

NEWS & LETTERS

Theory/Practice

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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Capitalists push workers to compete



Felix Martin, Labor Editor

Ever since Bush returned from his trip to Japan, the media have been filled with American politicians blaming the Japanese for our economic problems here and remarks by the Japanese rulers, who are talking against the American workers, saying we are stupid and lazy. Why are the capitalists talking like that?

To me, it is very clear. The whole idea from the capitalists is always to get workers to compete against each other and to regard the workers of another country as the enemy, rather than seeing that the biggest enemy is always at home, from your own ruling class.

WHAT IS 'MADE IN THE USA'

In February, I was at the monthly meeting of retirees from the General Motors South Gate plant. The meeting went into overtime; in fact, it took up the time scheduled for the bingo game. Our local union leaders were telling us that we had to be against the Japanese, and they were crying about the fact that so many auto workers drive foreign cars.

Well, most of the membership that took the floor—and that included many who had never spoken at one of these meetings on anything before—wanted to talk about the so-called "American" car that is filled with parts made all over the world, except in the U.S. The biggest thing "American" about it is that it has the name General Motors on it.

Since that retirees meeting in early February, General Motors has come out with the announcement about 14 plants it is going to shut down in the U.S. That includes its engine production plant in Moraine, Ohio, which it is moving to Toluca, Mexico!

I recently learned about something else that the American capitalists will do in order to say "Made in America." Manufacturers operating on the island of Saipan in the Marianas, a chain of islands in the Pacific Ocean ruled by the U.S., are keeping Chinese immigrant

(continued on page 3)

Black World

Thomas 'something different'



by Lou Turner

We haven't had to wait long to assess the damage wrought by the ideological confusion in the Black community over Clarence Thomas and Black conservatism. The political fallout extends to the NAACP where such high-profile board members as Julian Bond are removed, and the organization's executive director, Ben Hooks, is forced to resign over the ideological direction of this oldest civil rights organization in America.

More far-reaching have been the Supreme Court rulings handed down by Justice Clarence Thomas during his short tenure on the Court. They are opinions which, whether in the majority or the minority, place Thomas far beyond the ideological pale of his Black petty-bourgeois supporters. One of these "liberal" sycophants is Chicago Tribune columnist Clarence Page, who we'll return to in a moment. First, we must survey the damage Justice Thomas has wrought.

JUDICIAL RETROGRESSION

In three key cases effecting Black civil rights, workers' rights and prison reform, Clarence Thomas' actions evoke the very image of a "high-tech lynching" that he summoned in order to gain support for his troubled nomination to the Supreme Court. He has, in short, assumed the attitude of a hanging judge toward human rights.

At the end of January, the Reagan-Bush Supreme Court ruled 6-to-3 against Black plaintiffs in an Alabama voting rights case, and again ruled 6-to-3 against the rights of labor unions to organize by distributing union literature on company property. Thomas concurred in both decisions and wrote the opinion in the labor case. Where previous rulings had shown flexibility in interpreting workers' rights to organize through unions having access to company property, Thomas articulated the Reagan-Bush Court's desire to erode such rights.

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Battles against sexism and for a new society:

The unfinished tasks of today's Women's Liberation Movement



Los Angeles County workers, like workers in big cities across the U.S., are taking to the streets protesting city budget cutbacks.

by Terry Moon

On April 5, 1992, thousands of women will meet in Washington, D.C., for a March for Women's Lives. So alarmed are women that this Reagan/Bush reactionary Supreme Court will either overturn *Roe vs. Wade*, the 1973 decision legalizing women's right to abortion, or render it meaningless, that April 5 promises to be a massive demonstration.

But women will not be marching for abortion rights alone, even though the unprecedented attack against the right to abortion is a siege on the most basic right of a woman to control her own body. Rather women are protesting the total attack against all aspects of their lives. These attacks against women are a matter of life and death.

While Susan Faludi's best-selling book, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women*, concentrates on women in the U.S., that war is worldwide. From Iran to Algeria, from Israel to Poland, women are fighting religious fundamentalism—Islamic, Jewish and Catholic. The horror fundamentalism foists on women is now being seen in Ireland where it took massive demonstrations to overturn a court ruling that would have prevented a 14-year-old girl, pregnant from being raped by her friend's father, from getting an abortion in England.

TOTALITY OF THE ATTACK

The extent of the war against women can be seen in the recent revelations on silicone breast implants: up to one million women have been treated worse than guinea pigs. It can be seen in academia, where a few self-proclaimed "feminist" professors—with plenty of support from the right wing and those who attack so-called "political correctness"—are trashing women's studies professors, programs and departments that are struggling to survive. It can be seen in the escalating attacks on Lesbians, in the streets—including murder (see story page 2)—and in the courts, when their children are tak-

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On the Inside

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

An unprecedented contradiction confronts the struggle for freedom today. At the very moment that the world has reached a phenomenal new historic point with the long overdue collapse of the state-capitalist totalitarianism that called itself Communism—and simultaneously we confront the deepest economic and social crises since the Great Depression right at home—we confront, as well, the nearly total collapse of the Left, which is allowing the retrogression unleashed against all the freedom movements to go unchallenged. Far from running in retreat at the supposed "death of Marxism," what is demanded is the absolute opposite—the kind of intensive effort to project Marx's Marxism that *News & Letters* has undertaken.

The hunger for a new, human society grows daily. It is seen in the excitement and dialogue which has greeted the new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. It is seen in the way women are battling the attacks on their right to control their own bodies; the way youth are rejecting a decaying educational system; the way Black America is fighting an ever-rising racism; the way workers continue to fight ever-worsening conditions of their labor in those shops not yet shut down. All of these forces are looking for a way out of this degenerate society whose rulers are trying to make us believe that this is the face of our future.

● Never was it more important to search out and provide a forum for the voices of all those forces of revolt, nationally and internationally, unseparated from a philosophy of revolution that articulates the Idea of Freedom for our age—as we aim to do in every issue of *News & Letters*. BUT WE CANNOT CONTINUE WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

● At the same time, never was it more important to rediscover the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, which was hewed out by Raya Dunayevskaya over fully half a century, and which was grounded in Marx's concept of a new society as "a new Humanism." Because, from the beginning, her theory of state-capitalism established for the world the sharp divide between Marx's Marxism and what the post-Marx Marxists perverted as Marxism, it propelled her on to the founding of the phi-

losophy of revolution for our age. A re-study of that theory now—both in its origin and in its development—is crucial for responding to the new objective situation we confront today, unseparated from the fullness of the Idea of Freedom.

It is that urgency that compelled us to prepare for publication the selections of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings we have called *Marxist-Humanism's Theory of State-Capitalism*. BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GET IT OFF THE PRESS!

Although we have no paid staff, every increase in our rent and in the cost of printing N&L—both of which we have just suffered—is a serious blow. Today's economic crisis has hit all of us in the most concrete way; we know it has hit your pocket just as it has hit ours. Yet, at every such point since N&L began in 1955, we have been able to keep going with the help of our readers. To continue N&L and to raise the \$10,000 needed to get our new book on Marxist-Humanism's Theory of State-Capitalism off the press WE URGENTLY NEED YOUR HELP AGAIN!

PLEASE—GIVE AS GENEROUSLY AS YOU CAN OF YOUR SUPPORT AND YOUR IDEAS! WE CANNOT CONTINUE WITHOUT THEM!

NEWS & LETTERS, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605

Enclosed is my contribution \$_____ to help keep N&L going.

