, in his *Black Reconstruction*, singled out Mississippi's Code for its requirement that all Blacks under 18 whose parents did not enter into the prescribed labor contracts, and were thus unable to support them, were ordered taken away by the probate court and apprenticed.¹

'WORKFIRST' DANGEROUS TO LIFE

The six counties selected for Mississippi's 1995 "experiment" were hardly chosen at random. They include the cities of Jackson and Greenville, Tupelo and Laurel, the sites of poverty-wage garment, poultry, catfish and lumber plants, and the locales of ongoing struggles by

1. W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1935), p. 174.

Three important works on Black and labor history for African-American History Month

To order see page 7

Black/Red View

by John Alan

When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968, where he had gone to support the strike of Black sanitation workers, the Civil Rights Movement was already at the crossroads of its history. King was no longer the unchallenged leader of the Movement. Militant Black youth, attracted to the concept of "Black Power," were questioning the viability of nonviolence; and, at the same time, the cruel reality of the Vietnam War, mixed with the suffering of the poverty stricken in the U.S., created an uncertain direction of purpose for the Movement and King's co-leaders. But, nevertheless, King was steadfast in carrying forward his opposition to the Vietnam War and poverty in America.

Today, almost 27 years after that tragic day in Memphis and nine years after King was "canonized" by the state with a national holiday, there is an ongoing acrimonious dispute between King's family, the National Park Service and the Black political elite in Atlanta, Ga., about who is best equipped to project and preserve King's legacy.

This dispute originated in the fact that last year Congress appropriated \$11.8 million for the Park Service to construct a visitors' center—a King museum and a store to sell King souvenirs—directly across from the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-violent Social Change, founded by Coretta Scott King.

At the same time the Park Service plans to spruce up the Auburn Avenue area where King grew up. At this moment, the Park Service has acquired the old church where three generations of Kings have preached. The Auburn Avenue development is scheduled to be completed before the 1996 Olympics start in Atlanta.

Mrs. King and her son Dexter King saw this action by the National Park Service as a threat to their right to control, interpret and deepen King's legacy as the property of the King family. Unintentionally, this dispute raised the pertinent question about the nature of King's legacy and whether it belongs to the family or should be left to the desire of the state to also make an icon out of King as a national hero. In either of these alternatives, King's legacy is removed from the living, ongoing history

Who owns King legacy?

of African-American masses still engaged in the battle against racism and poverty in this country. In other words, when does King's legacy cease to be a starting point for the needed American revolution?

Can we expect the would-be inheritors of King's legacy, who are so separated from the reality of being poor and Black in America, to even be inclined to develop King's original, encounter with Black masses in motion, when as an unknown minister he was selected to lead the Montgomery Bus Boycott? This encounter, that is, King's self-identity with the essence of Black masses in motion, is no longer remembered in our popular consciousness; yet this original encounter formed the very substance of King's greatness. It was a rare moment in history when a leader reflected the content of a new mass movement in the process of radically separating itself from old ideas and methods and on the pathway toward freedom. The only other Black leader of this century who held such a distinction was Marcus Garvey in the 1920s.

From Montgomery to that tragic day in Memphis, King became a national personality. He advocated a theory of nonviolence, he opposed the war in Vietnam and against the advice of some of his colleagues planned to march on Washington against poverty.

All of this activity, after his 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech, coincided with a widening gulf opening between himself and the Black masses which created, as well, splits within the Civil Rights Movement. However, it would be far too easy to say that the problem of the Movement was the internal conflict between nonviolence vs. Black power. After much sacrifice, suffering and death, the tragedy is: the Civil Rights Movement leaders created no philosophy of Black liberation grounded in the Black mass movement.

Some may think it's wrong to criticize Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for this. But serious criticism is far better than mindless praise, because in serious criticism we can see both the greatness of King and the errors that future generations must correct. Today, King's greatness is not threatened by serious criticism, but by commercialization and the crass politicalization of his image. This we must oppose.



Chechens resist Yeltsin pounding

(Continued from page 1)

and reports circled the world of the admitted thousands of Chechen as well as Russian civilians and unadmitted thousands of Russian troops killed or wounded, the West began to mildly criticize the extent of the slaughter. But President Clinton continued to piously insist that the fight was "an internal Russian affair" in which the U.S. could not interfere. Never once did any of the rulers question that Russia had a "right" — if not a "duty" — to keep Chechnya from seceding.

Karl Marx had their number 140 years ago. As Marie Benningsen Broxup, the editor of *Central Asian Survey*, recently pointed out: "Karl Marx is no longer in fashion. Too bad, because his reports of the 19th century war in the Caucasus remain an excellent source — especially for those in the West who accept Moscow's claim that Chechnya is 'an integral part of Russia!'" She is referring to such articles as the one Marx wrote for the *New York Tribune*, in 1853, in which he exposed British Lord Palmerston's support for Czarist Russia, insisting that, whatever votes Palmerston won in Parliament, they "will neither out-voice history nor silence the mountaineers, the clashing of whose arms proves to the world that the Caucasus does not 'now belong to Russia'"¹

Far from any "neutrality," the hard truth is that not only was the green light for Yeltsin to continue his brutal war on Chechnya given by this same kind of support from the Clinton administration — but that Yeltsin saw the green light to launch it in the West's complicity in the genocidal war on the Bosnian people. Whether or not a direct connection can be drawn between them, Yeltsin's assault on Chechnya began almost immediately after the Clinton administration dropped its last pretense of opposing the Serbian rulers' destruction of Bosnia, and together with the UN and NATO openly declared a Serbian victory to be "inevitable."

CHECHENS: AN UNCONQUERABLE PEOPLE

The Idea of Freedom is not easy to kill. The battle for freedom is one the many peoples of the Caucasus have fought against three great empires — Persian, Ottoman and Russian. It took 40 years for the Russian czars to finally defeat the revolt of the North Caucasus led by the famous Imam Shamil, in 1859 — and, even then, the fighting in the mountains never ceased.

More important, the specific nature of the oppression the peoples of Chechnya and Ingushetia, the tiny republic to their immediate west, suffered from Stalinist Russia is recent enough to be in their living memory. Their memory is of the brutal deportation of up to a million Chechens and Ingushetians in 1944, in cattle cars, to Kazakhstan in Central Asia, on cooked up charges of collaboration with the Nazis — and of the hundreds of thousands who died on the way and under brutal conditions before they were allowed to return 13 years later.

Consider, then, what it means that a 55-year-old Chechen, looking at the civilian bodies and devastation around him, and agreeing with his friend that the Russians had "used everything they have against us except the atomic bomb, including anti-personnel bombs, vacuum bombs, nail bombs, needle bombs," declared to a *New York Times* reporter: "Even Stalin, who deported us, didn't do this." Whatever else it means, what demands examination is what is new in the long history of the oppression and the revolt today.

PART OF A PATTERN?

The current struggle of the Chechens begins in November 1991. While the overwhelming 90% vote of the *ICRG*-suppressed Ukrainian people for independence that month was acknowledged as the event that precipitated the sudden, swift total collapse of the Soviet Union, little attention, if any, was given to the vote taking place at the same time in tiny Chechnya. It took Yeltsin only a week after the Ukrainian action to declare the USSR dead and a Commonwealth of Independent States born, with Russia the "rightful successor" to the now-dead central government. But in Chechnya the vote that declared their independence and elected Dzhokhar Dudayev, a retired Soviet Air Force General, as President was based on his promise to completely free Chechnya from Russia. Chechnya alone seceded and refused to become part of the Federation.

There is no question that Chechnya's oil-rich land is of considerable importance to Russia and that it is critical as the place through which all the region's oil must pass on its way to export. There is also no doubt that Yeltsin has good reason to worry about Chechnya's "secessionism" inspiring others of Russia's 89 republics and regions to follow, as many are now threatening to do. But the crucial impetus for Yeltsin's decision to send troops to "restore order" on Dec. 11, 1994, is found in the event that startled not only Yeltsin, but the whole world, one year earlier, almost to the day — the Russian parliamentary elections of Dec. 12, 1993, when the party of the neo-fascist and rabid "Russian nationalist," Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, won more votes than any other candidate — no less than 25% of the popular vote.

Yeltsin's own move toward the nationalists followed at once. It can be seen in his positions over the past year on such international questions as Bosnia, North Korea and Iraq. It is seen right in Russia in such events as his visit to a Moscow exhibit of openly racist and anti-Semitic paintings, which he made sure was highly publicized. But the move against Chechnya is more than just part of a pattern. As Yelena Bonner, the widow of Andrei Sa-

kharov, put it in her resignation from Yeltsin's human rights commission: "The Russian-Chechen war is a clearly marked milestone in Russia's return to totalitarianism... Do not hope to fool the people."

It is hardly a secret that the move toward greater and greater authoritarianism in Russia flows from the depth of the economic crisis today. While perhaps 5 to 8% of the Russian people have profited gluttonously from the speculative economy that accompanied the "shock therapy" installation of a free market, actual industrial production has fallen by more than 50% and at least half of the population lives in abject poverty — while advocates of both "shock therapy" and a slower pace are calling for a "stronger state" to control the crisis.²

Yeltsin scarcely required any great "transformation" in his attempt to meet Zhirinovskiy's challenge to become the "Iron Hand" he heard being called for; he has long ruled by edict and decree. But Chechnya has completely torn away any possible illusion that Yeltsin was a "guarantor" of Russian "democracy"

WHERE TO NOW IN RUSSIA?

What Yeltsin greatly miscalculated when he launched his invasion in Chechnya on Dec. 11 was both the ferocity of the "mountaineers" and the opposition of the Russian people at home. The first anti-war picket in the center of Moscow was organized by the small democratic socialist Left, on the eve of the invasion. The opposition was soon expressed in everything, from demonstrations in front of the Defense Ministry by the peace organization, Soldiers' Mothers, created at the end of the 10-year war in Afghanistan, in which 13,000 Russian soldiers came home in body bags, to mothers actually traveling to Grozny determined to find their sons among either the dead or the prisoners of war and bring them home. In Chechnya, Russian soldiers were reported to be showing villagers how to drain the fuel from their vehicles so they could not move, while a Colonel and a Major General refused to lead their troops past walls of grandmothers standing in their way.

For the first time the Russian people watched a war as it was happening in officially uncensored TV, and read about it in the non-controlled press. On Jan. 6, the *Moscow News* ran a special edition filled with quotes from

2. See "Where is Russia going?" by Peter Hudis, in January-February 1994 N&L for a Marxist-Humanist analysis of these developments.

Essay Article Is Marx's critique still valid?

(Continued from page 5)

tishism equally one-sidedly by not even mentioning Marx's projection of "freely associated labor."

Postone knows full well that the concrete, use-value side of the contradiction does not vanish in Marx's tracing out of the value-form. He also knows that workers rise up in revolt against capitalism. Yet Postone views workers' subjectivity as becoming fully subsumed by capital, since their struggles at the point of production forces capitalism to replace living labor with labor-saving devices which ultimately makes the proletariat superfluous.

This especially comes out in his discussion of the chapter on Cooperation. Marx here posed the "cooperative plan of labor" against the "despotic plan of capital." Postone tries to get around this clear reference to human subjectivity by saying Marx was referring only to an early stage of capitalism when direct human labor still predominates in the production process.

But Postone doesn't mention that Marx returned to the cooperative form of labor at the apex of Capital — the section on the "absolute general law of capitalist accumulation." Marx here showed that the drive of capital to reduce the relative proportion of living labor to machines at the point of production reaches the point where living labor becomes expendable. But instead of erasing all forms of human subjectivity, Marx showed that capital is now confronted by the cooperative form of labor in the form of the unemployed, who rise up in revolt.