I enclose \$_____ for the Raya Dunayevskaya Memorial Fund to help keep her works in print and continue the organization and presentation of her documents to The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection at Wayne State University's Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs.

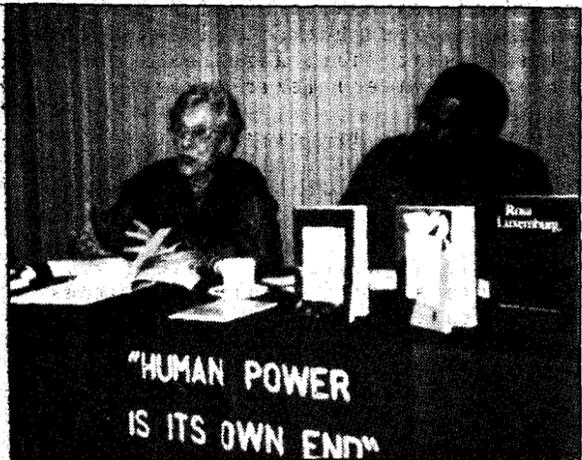
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Adrienne Rich greets new publication of

Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution



Olga Domanski and Lou Turner at book party

On Feb. 1, a book party in celebration of the new edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, sponsored by the Women's Studies Program, was celebrated at DePaul University in Chicago. The over 75 participants heard Olga Domanski, Co-National Organizer of News and Letters Committees, and Lou Turner, "Black World" columnist for *News & Letters*. Below we print Adrienne Rich's greetings that she sent to be read at the book party.

I join you today in celebrating the inspiration that Raya Dunayevskaya has been to all of us. In a moment when Marxism and socialism are being declared a dead letter, her letters to the world flare up with a particular vitality. We can be sure that

Marxism is no more dead than the women's liberation movement is dead, that the ways of reading Marx that Raya mapped for us are more challenging than ever in our time.

What Raya taught me is that Marxism itself is yet to be discovered, that the post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels, understood as much about that "new continent" as Columbus did about his landfall of 1492. For me, Raya walks on into the future, in her restless impatience and world-awareness, and I hear her reminding us yet again:

"Only live human beings can create the revolutionary dialectic forever anew. It is our generation that experienced the need for measuring up to 'revolution in permanence.' It is our generation that has suffered through so many transformations into opposite and new tyrannies even after the old was overthrown and power won. It is to our generation that what happens 'the day after' becomes so urgent. It is not a question of asking for a blueprint. It is the imperativeness for a philosophy that has as its goal not only the overthrow of the old system, but creation of the new that would be truly a classless, non-racist, non-sexist society of new human relations."

As a poet, my work is in solidarity with yours as we try to carry on, in our diverse ways, this vision.

—Adrienne Rich, 1992

Please send me a copy of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*. I enclose \$12.95 plus \$2 postage per copy.

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Health care horrors

Los Angeles, Cal.—We pregnant women can get plenty nervous, but it isn't because of our hormones. Women's health care in this society is confusing, impersonal and in too many cases horribly inadequate.

My first baby was born when I was on welfare in a hospital so dirty my husband and mother wanted to take me home while I was still in labor. My Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) hospital is sparkling clean, but so bureaucratic that I've only gotten half the recommended pre-natal appointments.

One thing I've found repeatedly is that women are never given enough information about the process of pregnancy/labor, yet we are blamed if anything goes wrong. At the HMO I was given a slick 92-page pamphlet that had about two pages of useful information. It gives you a list of symptoms that you should report to your doctor, but nowhere says what these symptoms indicate or rates their seriousness. It also says that "some women may experience some discomfort during labor." Ha! Ask any sister who has ever given birth.

When I told one doctor I'd had pre-term contractions he scolded me for not reporting to the emergency room. When I reported this to an emergency room doctor after developing further symptoms, the doctor chuckled and said the baby was just getting comfortable. Clearly, both of them think women can't handle their own health care. And they don't want us to!

Then the so-called "pro-life" forces and the "pro-family" media created the myth that high-risk pregnancies all work out. I was in the maternity ward when I heard a woman screaming in agony. The screams came from a woman who lost her baby when her blood pressure escalated. I still hear that scream.

—Radical L. A. mother



Women-Worldwide

by Mary Jo Grey

Shouting "Guilty!" a crowd of angry women in Kingston, Ontario rocked the car driven by graduate student Robert Van Ostrom after he was acquitted of raping three undergraduate women last December. Women's groups are demanding a change in Canadian rape laws because they do not adequately protect the rights of women.

* * *

Wangari Maatha, well-known woman activist, environmentalist and founder of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, has been charged with "spreading false rumors," after attending a meeting in Nairobi opposing a threatened military government and supporting expanded democratic rights and a multi-party system. Her condition was so bad she had to be carried from the courtroom after being released from prison on bail. On March 3, she and three other women were clubbed unconscious by riot police as she, along with several hundred other women, demanded freedom for political prisoners. Send letters of protest to: Attorney General, P.O. Box 40112, Nairobi, Kenya.

—Information from
Women Living Under Muslim Laws

Outraged Korean 'comfort women' fight back

Hak-Sun Kim, in her mid-60s, was one of the most outraged demonstrators on Jan. 13 in Seoul, South Korea, protesting a visit by Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa of Japan, who still denies the official policy during World War II regarding so-called "comfort women." She was one of 200,000 women kidnapped from Korea and forced to serve in battlefield brothels for the Japanese Imperial Army. Confined to filthy shanties, they were forced to have sex with 20 to 50 soldiers a day. Many died during this heinous work.

The Japanese army poisoned and starved most of the women to death in the trenches or caves when the military leaders ordered the army to retreat right after the war was over. Those Korean women, after being physically usurped, were killed without knowing that they could go back home.

The war has never ended for them. Though some managed to come back like Hak-Sun Kim, they suffered from severe physical disease, extreme poverty and unspeakable humiliation in their conservative society. Deeply wounded by the wretched reality a lot of women chose suicide.

When asked to take responsibility for reparations by Korean women's organizations, Japan denied it com-

Black women—pushed out

Chicago, Ill.—In comparing today with the 1960s, what I see is that Black women are being pushed out. In the 1960s, although we were still second-class citizens, we were included in Blackness by being encouraged to wear African dress, natural hair, take African names, read Black male writers. This meant we were included as being Black. But in the 1990s we're isolated. Among Black men we're not considered fully to be Black people—we're women. Among white women, we're not fully women—we're Black people. We're ever in limbo.

There is a perception that Black women made great gains at the expense of Black men. But I think it was tokenism. Black men who didn't experience the movement think white women are getting all the jobs. There is also the perception that Black women are getting all the jobs—which has even less validity. And Black women become the scapegoat.

Rather than addressing the real causes of problems within the African American community, many Blacks, both men and women, find it safer to direct their anger at Black women—particularly feminists.

Isn't part of the issue what people perceive as liberation? Black men may see it as being like the oppressor and being able to oppress women. White women may see it as having equality with white men and being able to oppress people of color and their less fortunate white sisters. Why would Pat Buchanan, or even a David Duke, get significant percentages of the white vote? Why would whites want to support people whose policies and ideologies got them into trouble in the first place? Perhaps white people, like many people of color, perceive liberation as: "Let me do what the oppressor does."

—Gloria

Lesbian feminist killed

Claremont, Cal.—I was still reeling from the virulent attack of two anti-feminist, anti-lesbian articles published prominently in the Los Angeles Times,* when I learned the frightening news of the brutal murder of a lesbian-feminist activist, Nancy Willem, on Feb. 4 in nearby Riverside.

Nancy was an out lesbian activist who had been involved for years with the women's community. She was prominent in Riverside's recent contentious battle against a gay/lesbian hate ordinance, and in the protests against Governor Wilson's veto of the gay rights bill. She worked as a rape crisis counselor and it was at work, at the Behavioral Health Services, that her killers methodically sought her out and broke through the locked doors. Their intention was to kill, since nothing was stolen.

An increasingly hostile environment, manifested in incidents such as this, must call forth all our powers of creativity. Therefore it is no coincidence that the anti-feminists like columnist Sally Quinn are trying to convince us of the opposite: that while feminism needed "extremists to get it off the ground," such "extremists" have now "outlived their effectiveness." Nina Easton, in her article, comments with trivializing disdain about feminist literature that uses language "borrowed from combat: 'battle,' 'victim,' 'war against women.'"

These articles are part of an offensive against any feminism less tepid than dishwasher. They strive to blunt our passions—both women's joys and women's angers—and totally erase lesbian existence, even as Nancy's killers not only killed her, but hoped to kill something within all women who love women and who protest the violence and hatred that patriarchy represents.

I, for one, am proud to consider myself an extremist in my love for women. And I will fight, not for the tame feminism that Quinn offers—"the principle that women should have political, economic and social rights equal to men"—but for feminism as action, a dynamic goal that encompasses such rethinking and remaking of our lives and societies that crushing anyone's spirit and body is no longer even conceivable.

—Jennifer

* The two articles were: "Feminists Have Killed Feminism," by Sally Quinn, L.A. Times, Jan. 23, 1992 and "I'm Not a Feminist But ..." by Nina J. Easton, L.A. Times Magazine, Feb. 2, 1992.

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Profit-based health care hurts

Chicago, Ill.—Last December I had a serious asthma attack. I was taken by paramedics to the nearest hospital emergency room and admitted to the hospital, not a new experience for me. This time, however, I made observations during my stay that I had not made before.

The hospital staff nurses and aides were overworked to the point of exhaustion, running from one room to another. As a worker on production lines in meatpacking plants, I had thought of myself as being at the more physical end of labor. I saw these people being worked just as hard as line workers, which showed me that all workers are equal in that they are misused by capital.

The division of mental and manual labor is more visible in a hospital than anywhere else. While I was having another attack, the nurses wouldn't give me a breathing treatment or increase the dosage of my medication until the doctor said it was okay. I knew through experience that an increase in breathing treatments would help me, yet as I sat there struggling to breathe, the nurses, probably in fear of losing their jobs, would not act until the doctor approved. This is a hell of a lot of power for any human to have over others.

THE EVIL HANDS OF capitalism have gotten hold of hospitals and health care and turned them into big business. If it is not profitable, it doesn't cut it. The closing of many hospitals in Chicago alone proves it.

The big pharmaceutical companies, the AMA, hospitals and insurance companies have forced health care workers, who entered this field to help care for others, to follow policies that are geared towards making a profit. They have further frustrated those workers and patients by understaffing and cutting corners to increase the profit margin and, in general, have turned health care into one big, ugly beast that hurts while it helps.

All working people in the U.S. must have health care, but the politicians and the government will not give workers a truly great health care program as long as someone is making money on it. The only way I see working people getting the health care all humans should have is by killing the beast, and only a revolution will do that.

—Martin Almora

New York, N.Y.—A rally and march of 28,000 health care workers and their supporters was held Feb. 7 in Manhattan to protest Gov. Cuomo's proposed Medicaid cuts of more than \$1 billion. A conference followed on Feb. 15. Most of the thousand participants were delegates of Local 1199 Drug, Health and Hospital Workers Union.

There were a few workshop participants who were in management positions. One hospital worker commented, "If we see these management people with us now, it is because they, too, are affected by these Medicaid budget cuts. It means fewer bucks for them. It is not because they are really concerned about us."

Another health care worker said, "We are protesting

Who will work today?

Chicago, Ill.—Helene Curtis Industries is the fourth largest producer of "personal care" products (lotions, deodorants, shampoos, conditioners and hair sprays) in the U.S. and is approaching one billion dollars in sales. Yet fifty percent of the work force at Helene Curtis' Chicago manufacturing facility (the largest of two) are day laborers.

The "dailies" are mostly Black and Latino. They are paid \$30 for an eight-hour shift, \$45 for 12 hours, and receive no benefits. They wait before each shift in a "processing center" under the watchful eyes of several Helene Curtis guards. The production lines assess their needs, and then someone comes to pick out the women and men who will work that day. Those not chosen are sent home.

Once inside the plant, a "daily's" hours are not guaranteed. One night a "daily" who was working on our line was sent home as soon as an employee who started that night had proved that she could pack. When our line was down another night, our supervisor sent two young women—one 16 years old and the other 17—home on the bus at three o'clock in the morning.

Some of the "dailies" are "regulars," who come to work at the same time on the same lines every day. Others work a variety of shifts to accumulate 60 or more hours per week. None of these people were included in our training session on working with hazardous chemicals. None of them are invited to the party to celebrate the company's one billion dollars in sales.

If you express concern about the "dailies," the supervisors react as if you were speaking about a sub-human species. Some permanent employees are just as insensitive. The "dailies" are ordered about, tested, yelled at, insulted and sexually harassed. Helene Curtis continues to profit.

—B. Ann Lastelle

here, but the effects of these budget cuts are already being felt. In our agency, we were told that our working hours will be cut to four-hour, instead of eight-hour, shifts." One home health aide related that more than a thousand people who are receiving personal care services in the city require 24-hour care, meaning a worker stays in the home 24 hours a day, but is paid for only 12.

MEANTIME, AT Manhattan's Beth Israel Medical Center, an unusual pact between management and Local 1199 was reached three months before the industry-wide contract expires. According to Dr. Robert Newman, Beth Israel's president, it represents "a commonality of interest in labor peace, job security and patient care and marks the most productive way to enhance revenues and economize on costs. As much as it sounds like a radical approach, the Japanese workplace concept is what we are putting into practice."

This pact is a reflection of what Dennis Rivera, president of Local 1199, describes as enlightened labor relations policy. Workers will also be managers. A member of Local 1199 remarked, "Who wants to be managers under a profit-based health care system? We see our patients as human beings, and we want to provide as much care as we can. We will have to do what management does: force each other to work harder to generate more revenues, not to improve our quality of life or the patient's."

—Concerned health care worker

Nationalism vs. workers

Dearborn, Mich.—The corporate nationalist conflict between Japan and the U.S. is not concerned with alleviating the auto workers' dilemma. An auto worker is an auto worker, whichever nation one lives and works in. As auto workers, we need to see through the attempts by each nation to blame the other and raise animosities. Sadly enough, auto workers do not formulate corporate or national policies.

Surveys taken in Japan indicate conditions which are not alien to auto workers in the U.S. The conditions causing this stress and chronic fatigue need to be addressed by workers wherever they are employed on assembly lines.

Competition between auto workers doesn't result in more jobs overall. It results in increased productivity through increased hours of labor. Somewhere it results in jobs lost. Solidarity in addressing the issues of overtime and the length of the workday would result in full-employment. The implementation of a shorter workday would be most successful if brought about across the borders internationally.

This is the direction we need to steer our unions, cooperating together to allow technology to make work less strenuous for auto workers as a whole. If the workweek was shortened significantly in one nation, it would be necessary to boycott products from nations in which the workday was not similarly shortened until the workday is reduced universally.