Remarkably, Postone has not a word to say about this section and doesn't even mention the two categories central to it—constant capital and variable capital. It is strange that a work aiming to present the trajectory of Capital has nothing to say about two of the only three theoretic original categories Marx ever created.³

It is also strange that the book has nothing to say about so crucial a feature of today's high-tech capitalism as permanent mass unemployment, "contingent" work forces and new revolts of the unemployed, as seen in the Los Angeles rebellion of 1992. Postone seems to ignore these issues because they get in the way of his contention that class struggle is not internal to the value-form.

He is so anxious to get rid of subjectivity that he writes, "the women's movements and minority movements should not be understood as a development that points beyond capitalist society...the form of universality they have helped constitute is one that, for Marx (!!) re-

3. The only three categories which Marx took credit for creating were labor power, constant capital and variable capital; he refused to take credit for the concept of surplus value on the basis that it was implicit in Ricardo. Though Postone discusses the concept of labor power, he has precious little to say about Marx's split in the category of labor between labor as activity (living labor) and the capacity to labor (labor power as a commodity).

public officials denouncing the war and asked readers to hang it as a sign of protest on the door to their apartments, in their office buildings, or at their bus stops, and hundreds complied. There were continuous conflicting reports of the dead and wounded, some officials on Jan. 17 saying that already as many as 4,000 body bags waited to be shipped home. All of Yeltsin's former fellow "reform democrats" soon joined the voices of opposition to his war, while Yeltsin continued to surround himself with a small band of "advisors," who were dubbed the "War Party." Maj. Gen. Aleksandr Korshakov, the body-guard the KGB first assigned to Yeltsin in 1985, became his chief "comrade in arms." It seemed to many that the only one in Russia left to support the war was Zhirinovskiy — whose criticism was that it was not brutal enough.

That does not mean that all the opposition to the war was for the same reasons. Whether Yegor Gaidar or Grigori Yavlinsky or Boris Fyodorov, much of the opposition of the "reform democrats" had to do with the enormous costs of the operation as well as the burden the 350,000 refugees will represent and the effect it will have on the already troubled economy. While all wanted the bombing stopped, few voices were heard demanding the right of the peoples of Chechnya to decide their own fate. It led two leading democratic socialist scholars, Alexander Buzgalin and Andrei Kolganov to suggest: "If the war in Chechnya had been organized 'professionally' only the democratic left and a few human rights defenders would have spoken out against it."

Nor does the intense and increasing opposition to Yeltsin mean an end to the steady move to greater and greater authoritarianism in Russia. Far from it. No one can know for sure whether Yeltsin can possibly survive; or whether a Zhirinovskiy will grow in power; or whether a so-called "dark horse" will emerge as an "Iron Hand" — like the popular Afghanistan "hero," Lt. Gen. Alexander Lebed, who admires the dictator Pinochet for turning the Chilean economy around while killing "no more than 3,000 people."

While it is impossible to know what will happen in the period of enormous economic and political instability Russia is facing, what is of crucial importance is whether the current opposition to the war leads to a deeper questioning of Russia's state-capitalist society and a search for a way out that might re-connect to Russia's true revolutionary legacy.

—Jan. 19, 1995

mains tied to the value-form of mediation."

If no existing social group can be considered the agent of liberation, then how do we get beyond capitalism? Postone brazenly proclaims, "the possibility of a qualitatively different future society is rooted in the potential of 'dead labor'" (p. 357).

Basing himself again on the *Grundrisse*, Postone says the "inner contradiction" of the law of value is that capital must reduce the necessary labor time needed for producing commodities to an absolute minimum. This means it must increase productivity by adding more and more "dead labor," such as automated machinery, to the production process. As necessary labor time falls, surplus labor time rises. Yet capital's drive to reduce necessary labor time squeezes the system's only source of value—living labor—to a minimum. By reducing living labor to abstract, homogenous universal labor time, "dead labor" produces both systemic instability and "new needs and capacities" which can point us beyond capitalism.

But since Postone rejects the notion of subject, he refrains from conceptualizing how these "new needs" become embodied in human forces which can negate the system. He leaves us only with an abstract declaration about the difference between "what is and what could be." With the concept of revolution unable to flow from the analysis, we are thrown back into the quagmire of the Kantian divide between "is" and "ought."

THE DIVIDE IN CONSCIOUSNESS

Postone's limitations are as instructive as his contributions, for they show that our high-tech society has created a divide in consciousness not unlike what characterized the emergence of automation two generations ago. Automation created a divide in thought—between planners, bureaucrats and radicals who viewed automation as "absorbing" proletarian subjectivity, on one side, and the emergence of new forms of human resistance rooted in the question "what kind of labor should man/woman perform," on the other. Our high-tech world is also creating a new divide—between those so swept up in the increasingly abstract forms of social domination that they proclaim "the death of the subject," on one side, and the still-uncertain search for new human beginnings from out of this alienated reality, on the other.

But what is "new" today is that the rejection of the concept of subject leads straight to the death of the very idea of philosophy. Because we live in a retrogressive period when the subject seems quiescent, this threatens to completely assimilate thought itself into the structure of the reified world.

The test of any revolutionary theory is to grasp the newly-emerging forms of domination inseparable from the elucidation, articulation and, indeed construction of its dialectical opposite: the concretion of human powers which the self-movement of capital strives to subsume. That this work fails this test only emphasizes the need for the philosophic labor which has barely begun.

1. See *Marx-Engels Collected Works* vol. 12, p. 406. See also "Un peuple indomptable" by Marie Benningsen Broxup in *Le Monde* Jan. 4, 1995.

Who pays for Mexico's economic crisis?

by David C. Ranney

On Dec. 20 Mexico began a descent into a sharp economic crisis. Within a month, Mexican workers and peasants saw the value of their already meager earnings cut nearly in half. The minimum wage which was worth about \$4 a day is now worth less than \$3. The prices of staples such as milk, rice, beans and chicken have skyrocketed from 15% to 40%. The loss of investors in Mexican securities pales in comparison to the devastation to Mexican workers and peasants.

The first manifestations of the crisis were a fall in the value of Mexican money (the peso) relative to the dollar, a steep decline in the Mexican stock market, layoffs, and the withdrawal of foreign capital. But there is strong evidence that this crisis was in the making for some time as the Mexican and U.S. governments secretly and artificially propped up the value of the peso in order to get the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) passed and maintain Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in power.

The U.S. government and transnational corporate interests are presently preparing a bailout scheme to protect the interests of transnational corporations. But that scheme will be at the expense of working people on both sides of the border.

While the loss in wages and income is devastating to Mexican workers and peasants, transnational corporations find Mexican labor cheaper than ever. As long as the crisis does not cause major social upheaval, therefore, it is good for companies moving their capital in search of cheap labor. A continued slide, however, could result in such a deep depression and political instability that Mexico could be lost as a haven for cheap labor and export platform for the transnationals. This is the motivation for the buyout—keep the value of the peso down but stabilize the economy.

BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER

Since U.S. goods are more expensive in Mexico, the lucrative "Mexican market" which NAFTA advocates claimed would enrich the people of the U.S. has all but dried up. Furthermore, these developments will create greater pressures for Mexican workers to attempt to find life-sustaining jobs in the U.S. United States government sources have estimated that a continuing crisis will increase undocumented immigration by 30%. This in turn is likely to exacerbate racist efforts to restrict immigration (such as California's Proposition 187) as workers on both sides of the border compete for declining jobs.

The December 1994 crisis had been in the making for some time. A similar but less severe decline occurred in 1982 when Mexico defaulted on \$80 billion in public debt. At that time the price of the bailout offered by the U.S. government under Ronald Reagan and the International Monetary Fund was the imposition of a "structural adjustment program" (SAP) which represented a sharp shift in Mexico's development policy. Rather than attempting to build up local industries, Mexico was forced to produce goods for export, reduce the value of the peso, cut government expenditures and begin to open the economy to foreign goods, services and capital. The culmination of this policy was the passage of NAFTA.

The problem was that the SAP resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of peasants from their lands, and the elimination of thousands of industrial jobs as imports displaced small and medium-sized Mexican companies. Mexico began buying more things from the U.S. and other countries than they were selling. Without further intervention, a growing trade imbalance would cause the value of Mexican money to decline relative to the currencies of the nations from whom Mexico is buying things. Further devaluation would highlight the fact that the SAP was not working for most Mexican people.

But the SAP was working for some. While wages fell from 36% of total national income in 1980 to only 18% by 1994, 24 new Mexican billionaires made the Forbes list. To keep the ruling party (PRI) in power, government and industry leaders, with the help of their counterparts in the U.S., moved to prop up the peso until af-

ter the 1994 Mexican elections.

To this end Mexico used its economic ties to the U.S. to convince foreign investors to use dollars to buy Mexican stocks, to get foreign loans and to sell bonds. This resulted in an accumulated debt of over \$160 billion. Mexico must now spend over \$2 billion a month to pay interest and principal on that debt. Under these circumstances, if foreign investors withdraw their capital (which they have been doing for some time), it results in the collapse which we see today.

In order to prevent the crisis from appearing prior to the passage of NAFTA and the Mexican presidential



Workers' housing in Piedras Negras, Mexico

elections, Mexico's former President Salinas drew down on an accumulated reserve of dollars and other currencies to pay off the debt service. By the time present President Zedillo took office, the reserve was all but depleted and he was forced to let the value of the peso "float," which brought the crisis to the light of day.

BAILING OUT WORLD CAPITAL

The planned bailout should not be seen as a bailout of Mexico or its working population, but a bailout of transnational corporations. Details of the bailout are still being worked out behind closed doors in Washington and in the board rooms of Wall Street. At this moment President Clinton is facing considerable opposition to aspects of the plan that have been made public. Essentially the deal will exchange foreign loans guaranteed by the U.S. for another strict round of structural adjustment.

As we go to press, an \$18 billion line of credit has been arranged. \$9 billion is from the U.S. government, \$5 billion is from the Bank of International Settlements, \$1 billion from Canada and another \$3 billion from a consortium of international banks led by New York's Citibank. In addition, the Clinton administration with the endorsement of the Republican leadership is asking Congress to approve a plan for the U.S. to guarantee additional loans to Mexico up to \$40 billion.

In return for all of this, Mexico is agreeing to an austerity package. Already some of that package has been presented to the Mexican public including a pledge by labor to hold wage increases to 7% while business has merely agreed to an "extraordinary effort" to hold prices down. This anti-inflation measure will thus fall on workers as prices already are surging upward despite the "extraordinary effort" of business. By keeping the value of the peso down, Mexico is also asked to reduce imports and increase exports. Other aspects of the plan may involve further public spending cuts in social services and more privatization of public enterprise.

The NAFTA chickens are coming home to roost. The Mexican crisis which was precipitated by the imposition of a structural adjustment development policy on Mexico's working class and peasantry is being "resolved" by the same medicine which ultimately hurts working people throughout the hemisphere. The bailout is not designed to help people but to save a development model which enables transnational corporations to move their capital and jobs wherever they want, whenever they want, without interference from government or labor.

Limits of Aristide's theology of liberation

In the Parish of the Poor—Writings from Haiti Jean-Bertrand Aristide (Orbis Books: New York, 1990); *Aristide—An Autobiography*, (Orbis Books: 1993).

At the very end of 1990 the Lavalas (flood) movement—a multidimensional coalescence of Haitian youth, peasant and women's organizations, and a radical, base community church, Ti Legliz,—succeeded in electing Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a parish priest and practitioner of theology of liberation, as President of Haiti. It was the first time that theology of liberation had actually taken power, even if incompletely and momentarily.

In *The Parish of the Poor*, written before Aristide's election, is primarily made up of a long letter on the misery of Haitian life and the growth of the Lavalas liberation movement. Against "the deepening shadow of that greater state to our north," Aristide pulls no punches: "The dark places I know best are my country's slums...I used to walk through La Saline and the other slums like it that are spreading like contagion in a city that for years has been clogged with the detritus of the deadly economic infection called capitalism."