—Concerned UAW member, Local 600

Diamond Walnut only offers peanuts



News & Letters photo

Editor's note: A rally and march were held in Stockton, Cal. on Feb. 22 to support the 500 workers at Diamond Walnut Company, members of Teamsters Local 601, who have been on strike since September 1991. Diamond is the world's largest walnut processing plant, part of a grower-owned co-op which last year made a profit of \$12.5 million. Below we print the comments of two strikers.

I've been at Diamond 18 years and worked nearly every job they have. They used to let very few women work in the plant, but now we run the place; three-fourths of the workers are women. We produce 20,000 pounds of walnuts in a shift in the season.

Sorting is probably the most tedious position, because you sit on the line for eight hours and pick out the cracked nuts when they come out of the silos. But even this was a good job back in the late 1970s when we had a decent contract. Back then sorters made \$9 an hour. Seasonals (two-thirds of us are seasonals) would come in at \$8, whereas now it's \$5 with no benefits.

We took those cuts in the 1985 contract because the company said they'd help us out down the road if we

helped them. Now they demand even lower wages and more cuts in benefits. So you can see how they turned their backs on us. They even wanted us to train the scabs before we walked out, but no one would do it! Management had to come out of their offices to do it, but they don't know how production works, we do.

—Black woman

Today's rally is the biggest we've had so far. It reminds me of the kind of people power we had over 20 years ago during a United Farm Workers strike in Arizona. I was picking lemons then. The problem today is we're usually lacking that power. The union, for instance, has never asked us what we want from this strike. That bothers us a lot, because everyone expects a lot from such a big union like the Teamsters.

Today a woman from the Ragu cannery here in Stockton told me her Teamsters local hadn't told them a thing about what's going on with the Diamond strike. That's the problem. They should tell them we're at a stalemate. They should tell them not to accept cuts.

The company didn't only cut our wages, they made the work harder. I used to unload 50 bags of nuts, each weighing 50 pounds, from a pallet onto a truck in five minutes. Then they knocked out some positions, and we had to double the speed! When other workers know these things, it becomes easier to spot the company trying to get away with it in your own plant.

—Mexican man

Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

workers there under slave labor conditions, producing clothing with "Made in the USA" labels.

These Chinese, mostly women workers are brought to Saipan, are housed in guarded barracks and work at factories inside compounds that are fenced and guarded. The workers have to surrender their passports to the factories' owners on arrival in Saipan.

They are made to work seven days a week—11 hours a day Monday through Saturday, and eight and one-half hours on Sunday—earning less than the legal "American" minimum wage on Saipan, which is \$2.15 per hour! These American slave masters ship \$100 million worth of duty-free clothing labeled "Made in the USA" to the U.S. each year and market it under major brand names.

LABOR GAINS TAKEN AWAY

There were some at my retirees' meeting who were saying, "Vote for the Democrats," but over all, both the Democrats and the Republicans caught hell. One fellow said: "Since we in this room retired, the capitalists and government leaders have taken away almost everything we won for labor over the last 50 years. What have those damn Democrats done to stop it? Workers have never won by going to the government."

When I look at the world today, I feel that something just has to happen, something has to come from the workers. It is getting impossible for people to even survive, and everyone knows that things will be even worse for their children. But the question I ask myself is not only, when will the workers move? but also, what can those of us who right now are ready for revolution do to help that needed self-development? We can't allow any new movement to get sidetracked as all movements have in the past.

Bosses play games

Chicago, Ill.—When I was talked into going on the night shift at Toys-R-Us, I saw on my check more money per hour than what I was told I was to get. I told all about this, so that there was not one person in the store who did not know my pay, and there was no pressure between us. I thought at the time that this action between us workers was the thing that would undo the chess game that the bosses play on our minds, that pits one worker against the other.

After the night shift was ended, I saw what I thought was a mistake on my check. I went to talk with the boss, and they told me I had been so-called "overpaid" for that three months and that I must pay this so-called "mistake" back. After I got my head back, I said to myself: They are forcing me to stay in my place and forcing me to work.

At this point, I have to thank my bosses, something that I thought I would never say in my life. You see, sometimes you forget that, even when bosses are nice people, that is limited by the nature of capitalism. No matter what we as workers do, we are just reacting to this capitalist world. The real answer is to move toward what Marx said in the *Grundrisse* in 1857-58:

"What is this, if not a situation where man does not reproduce himself in any determined form, but produces his totality? Where he does not seek to remain something formed by the past, but is in the absolute movement of becoming?"

This vision is the only answer for us as workers.

—David L. Anderson

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by Raya Dunayevskaya
 Founder of Marxist-Humanism

Editor's note: The letter printed below was written to Mike Connolly, Dec. 21, 1967. It was in response to his letter to Dunayevskaya concerning the ideas of a theorist of council communism, Marc Chirik, on the theory of capitalist accumulation. Dunayevskaya subsequently placed this letter in The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: a Half-Century of Its World Development under the section on the process of her writing Philosophy and Revolution (Microfilm #4290).

I will begin with...your first question about "exactly why the contradiction in capitalism results from the preponderance of constant capital over variable." What is the internal cause of capitalist crisis?"

You must realize that the very categories of constant and variable capital—Marx's originals—are related to Subject. By creating these terms as against those used by bourgeois economics—fixed and circulating capital—Marx was saying two things simultaneously: (1) It is not a technical problem; it is not a question as to whether capital is "fixed" like means of production, is immovable property, or circulates like money. The real question is does it, can it, cede value, surplus value, unpaid hours of congealed labor? (2) Well, neither means of production nor raw materials nor money for that matter creates value; whatever went into the production of either the means of production, raw materials, etc., etc., is transferred, transferred but not increased in value as, bit by bit, parts of its value are put into the new commodity. In a word, if a machine lasts ten years, its wear and tear has to be accounted for in the products, commodities produced by it, but its own value has already been "fixed" by the process of production which produced it. So, in fact, all these are constant in value; they are constant, or, to speak "vulgarily," cost whatever labor was put into it. On the other hand, living labor (which appears in capitalist eyes as variable capital because it, too, belongs to the capitalist) is the one and only commodity of all the millions that exchange daily that does undergo a CHANGE IN MAGNITUDE, because you, the capitalist, extract many unpaid hours of labor, it is not a thing; "it" is a living person, it produces all your values, including your surplus values.