To this critique Aristide adds the Catholic Church. Against this church he poses "the Little Church—Ti Legliz, as the liberation church is called in Haiti."

Much of *In the Parish* traces the growth of a liberation movement in the face of enormous repression and terrorism. Aristide singles out the youth, particularly in the church of St. Jean Bosco, for pushing the movement forward. Facing the military, the police, the attaches and other terrorist groups sponsored by the authorities, they do not flinch, but continue to build a movement which

Black World

(Continued from page 1)

Left Review (NLR) back in the summer of 1994: "...what are the objections to insurrectionary activity in Haiti against the murderous regime of Cedras and Francois?" ("Beyond Utopia: The State of the Left in Latin America." NLR 206, July/August 1994, p. 31).

In his critique of Jorge Castenada's *Utopia Unarmed: The Latin American Left after the Cold War* (1993) Dunkerley agrees with Castenada's assessment of the limits of guerrilla focusism, but takes him to task for going so far as to render armed insurrection an exhausted paradigm. "If the claims of guerrilla-ism were generally inflated and misguided," he writes, "they were not always so and even now retain some sad validity" (p. 31).

The tendency to offer tendentious criticisms of the limitations of radical mass movements, now fashionable among the Western Left who anxiously bury Marxism in the same stroke, seems less outraged at the repressive authoritarian whip under which radical social movements must develop. Instead, the democratic option of electoral politics that Western imperialist powers (led by the U.S. and sanctioned by the UN) control and manipulate has become the political instrument of choice for much of the Western Left.

This depoliticization of revolution and revolutionary struggle in the interest of promoting the so-called democratic development of Haiti's political culture, misperceived as lacking any evidence of democratic institution or history of democratic social relations, has ideologically watered the soil of the retrogressive world order.

A typical viewpoint is that expressed by an administration official that Haiti has "no experienced democracy. Experienced or not, U.S. pressure on Aristide hasn't prevented him from exercising some creative disempowerment of the Haitian military, such as his handing over the military's headquarters to the Ministry of Women's Affairs."

However, the thin layer of high-ranking military officers Aristide believes he can count on to be loyal to him has led him to promote Lieut. Col. Pierre Cherubin to brigadier general and to a leading position in the military, despite Cherubin's role in covering up the police killing of five students in 1991. As a key sector of Aristide's constituency, youth cannot help but recognize the signal that Cherubin's promotion sends to them.

Moreover, Aristide's downsizing of the military doesn't address the more troubling issue of the much larger and murderous paramilitary group FRAPH headed by CIA protege Emmanuel Constant. And now there are reports of collusion between FRAPH and U.S. forces in places like the southern coastal town of Jeremie. The notorious Special Forces of Vietnam-era infamy have interfaced comfortably with paramilitary organizations like FRAPH in detaining Aristide supporters.

The more alarming implication though is that high level officials in the Aristide government condone FRAPH-U.S. military collusion. The naive stupidity of the U.S. which claims that the murderous activities of FRAPH goes under the colors of the "political orientation" of a "recognized political organization," no different than the Democrats and Republicans here, is itself a form of U.S. collusion with Haiti's fascists.

The political illusion that democracy is something brought to Haitian society by U.S. military might obscures the actual human factor that the suffering Haitian masses decided they would suffer no longer, when in 1986 they began the uprooting of three decades of neofascist Duvalierism. They didn't begin that liberatory process in order to realize the principles of bourgeois democracy. They were already victims of a caricature that; after all, the Haitian Constitution had been written by the U.S. State Department early in this century. Their liberatory impulse issues instead from a desire to rid themselves of this caricatured democracy so prized in "virtual America."

eventually carries Aristide to the Presidency.

Aristide: An Autobiography begins with that moment of election, December 16, 1990. Here we are reading a biography of theology of liberation as Aristide practices. When seen in its relation to the Haitian masses, its strength is in full view. The participation from below the support of the masses is clear.

But when theology of liberation seeks its philosophical roots questions arise: "Marxism is not a source of inspiration for me. Instead, the texts of Marx constitute a tool among others to which I may have recourse." What seems so crucial for this moment, the exploration of Marxism as a philosophy of liberation, is rejected.

Couldn't the theology of liberation find a rich ground for the creation of a philosophy of liberation within Marxism "thoroughgoing naturalism or Humanism" which was rooted in an absolute opposition to capitalist class society and to "vulgar communism," and for totally new relations in all spheres of human activity?

This failure to grapple with the fullness of Marx is not a mere theoretical question. It has very concrete, indeed lethal consequences for a liberation movement. Thus Aristide wrote that his first challenge upon assuming the office of President in February 1991 was "the democratization of the army." But can you democratize an army without first smashing it as a representative of the repressive state? Eight months later that army overthrew the Aristide government. Perhaps Marx's writing on the class nature of the state could have been of assistance.

—Eugene Wall

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Students oppose criminalization of the homeless

Champaign-Urbana, Ill.—"Do you hear a knock at the front door of America?...These are the people of America's 51st state—the state of homelessness." So were the resentful words of Dwight Fowler, a member of a Black homeless acting troupe (Voices from the Streets) rooted in Washington, D.C., which visited the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana in mid-January. Fowler's skepticism of the existing political system is reflected in his reference to homelessness as another one of the nation's states, without which the country could not maintain its "economic order."

Fowler was joined by a formerly homeless battered mother, 15- and 12-year-old girls, a talented, homeless male vocalist, and a formerly homeless woman named Gloria Palmer-Hall who equated her life to those of "faceless, voiceless refugees." Palmer-Hall and her seven children live their lives in fear at the Langston Place projects, encountering and/or witnessing drive-by shootings and violence almost daily.

Together, this group performed skits which included the frustrating trip to the social worker's office, the accusation of the victim as being an alcoholic/addict, and the classic view that the homeless have earned their situation. Collectively, these skits depicted the class bigotry, racism, depression, resentment and outright societal

Bottom line on cops

Chicago—All the Latinos call the two worst cops in the neighborhood "The Hispanics" because they're two Hispanic cops. When they see you with two or three guys together, they talk sh-- to us and lock us up. They harass everyone. They called this old lady one time a b--h. She was looking outside her window, and they said, "Get back inside b--h!"