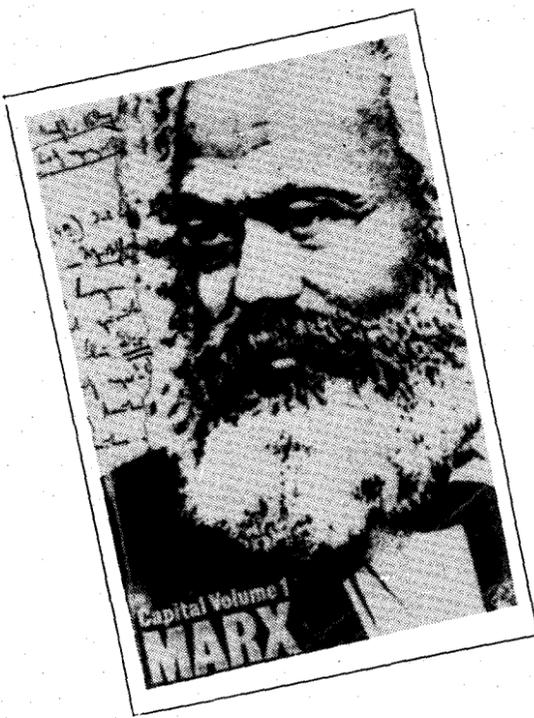
Not only that. Since that little commodity, labor power, that you buy is buried under that great fetishism of commodities which "reifies" people, that is to say, transforms people into things, becomes both a "chemical" that dissolves all the many particular, specific kinds of concrete labor into but one mass of abstract labor, and yet cannot be killed off, remains alive, is Subject, [and since labor power] contains within itself all the contradictions of your system, and is the one and only [force] that can resolve the contradictions by overturning the very mode of your production, here is what happens to YOU, Mr. Moneybags: (a) you think you are smart by having to depend less and less on that rebellious person, those "refractory hands," the variable capital; and (b) you put more into dead labor, constant capital, those lovely machines that you think is the golden goose that lays all the golden eggs; but in fact this preponderance of constant over variable capital results in (c) you have less and less of your precious profits, to speak your language instead of the scientific one of values and surplus values. Ah yes, I can hear you laugh since the mass of profits are so much with mass production and greater machines, "the automation" you worship so. But the truth is that the rate of profit has gone down all the time and it is the expectation of ever greater rates that makes you invest, expand, etc. And, my dear stupid fellow, you cannot expand that rate of profit if you keep using less and less of living labor relative to

greater and greater investments in machines for you cannot suck surplus out of your constant capital but only out of variable capital; you can suck blood (what you call profits and gold) out of living people, not dead.

NOW I WILL ADMIT, there is only a tendency of a decline in the rate of profit, and there are many counteracting tendencies, games you play on the market, home and abroad, but the greatness about economic laws, those little objective factors in behavior, is their persistence of appearance. So, if you'll stop dismissing these appearances as mere show, accidents, next time you'll know better, you will note this about your own history:

(i) Crises were born with capitalist production established as factory production. Before 1825, your first general crisis, no one had ever heard of suffering from too much production: it was always scarcity that got you into trouble, but here you are suffering from what you call "overproduction."

(ii) These crises, though, don't come from the market, even though you think they do because that's where they appear; they come from production, from produc-



ing ever more c/v, C/v, CCCCCC/vv [constant capital/variable capital]. I'll predict that the technological revolutions which make a machine obsolete in ten years are the actual cause of your crises and you'll have an ever, ever bigger one every ten years or so.

Now, do you know that in these years no one paid any attention to technological revolutions as having anything to do with crises, or the "internal" causes of crises? It would be all the way till 1929 when suddenly bourgeois economics saw something in Marx's analysis of crises and began to build their business cycles on them. But Marx wrote all that in 1867 (in fact it was 1857, ten years before the actual publication of Capital) and while the bourgeoisie paid no attention to him, the "Marxists" did and the first one who said Marx was all wrong on the crises was Edward Bernstein, because no crisis appeared on "the" day it was supposed to. Rosa Luxemburg rose to the defense of Marx—but in fact she saw only "Subject," or rather saw Subject only as force that would overthrow capitalism, but not that something we can learn from them, "exactly how" they mean to resolve these crises. In any case, in the first fight with Bernstein, Rosa won not only because she posed revolution vs. reform, but, simply, because the de-

What is the internal cause of capitalism's crisis?

bate was still going strong when the crisis came, and bigger than ever. Where Rosa went thoroughly wrong was not in that easy debate, but the next time around, so to speak, when the question posed was not the easy one for revolutionaries—revolution vs. reform—but the event of World War I—actually two years in advance, 1912, when capitalism reached a still newer stage of monopoly and finance.

O.K. She was still a revolutionary but two "scientific" matters she did not understand: (1) Did those little categories, c/v, really mean everything; weren't they in fact just "technical" for any means of production and means of consumption that would characterize all systems of production; were they really necessary to Marx; didn't Frederick Engels after all edit Volumes II and III of Capital, making a mess of the mass of manuscripts Marx left; shouldn't we, the Marxists of today, look at "reality" (oh, that word, Reality, what a trap for how many Marxists!) and see that it is the underdeveloped countries, the non-capitalistic ones that make it possible for capitalism to continue to live? If we depended only on c/v, we'd have to wait till Doomsday, so it is really the relationship of capitalism to non-capitalism [that is decisive]....

(2) The question is, if she thought that it was a question of capitalism vs. non-capitalism, then the Subject has moved—it is the underdeveloped countries where the peasants are, and the peasant mass should be revolutionary. Ah, no, she wouldn't have that either. Indeed, when she first began the fight against Lenin on self-determination of nations—long before the Accumulation debate—she was trying to prove to Lenin that Poland was really more advanced than Russia, though Russia was the oppressor and Poland the oppressed, and "therefore" one shouldn't fight for national self-determination which was "chauvinistic" as against such great internationalists as "Marxists." In all cases, whether it was a question of markets or some stupidity of absorption of markets "into" the system, the result is the same. In Rosa's case, all it ended in was that she was so utterly removed from her Polish masses that the reactionary "Socialists" (that's what Joseph Pilsudski originally was) were for Poland fighting against Soviet Russia. (Do please read again the chapters both on Capital and on "Appearance and Reality" regarding Rosa Luxemburg in Marxism and Freedom.)

It will never happen that you absorb "all" for the simple reason that there are not only workers vs. capitalists but intra-capitalist and intra-imperialist rivalries and the "theory" (Karl Kautsky's) of super-imperialism absorbing all, etc., etc., has long since been answered by Lenin. All we are interested in is the reality which leads to revolutions, not in the abstract, but in the concrete and for that you need people, Subject; so let's return to that, this time, not in the relationship to economic categories, but people—proletarians, peasants, oppressed peoples.

MARX "CHOSE" THE PROLETARIAT as the force of revolution, and they remain the central, but not the only force. He "chose" them because they were both source of all the capitalist's surplus value and the "subject" who would transform society since they were strategically placed in that process of production, and organized by it, united, cohesive, etc., etc.

Then came some Narodniki [the Populists] from Russia—they had translated Capital and tried to make Marx say it is really the "mir" [the peasant commune] which would produce "Socialism." Marx wouldn't say so but he said send me lots of material, let me see the data, the facts and really I should learn Russian—which he did quite late in life—and find out about these voices. The Narodniki gave the Marxists a lot of trouble in Russia, then a Marxist (Vera Zasulich) wrote and asked Marx: What did you really mean? We know the Narodniki are wrong because Russia isn't escaping capitalism; it's here too; but what did you really mean? Well, poor Marx, he never had so much trouble writing a letter. He wrote three different versions, sent the briefest and least telling, but pregnant enough with meaning. It said: well, what I described in Capital was capitalism in Great Britain, the most advanced country, etc., etc. Now in Russia—no one in any case "must" follow a tendency—well IF the mir can tie up with the proletariat; IF Russia can tie in with advanced Europe; IF the Russian Revolution can be the signal, then it indeed could be the vanguard.

How Marx knew how to listen to voices and how that became but the beginning for him to return to theory and work for the unity of theory and practice. You think he said that only about Russia? Read the absolutely magnificent articles in the Tribune way back in the 1850s (just published as The American Journalism of Marx and Engels), and see what he says on the Chinese REVOLUTION (yes, he called it a revolution), not the monstrosity of our day but the monstrosity of 1853. Moreover, despite all he had written of the idiocy of rural life, he thought those peasants could start a new page of world revolution: "It would be a curious spectacle, that of China sending disorder into the Western world while the Western powers, by English, French and American war steamers, are conveying 'order' to Shanghai, Nanking, and the mouths of the Great Canal. Do these order-mongering powers, which would attempt to support the wavering Manchu dynasty, forget that the hatred against foreigners and their exclusion from the Em-

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Philosophic Dialogue

Editor's note: Laurie Cashdan, an anti-war and women's liberation activist, has written frequently for N&L. She is author of "Anti-War Feminism: New Directions, New Dualities—A Marxist-Humanist Perspective," which appeared in Women's Studies International Forum, Vol. 12:1(1989).

Raya Dunayevskaya's Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution opened up a crucial new vantage point for women's liberation when she discovered what she called Rosa Luxemburg's "heretofore hidden feminist dimension." While Luxemburg's concept of socialist democracy after the revolution had been widely discussed among radical thinkers since the 1960s, no other work had brought forth the revolutionary feminist legacy intertwined with that concept.

The 1980s saw a pointed effort on the part of some Luxemburg scholars to discount Dunayevskaya's findings specifically on her feminist dimension. British scholar Richard Abraham's Rosa Luxemburg: A Life for the International (Berg Publishers, 1989) describes Raya as "still a Marxist" who "argues unconvincingly that Rosa Luxemburg was a contemporary radical feminist before her time" (16).

Yet he includes beautiful quotations from Luxemburg such as one against Belgian male socialists who argued in 1902 that women were not "ready" to vote: "a strong, fresh wind would blow in with the political emancipation of women, which would dissipate the stagnant air of the present Philistine family life that so unmistakably colours our party members, workers and leaders alike" (67). He also notes a request during the 1918-19 German Revolution to Clara Zetkin to form a women's section for Die Rote Fahne, the paper produced by the Spartacus League (139).

ZETKIN AND LUXEMBURG

Why then does Abraham attribute her close friendship with Zetkin, leader of the socialist women's movement before the war and editor of its paper Die Gleichheit (Equality), strictly to "their common hostility to reformism and the 'Revisionists'?" (55).

Abraham wrote, "Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin were making demands for women more radical than the major organizations of bourgeois feminists in their time, and tolerating no backsliding from proletarian men or their leaders" (67). Yet he argues that when it came to feminism, Luxemburg "accept[ed] the views of her male comrades as to what really mattered" (55). His contradictoriness comes from his own view of women's liberation and revolution as two separate worlds.

It is true that Luxemburg and Zetkin disparaged bourgeois feminism, but how do we work out what Rosa meant when she spoke of the working women as a "strong fresh wind"; or the fact that her arrest in 1915 came on the eve of an international women's anti-war conference she was helping to plan? To answer this question means grasping what is new and original in Luxemburg, even if she herself wasn't fully cognizant of it. It involves what Marx called "history and its process"—dialectics.

Stephen Bronner, editor of a collection of Luxemburg's letters and a political scientist who writes on socialist theory, tries to bring the "eyes of today" into Rosa Luxemburg: A Revolutionary for Our Times (Columbia University Press, 1981 and 1987).

But Bronner shows little interest when it comes to Luxemburg's feminism. The 1981 edition commented only that Luxemburg, despite her lack of interest in the women's movement, became Zetkin's lifelong friend. The 1987 Introduction argues that seeing Luxemburg as feminist, as do Raya Dunayevskaya and Margarethe von Trotta, creator of the film "Rosa Luxemburg," is one of many "distortions" of Luxemburg.

"Rosa Luxemburg...never made a major contribution to either a uniquely feminist theory or a particularly feminist practice," he writes. "Indeed, she always saw herself as an international socialist whose primary loyalty and self-identification derived from her commitment to the abolition of capitalism and the struggle for socialist democracy." (2).

Was Rosa Luxemburg a feminist?

Bronner's own concern with socialist democracy centers on the working class alone. In both national self-determination and feminism he sees only bourgeois tendencies. There is not a hint of Luxemburg's speeches relating the demand for women's equality to the need to totally uproot class society, nor her deepened involvement as the socialist women began organizing autonomously against World War I.

He thus misses completely what Dunayevskaya allows us to see: that Luxemburg's reformulation of her views on socialist democracy and self-determination of the masses after her participation in the 1905 Revolution, coincided with the emergence of a new type of independent, revolutionary feminist consciousness.

In Dunayevskaya's work we discover Luxemburg refusing to be pigeonholed into just writing on the "Woman Question," yet speaking and writing on the emancipation of women as early as 1902; contributing articles to Die Gleichheit and attending a 1907 socialist women's conference to urge the women to maintain their autonomy; relying on them further as the women became the most significant mass opposition to the war and to the capitulation of the Second International, culminating in the protests which turned into revolution by 1918-19.

Yet it is not just a question of hidden facts—as we



saw with Richard Abraham's work. What is the meaning of the facts, and how do you work it out?

It is true that Luxemburg never openly critiqued the disgusting male chauvinist epithets thrown at her as she broke with the Party line to oppose the opportunism and war-mongering of its leaders. Victor Adler called her a "poisonous bitch" in a letter to August Bebel, who wrote back about "the wretched female's squirts of poison" (27). Her "tone-deafness," as Dunayevskaya calls it, left the socialist women's movement without a theoretical self-comprehension.

JOGICHES AND LUXEMBURG

It was in the 1960s, when the Women's Liberation Movement began raising new questions about new human relations during and after revolution, that Dunayevskaya found new appreciation for Luxemburg's originality. This "shock of recognition" comes through in her discussion of Luxemburg's break-up with her lover, Leo Jogiches, just after the 1905-06 Revolution.

While other biographers see it as jealousy over an affair, what Dunayevskaya finds is that suddenly Luxemburg has stopped accepting Jogiches as the authority on organization. Luxemburg's summation of the 1905 Revolution in *The Mass Strike, The Political Party and the Trade Unions* had made her see a different relationship between spontaneity, consciousness and "the Party" than the elitist one prevalent among German Social Democracy leaders.

The point, to Dunayevskaya, is Luxemburg's need to be whole, to be free to develop her own ideas, to "throw her life on the scales of destiny" and "be fully human." As Luxemburg wrote to a friend, "I am only I, once more, since I have become free of Leo" (93).

It was from prison in 1917, with no revolution yet visible, that this remarkable woman wrote to her friend Mathilde Wurm, whose husband had capitulated to the war fervor, the words that to Dunayevskaya link Luxemburg backward and forward in time to Marx's "new Humanism" and to our great passion for freedom:

"I'm telling you that as soon as I can stick my nose out again I will hunt and harry your society of frogs with trumpet blasts, whip crackings, and bloodhounds—like Penthesilea I wanted to say, but by God, you people are no Achilles. Have you had enough of a

(continued on page 9)

Editorial

U.S. rushes into central Asia

Secretary of State James Baker's sudden trip in mid-February to five small newly independent nations in central Asia and the Caucasus—Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan—was a determined push for control over the region's strategic resources such as uranium and oil, as well as its remaining nuclear facilities. It was an attempt to offset Iranian influence in Muslim central Asia and Azerbaijan.

Most of these former "republics" of the former "Sovi-



et" Union were thrust somewhat unwillingly into independence in 1991. Yeltsin, the new ruler of Russia, has rapidly cut many of Russia's economic ties to the region, but ethnic Russians continue to comprise a substantial part of the region's population, and hold many of the top positions in the economy.

Iran has recently been very active in promoting ties to the region, opening embassies, and funding "Islamic" cultural facilities. Both Turkey and Saudi Arabia, acting as U.S. surrogates, have been equally active in urging these newly independent nations to link up with the "West." Turkey has been especially important in this regard, because of linguistic and cultural affinities with the mainly Turkic cultures of central Asia and Azerbaijan. Pakistan has also been active, in part via its relationship to Afghanistan.