When "The Hispanics" are working everybody leaves the neighborhood, and I mean everybody. Nobody hangs out. The first person they see, they lock up. Sometimes they'll see you with beer on the street; if they're in a good mood they'll just take your beer and leave, if they're in a bad mood they'll lock you up for drinking on a public way.

Sometimes I get frisked two or three times in a night by different cops. You can't run from them because they already know us so good. They've been in the neighborhood for over five years. They know where we live. They know where we hang out.

I work in a factory, and I always show them my check stubs because they tell you when they see you with money, "Oh it's a good night today." You say, "For what?" Or sometimes they'll rip your money in half and throw it on the ground.

A lot of cops ask for guns. They say, "Give us a gun and we'll let you go." They want the guns so they can pin them on someone else. I remember one time this one cop was frisking me, and he put his hand in my pocket and he goes, "Look what I found," and he took out a gun. He probably had it in his hand. I said, "No that ain't mine, officer. If it would have been mine when I saw you coming I would have ran." He said, "I know it ain't yours." He put it back in his pocket and let us go.

"The Hispanics" told us it's better for them if we kill ourselves. Sometimes they'll put us in the car and tell us they're going to lock us up. But then they'll say, "If you can find somebody else better, we'll exchange you." The more attitude you give them the more they'll hate you. And they'll tell you too, "We're going to send you to the joint."

They don't like messing with the little kids. It's a waste of their time. They'll say, "Just wait 'til you're 17." They'll arrest them a couple of times, they'll put drugs on them, then they'll leave them alone. When they turn 17 they'll put something big on them. They'll already have priors. They put a couple of guys in prison like that.

They'll harass anybody whether you're in a gang or not. It's our word against the cop's word, so who are they going to believe? They say we're just a little group of Latinos who all stick together because we're all Latinos. But it's hard to work against the government, especially when they think you are all gang bangers and drug dealers. How can you fight the government when they are accusing you of something? —Latino youth

FSM: 30 years later

Berkeley, Cal.—On the 30th anniversary of the Free Speech Movement Mario Savio returned to speak to over a thousand FSM "vets" and current youth in Sproul Plaza at UC Berkeley. Savio called for a return to action and resistance against Proposition 187 which he called a turn to fascism in this country. His view is that this is a troubling transition period in which Prop 187 is part of the rulers' search for enemies to blame before global trade can eventually help bring wealth everywhere.

He said that in 1964, as now, a "clarion call" for action comes from off the campus. This time, he said, it has come from the mass resistance to 187, including his son who said if he's asked to produce proof of citizenship in school, he's going to refuse. What was conspicuously absent in the whole event was attention to today's Black dimension in general and Mississippi in particular. Mississippi Freedom Summer was cited as the 1964 off-campus "clarion call." Many in the crowd were interested in learning about the new voices of Black labor in the South recorded in *News & Letters*, as well our original pamphlet on the Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution. —Ron Brokmeyer

rejection experienced by America's homeless.

It was never more clear to me just how withdrawn and almost helpless the situation of the homeless was until I recently spent three hours talking to Chris, an Urbana native and homeless Black man, at a local cafe. During our conversation, I had asked Chris what he thought of the shelters in this area. He remarked on how there was no space to eat anywhere, how everyone was either sick or had a cold there, and how they threw him right back on the streets promptly at seven every morning. Furthermore, he had to rotate from shelter to shelter due to each being filled over capacity.

I also asked him if the police harassed him, and I became disgusted at how. Chris claimed that they would flick their red and blue lights on and start laughing at him, only to drive away shortly after doing so. On occasion they have taken him to the station and jailed him overnight solely because he was asking for pocket change, clearly demonstrating that this system, in addition to forcing people into poverty, criminalizes poverty.

Finally, I asked Chris what he told people when they asked him why he didn't just get a job. His response: "I don't know if I'm going to be alive tomorrow. Some days I don't even have enough energy to say hi to people."

The law by no means aids Chris or anyone in his situation. In August of 1994, Champaign passed an ordinance that allows Champaign police to ticket or take to jail panhandlers if they so much as ask for change more than once. This outrageous law, obviously aimed at only people of low socioeconomic status, produces a crime out of being poor! Working hand in hand with this ordinance is the "Put Your Change Where You Can Make One" campaign. Local businesses collect change in jars, and the funds allocated from these jars go directly to shelters



Calderón/Reforma/Mexico City

Republican Contract will destroy environment

Two years ago, the Clinton administration abandoned most of its rather mild environmental agenda in the face of resistance by a minority in Congress. The tone was set for a two-year holding pattern, just when the crises of the depletion of fish from the ocean and the accumulation of nuclear waste are reaching a breaking point.

Enter Gingrich and his disciples, ready to sacrifice the health of people and the planet on the altar of property rights. Their "Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act" aims to halt all regulations that protect the environment and the health and safety of workers and communities, limited though they are.

This act would, among other things, require 23 new sets of cost-benefit analyses for any new regulation and would require reimbursement to any owner of property whose value was reduced by 10% or more. Any rule that passed the law's tests plus the tight budget limitations would very likely achieve nothing at all.

But conservative judges appointed by Reagan and Bush have already enshrined these principles as law. They have become less and less willing to force corporations and government to pay damages for harmful working conditions, products and pollution. At the same time they have increasingly ruled that the government must reimburse poor, suffering capitalists prevented from squeezing the last cent out of their property.

A Wyoming coal company was given \$150 million because it couldn't mine in a protected area. A New Jersey developer was awarded \$3 million because he wasn't allowed to destroy 12.5 acres of wetlands that cost him \$15,000.

The basis for these rulings is the Bill of Rights clause forbidding uncompensated taking of property—a clause used earlier to defend slavery and oppose New Deal child labor, occupational health and minimum wage laws.