Islam is certainly undergoing a resurgence in the region, but it is as yet unclear what its political coloration or strength will be, although secular women have already expressed misgivings about the possibility of fundamentalism. For very different reasons, the U.S. is also worried about fundamentalism.

NUCLEAR "INDEPENDENCE"

While little has been said publicly, presumably China would also have strong "interests" in this region, which borders Xinjiang region, site of its nuclear weapons program and home of a large minority population. Groups predominant in Xinjiang, such as the mainly Muslim Uighurs, have relatives across the border. The Chinese dominate them in an arrogant and imperialistic fashion as did the Russians in central Asia, and would be worried about demands for independence. China has shown its own sub-imperialist ambitions in the region by constructing the vast Karakorum highway going from Xinjiang through some of the world's highest mountains, and then down into Pakistan.

Although Baker did not visit Kazakhstan on this trip, the U.S. already has ties with its ruler, Nursultan Nazarbayev, a longtime Communist bureaucrat who has suddenly embraced the "free market" and bourgeois democracy. He has brought in Professor Chang Yong Bang, a Korean-American expert in Reaganomics, to supervise changes in the economy. Kazakhstan is so far refusing to comply with Yeltsin's suggestion that they simply turn over their nuclear weapons to Russia. Apparently to show their independence from Yeltsin, they tested an ICBM last December, despite the test ban agreed to by Russia and the U.S.

The largest of the non-Slavic republics, Kazakhstan's population of 17 million is 41% Russian. It contains over 30% of the former USSR's deposits of non-ferrous metals, especially lead and titanium. Like the rest of central Asia, it has suffered for decades under Great-Russian chauvinism and the break-neck pace of state-capitalist industrialization begun by Stalin in the 1930s.

In 1986, its capital, Alma Ata, was the scene of nationalist rioting which left many dead. In 1990, a major explosion at a nuclear weapons related facility, a beryllium plant in the city of Ust-Kamenogorsk near the Chinese border, sent toxic gas clouds over thousands of miles. In other plants, thousands of workers still process lead with little in the way of protective devices.

The other nations of central Asia have also suffered greatly under state-capitalist "development." For example, in order to create a massive cotton industry in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, millions of gallons of water were siphoned off and desalinated from the Aral Sea, once the world's fourth largest inland body of water. This has created an ecological disaster: the sea has lost 40% of its surface since 1960, desertification has set in, and dried salt and the chemical fertilizer residues have created highly toxic air pollution over thousands of miles. In Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, the total economic collapse since independence has already sparked riots in January by students protesting skyrocketing food prices, riots which left six dead.

THE URANIUM REPUBLICS

U.S. capitalism is hardly interested in, or capable of, alleviating such horrendous conditions of life and labor. What interests it in Turkmenistan as well as tiny Persian-speaking Tajikistan is to make sure uranium does not get into the hands of Iran or another "hostile" power. For these two small nations contain most of the uranium which fueled the USSR's nuclear power and weapons programs.

The peoples of central Asia face the bleak prospect of political independence as small, economically weak states in a world market dominated by a single superpower, the U.S. Russia has given up its control of the region, at least for the moment, and therefore the U.S. is rushing in, with an eye toward the whole Middle East. To what extent, and under what banner, the peoples of the region will resist this new form of imperialistic hegemony is something that remains to be seen.

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THE 'ONE-WORLDEDNESS OF THE CRISIS' VS. MARXIST-HUMANISM'S PATHWAY OUT

When I read that Russian President Yeltsin was accused of "economic genocide," I thought it was a perfect description of what we're facing here in the U.S. There is starvation and death and a deep violence against the minds of working people. There is continual speed-up at the point of production.

The Lead in the January-February N&L asked if the economic chaos in the former Soviet Union shows us our own future. It reminded me of what Charles Denby said at the time of Stalin's death in 1953, that his fellow workers were all saying, "I know just the man to take Stalin's place: my foreman." This is all at a more intense level now than ever before.

Marxist-Humanist Worker
California

I think it is especially important to discuss the relation of feminism to Marxism now with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and with all eyes on Cuba. Many people are declaring Marxism is dead. It is a difficult task to keep separating Marx from the negative view people have of him.

Feminist
Austin, TX

A railroad worker I know stopped his car to ask me for "that paper" I had been telling him "lets workers speak for themselves." It shows what a hunger people have, as the U.S. and Russia reflect each other more and more—a hunger for an independent voice that is theirs.

Fred
Chicago

Keeping sight of a "freedom-filled future" which Raya Dunayevskaya said (in her letter to the Youth printed in the November 1991 N&L) is "implicit in the present," becomes an important task today. Her discussion of the need to "practice internationalism" illuminates a problem of our age when many youth decry the possibility of dramatic change coming in the U.S. despite the unpredictable rapid changes occurring in Russia today. How can we possibly work toward international freedom when state boundaries become boundaries to thought? Projecting the dialectical method of Marx who saw that "everywhere the paths to freedom are open" provides a way out of this depression which declares Bush's vision of the future the victor.

Julia Jones
Bay Area

Great anxiety is created when there seems to be only two choices, either U.S.-style capitalism or Soviet-style Communism. It doesn't feel very liberating. The escape from that false bifurcation is what is liberating. That is what is so attractive to me about Marxist-Humanism—seeing that we can have a hope and a future.

Student
Lockport, Ill.

The use of the phrase "one-worldedness of the crisis" confounds me. Did Dunayevskaya not stay away from the term "one world" precisely because she insisted that there are two worlds within each country, that of the oppressor and that of those struggling for freedom? Didn't she choose, even when it was to describe crises, to use the term global crisis very deliberately? Does the use of "one worldedness of the crisis" in any way impact on RD's concept of the Two Worlds in each country?

Angela Terrano
New York

Communism, capitalism and socialism are all economic systems. Democracy, hierarchy, etc. are political systems. So what's humanism? Specifically, Marxist-Humanism? Is it economic? A political system? Something radically new? I think it might be a way of changing one's thinking and acting and even being. Maybe when the reality of Marxist-Humanism is realized, we'll be free.

Revolutionary youth
Utah

Today we see state-capitalism in Russia has fallen to its knees but is more

dangerous than ever. The crumbling of capitalism in the U.S. is just as dangerous. The unemployed army is growing by leaps and bounds throughout the world. The crisis is in production. We are being forced to move to freedom, to a new way of producing ourselves. The Lead on Russia and the U.S. is right on.

Retired autoworker
California

Everywhere for the past year we've been hearing that "Marxism is dead," and, of course, that view equated Marxism with totalitarianism. Now I'm seeing that totalitarianism is the opposite of what Marxism is. I like how Marxist-Humanism discusses individuals in movements as being what Marxism is about, people making history, making revolutions—not just having a different kind of economic system imposed on top of them.

New student of Marxist-Humanism
Los Angeles

I find Raya Dunayevskaya's writings in N&L difficult going and am probably too lazy to really study them, but the overall gist seems clear. She shows that Marxism must be humanist, not just technical or "scientific." What proves how right she is, is the collapse of the USSR.

Longtime reader
Wyoming, Pa.



**BUKKKANAN
AND
DUKE**

When I hear Pat Buchanan calling for a "middle class revolution to take this country back" and an "America for the Americans," the image that comes very sharply in my mind is that of another barbaric demagogue haranguing crowds and calling for a "Germany for the Germans." Buchanan doesn't have Hitler's corps of brown shirts yet, but I'm sure he'll be able to get quite a few by placing a call to his soul brother David Duke.