It has been revived under the guise of a "property rights movement" organized by right-wing groups and largely funded by oil, mining, logging, paper and agribusiness companies. One of its organizers, Ron Arnold, vows to "destroy the environmental movement once and for all."

In 1990 this "property rights movement" released its "Wise Use Agenda" for public property, calling for immediate logging of all old-growth forests, opening all public lands to mining and oil drilling, and gutting the Endangered Species Act. Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska, chair of the Natural Resources Committee, embraced it enthusiastically. His number one environmental priority is to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling.

"Property rights" does not mean the right to enjoy the

and not to the homeless. Such a campaign leads to the empowerment of the donor rather than the beggar.

University of Illinois students have shown opposition to the panhandling law and the campaign by protesting outside the doors of businesses that sponsor the campaign and by attending town legislative meetings. This may have helped to keep the law out of Urbana. Also, a group entitled "Student Action on Homelessness" has been established on campus. However, the issue is one of tremendous complexity, and the group has decided little on what to do. The people of America's 51st state are crying helplessly at the front door, and the existing political system forces them to continue crying. —Vijay

Teens lead the fight against racist Prop. 187

Oakland, Cal.—By participating in the demonstrations against Proposition 187, I feel like we really united together as a people to fight this discrimination. It was the first time that I know of where high school and middle school students were really leading the fight. We were the ones in charge. This was the best part. The adults were looking to us saying, "What are you going to do?" I saw that we made a difference even though we weren't old enough to vote because now all people, not just students, can resist 187 and know that they have support from people all over the state.

In a lot of ways, though, just demonstrating against 187 was not enough. So much of our time and energy was spent fighting those who wanted to limit us to just voting. Even a lot of other people my age saw that as the answer. Which is ridiculous because we aren't even old enough to vote ourselves. Even if 187 hadn't passed in the elections last November, Wilson would have found a way to make it happen. They would have just signed it into law instead. Putting it on the ballot was a way of saying to immigrants, "Look, everyone else supports this, so get the hell out."

Now that 187 has passed, it is like there is no one fighting any more. Today is the time that we should be in the streets. We should be fighting back right now! There are a lot of misconceptions that 187 is not even going to go through, that it's all in the courts and it'll be fought out there and never even affect us. But that isn't true. Only parts of the law are being fought in court, other parts have already gone through, like making having a fake green card a 20-year sentence automatically.

I'm not going to say that fighting 187 wasn't worth it because it passed. I think that just shows how bad things are getting and how much more we have to fight.

—High school activist

Editorial

(Continued from page 8)

How else can anyone account for what Tisdale called the "strange unanimity of African-American legislators" in voting for "WorkFirst," a piece of legislation drafted by an associate of former KKK leader David Duke? Of 40 Black Mississippi state legislators voting on "WorkFirst," 36 voted "yes."

This far-reaching disorientation is not limited to Mississippi, as we can see from the broad retreats currently being undertaken by liberals and labor bureaucrats, official civil rights groups and many women's organizations. In the face of electoral and legislative changes, every goal is a weaker, more compromised one than the last.

Looking back at the "infamous Black Codes," and forward to the great upheavals of Reconstruction and the Black populist movement, Raya Dunayevskaya cautioned against awarding such reactionary laws an invincibility they do not deserve: "Once we place the problem in its proper economic framework, the human factors can emerge and then we see the limitations of all laws, written and unwritten."² As we enter 1995, it is the "human factor" that desperately needs to be released if we are to regain the offensive against the "law-makers."

2. National Editorial Board of News & Letters, *American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard* (Detroit: News & Letters, 1963; reprint 1983), p. 12.

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

In a world full of horrors and retrogression, not least of all in Bosnia, the multiethnic Bosnian people—Muslim, Croat, Serb, Jew, Hungarian and Gypsy as well as “unclassifiable”—continue to hold out against the forces of genocide and fascism. As this year opened, the city of Sarajevo recorded its one thousandth day of siege by Serbian fascist forces, a duration longer than Hitler's siege of Leningrad during World War II.

Sarajevo's people continue to resist both with arms and with a quiet determination to maintain their multicultural institutions and way of life. At the end of 1994, in an act hardly mentioned by the world media, 200,000 citizens of Sarajevo signed a declaration of commitment to the unity and pluralism of their city.

No one takes seriously the truce worked out by Jimmy Carter in December, a truce bought by a disgusting display of official recognition of the criminal Bosnian Serb leadership of Radovan Karadzic and company. Carter's trip made evident to the world what has been the real U.S. policy all along: allow the Serbs to keep most of their conquests, now comprising 70% of Bosnia, and call that peace. Carter in fact became the advocate of the Serb fascists, who he said had been unable to have “their side” heard by the world.

For nearly three years, a growing body of intellectuals and human rights activists have protested against the

Vietnam's capitalist road

In its quest to make the country one of the so-called economic “tigers” of East Asia alongside Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, Vietnam's Communist rulers have in recent years opened the country wide to foreign investment. In 1992 the government cut the minimum month's wage in foreign-owned firms from \$50 to \$35 per month (it's only \$11 in state-owned firms), prompting massive investment from Korea and Japan as well. Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) alone has drawn \$2.5 billion in foreign capital investment since 1990. “Singapore advises on the legal code,” applauds New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman. (Will it include caning of teenagers?)

Rather than any genuine effort at reconciliation, let alone admission of guilt for Washington's imperialist Vietnam War—a war that claimed the lives of over one million Vietnamese and 50,000 Americans—U.S. corporations are eager to jump in and take advantage of the cheap labor supply. This has to do with current hints by the Clinton administration that it might ease U.S. trade barriers in place since the Vietnam War.

In addition to low pay, often below the legal minimum, Vietnamese workers suffer long hours, abuses including beatings by foreign supervisors, and an unemployment rate approaching 20%.

In recent years, workers have also begun to resist. Over 30 strikes occurred in the first ten months of 1994. In December, workers walked out of a South Korean-owned textile plant, protesting low wages and a physical attack by a supervisor on a worker.

Official state-controlled unions have done little to support workers but, at least in Ho Chi Minh City, grassroots unions have sprung up among hotel and restaurant workers.

Phony Bosnian truce favors Serb fascists

genocide in Bosnia, to no avail. But this feeling is not only that of intellectuals. It is shared by many people the world over. Even military people, hardly known for their concern for human rights, have expressed disgust at what is going on.

The UN “peacekeeping” troops are at best pawns of the Serbian fascists, at worst in complicity with them. When the French newspaper *Le Monde* interviewed French troops in Bosnia, one of them stated: “I am ashamed toward the Bosnians to whom we are giving no aid.” Another said: “I am ashamed of France, ashamed of belonging to an army commanded by cowards.”

Even at the level of legal action, nothing is happening. More than 18 months after the Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal was set up by the UN, no trials have started, and there has been only one indictment. Work has been slowed by the failure of wealthy nations to provide funds. There has not been one indictment for any of the more than 20,000 rapes of Bosnian Muslim women carried out systematically at the start of “ethnic cleansing” in 1992 by Serbian fascists, despite mounds of evidence stored neatly in files in The Hague.

Inside Serbia, dissident intellectuals and journalists continue to criticize their government's policy of conquest, although they usually stop short of actually supporting Bosnia. In recent weeks, the fascist government of Slobodan Milosevic took over *Borba*, the sole remaining independent daily paper in Belgrade. So far this has backfired, with a new *Borba*—set up by virtually the entire staff who resigned en masse—outselling the official

one despite harassment on the streets and in the courts.

But it is the Bosnian people who have borne and continue to bear the burden of resistance to the Serbian fascists. Many expected the Bosnians to collapse or capitulate long ago, but in fact they have in some ways been gathering strength. Unbowed and unbroken, it is sure that they will continue to fight in 1995.

Earthquake in Japan



Hundreds of thousands of people are homeless after the Jan. 17 earthquake in “earthquake-proof” Kobe, Japan. More than 5,000 are dead and thousands more injured as the government is being challenged for rushing to repair things, while overlooking the human crisis.

Protests in Bahrain

Over 2,000 people are under arrest after a series of anti-government protests in Bahrain beginning in December. The protests initially centered around the issues of unemployment and lack of democracy in this tiny Persian Gulf emirate. Taking to the streets on the eve of a meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (comprised of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and two other emirates), the protesters were met with clubs, tear gas and gunfire by police.

In November, 3,000 signatures were collected on a petition demanding restoration of the country's elected parliament, shut down by Emir Issa Ben Salman Al-Khalifa in 1975 for allegedly “obstructing the work of the government.” In response, the Emir offered only a strengthening of his appointed Consultative Council.

Generally pro-Western, open to foreign investment and relatively secular, the regime maintains an authoritarian hold on the population, over a third of whom are immigrants without citizenship rights.

The regime attributed the revolt to Iranian-backed Islamic fundamentalist groups supported from among the country's Shiite Muslim community. Shiites hold little political power and are not allowed to join the armed forces or the police, even though they comprise 65% of the population.

In fact, judging by the signatories to the November petition, the anti-regime movement is far more diverse, and includes nationalists, former Communists, former Baathists, Sunni Muslim clerics, as well as Shiite groups. Part of why the revolt is emerging now is that the country faces deep economic problems as its oil reserves begin to run out.

China's Three Gorges Dam

In December, further steps were taken toward beginning construction of the huge Three Gorges Dam in China which, if completed, would be the largest hydroelectric project in history. At a cost of \$17 billion, the dam's proponents claim that it would generate nearly three times the hydroelectric power of the U.S.'s Grand Coulee Dam, one of the world's largest.

Unsurprisingly, Li Peng, the leader most identified with the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, is also the point man for this huge and ecologically destructive project, one originally planned by Mao Zedong in the 1950s. The dam, which would not be finished until at least 2010, would create a 400-mile-long lake and would displace 1.2 million people. There are all sorts of dangers, from mud choking the lake to massive floods if the giant miles-long rock formation upstream, the so-called Huangla Stone, crashes into the lake at some point.

In China, the writer Dai Qing has been among those to speak out against the dam. Jailed in 1989, she has also dared to publish a book recounting Mao's execution of thousands of opponents in Yanan in the 1940s before he even came to power, opponents he labeled “Trotskyites.” So far, however, despite some ambivalence at the top, China's feuding state-capitalist rulers have decided to go ahead.

Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding in 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. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are

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

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 have 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, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: “It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor.” We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

Iran's writers fight censors

A group of 150 Iranian writers recently wrote an open letter to the Iranian government calling for an end to censorship and the formation of a writers' union to defend their rights against government censorship. It reads in part: “We are writers...It is our natural social and political right to have our writings...reach its audience freely. No one should have the right to prevent our works from circulation. Everyone, however, can judge and criticize our works after circulation.” Recently one of the signatories visited Los Angeles. Shahnoush Parsipour has been jailed several times for her writings. Below we print excerpts from her interview with Cyrus Noveen.

It was a clear statement to the government to declare that we are writers and we need freedom to write. Literature will die without freedom.

Iran has a religious government and all the laws are Koranic. And when you want to touch, for example, the problems of love or sex, or things that you need to explain and to write freely about, you always find problems with the laws because they are very strict and very straight, without any dimension of the new world. So we suffer and in reality you can't write anything because all things have some problems with Koranic laws.

I wrote something about virginity in a book entitled *Women Without Men*. This problem is very important in Iran. It is something that you must hide. It is a secret which you must not speak about. I don't know really why they were so violent against me after this book. They attacked me for three months and after that they arrested me. I was in jail nearly two months without any charges brought against me. They told me it was against Islam. After that they told me it is against morality.

When the writers' statement was published I wasn't in Iran, but I have seen a lot of articles against this statement. They are very crude. Later some writers withdrew their signatures. I think writers of the world must help us to defend this statement. For now we need this support. I don't know what will happen in the future.