Concerned
Detroit

In the 1960s I thought the Left really overdid the KKK stuff, the way they always spelled America, "Amerika." It sort of lost its meaning and specificity when used like that. But the other day I saw Pat Buchanan's name spelled "Bukkkhanan" and I thought it really did fit that racist, anti-Semitic, sexist creature who would rather let a woman die than have an abortion.

Observer
Philadelphia

BLACK AND REVOLUTIONARY

A friend of mine commented that it's difficult and dangerous to be both Black and revolutionary in the United States of America. I feel that if you are Black, you almost have to be revolutionary, just in your day-to-day struggles and life. I also disagree with the way many Blacks now want to say that Marx was supposedly "Eurocentered." My attraction to Marx, and to Marxist-Humanism, is to the idea of revolution and a new society.

Young Black revolutionary
Los Angeles

The struggle for civil rights in the 1960s adopted the singular term "integration" as an expression of the claim that all people should have equal access to power and opportunity, a concept based on the indispensability of all in society. It has been watered down to mean Blacks should be represented throughout society in proportion to their percentage of the total population. This measuring of progress by statistics keeps us from seeing many who are left behind, people who have worked in all facets of the economy and have insisted on better working and living conditions without ever being invited by anyone to share in a better life.

Michael G.
Oakland, Cal.

Readers' Views

In her speech to the Black/Red Conference (January-February N&L) Raya Dunayevskaya discusses Nat Turner's slave revolt, and how Turner rejected the white slavemasters' charge that since there were also other slave revolts, there must have been a conspiracy, by answering that it was the idea of freedom that inspired all the slaves to rebel. The slavemasters' attitude reminded me of a lot of the Left today: they think you need a conspiracy or one small vanguard leadership group to have a revolution. Dunayevskaya rejected that view. Instead, she saw the need for the link of a philosophy of revolution, to help the revolutionary spark grow into a fire, and not be smothered by either the Left or the counter-revolution.

Gene Ford
Los Angeles



**NEW
DISCUSSION
JOURNAL**

Tatyana Mamonova, whose underground magazine, *Woman & Russia*, fueled a new women's liberation movement in Russia in 1980 and resulted in her arrest and exile, is beginning a new publication to be called *Woman & Earth*. It will be printed in both Russian and English and distributed twice a year—on March 8 (International Women's Day) and Dec. 10 (International Human Rights Day). Tatyana hopes it will act as a discussion forum for women who want to learn more about each others' lives and ideas. The first issue on March 8 will offer 48 pages with the latest news and views from the Moscow Center for Gender Studies.

Since the magazine will be offered free to Eastern readers, payment of \$10 will cover the cost of one European copy and your own. Each additional \$5 will mean one more free copy we can distribute. Subscription checks can be sent to: Tatyana Mamonova, 70 Terry Road, Hartford, CT 06105. Please tell your readers we also have 25 videos. They can send for a free list.

Chandra Niles Folsom
Connecticut

ANC AND THE CODESA

How can N&L write of the ANC (African National Congress) being "at the crossroads"—the title you gave Lou Turner's article on the Codesa (the Convention for a Democratic South Africa)—after the kind of agreements they made there? The Johannesburg Star considered it a "coup" by de Klerk—but de Klerk had never hidden his plan from anyone. Mandela and the other collaborators knew the game being played and went along with it. They are not "at the crossroads." They have already crossed over. Let's not have any more ambiguity from Marxists about this. We owe it to the people to call a sellout just what it is.

Phyllis Jordan
Detroit

FANON, MARX AND LUXEMBURG

I am pleased to see that Lou Turner's essay on Fanon and Marxist Humanism has caused a stir, as the number of readers' views in the January-February issue attest. However, I think Barry's critique missed the nuance and drive of Turner's article. If one agrees that Turner creates a "near-identity between Fanon and Marx, ignoring their difference" it has to be seen in the context of Turner's recognition, which Barry misses, that Fanon is viewed by many as a non-Marxist Third Worldist. I did not see Turner arguing that Fanon was unquestionably a Marxist Humanist. Instead I saw him trying to dig out a "legacy." The differences between Fanon and Marx have been well documented by Fanon's biographers as well as other scholars. Lip service is played to Marx but no one, so far as I am aware, has looked into Fanon's quote that is central to Turner's identification: "Everything up to and including the very nature of pre-capitalist society, so well explained by Marx, must be thought out

again." What plagues Marxists is an inability to "think out again"—and Turner's emphasis on re-creation, of "thinking out again," certainly does not mean an "application" of Marx's categories in a mechanical way.

Secondly, while Turner might have been too critical of Luxemburg, Barry asserts that Turner does not develop the point in this quote from Dunayevskaya: "The birth of the Third World in our era has made it easy not to fall into the trap of counterposing 'international' to 'nationalism' as if they were irreconcilable absolutes." Yet Turner does not end the quote there. It continues: "In the hands of a revolutionary like Frantz Fanon, the dialectical relationship of the two was beautifully developed by him in expressing the idea, even of an absolute, as a fighting slogan." Whereas Dunayevskaya unearthed an "unknown feminist" dimension to Luxemburg it had to be unearthed. Certainly her writing on "Woman's Suffrage" is not a "model for today." Perhaps we can also "unearth" a sensibility to women's liberation in Fanon as a dimension that can be developed from within Fanon's thought—not from his specific writing about women but in the spirit of his revolutionary humanism as a dialectic of liberation.

F. Shelley
New York

REHABILITATION OR SELF-LIBERATION?

In Britain, rehabilitation for the visually impaired is run by a national charity, the Royal National Institute for the Blind, which receives a subsidy from the State, enabling the State to control the program. The introductory two week course I attended started with meaningless talk of how important we are. We were then told how inadequate the provision is, and that it is up to us to ask for better provision. When I twice suggested we might benefit from assertiveness training, I was branded a troublemaker. The aim of the course was to rehabilitate us for the labor market but we were told we ought not to expect a job in view of rising unemployment. It exposes the relationship between an economic system which cannot provide work and the charity mongers who wish to control "their blind." Next year I will take N&L tapes with me because ideas of self-liberation are needed but so far are absent.

Bob Dore
Wales

LEADERS AND RANKS

There has never been a clearer declaration of class warfare than the statement given by GM Chairman Robert Stemple when he announced the GM plant closings and layoffs. It was already crystal clear from GAM management's whipsawing of the Arlington, Texas and Willow Run, Mich. workers against each other—and Stemple said the company would be doing the same thing in the future. The rank-and-file warned UAW President Owen Bieber of this danger five years ago when he negotiated the concessionary contract with the auto corporations opening the doors to this kind of whipsawing of plants and workers. Bieber said the union wouldn't allow it to happen but, as usual, the rank-and-file has been proven by history to be right again.

Radical
Detroit

The election of Ron Carey and the reform slate to head the Teamsters is certainly a victory. But the question is: what will happen to them now? The people who run my union, the Communications Workers, were also the same kind of honest, rank-and-file-oriented reformers once. Now you can't even get them to call a meeting, except to tell you what they've already done.

Union member
New York

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!
SUBSCRIBE AND WRITE FOR N&L**

DIALOGUE ON LUXEMBURG, WL, AND MARX

The book party at DePaul University for the new edition of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution was a wonderful event...

Dunayevskaya's book is perhaps the only cogent response to the twisted body consciousness of capitalism which reduces women and men to mindless objects...

Ted V. Chicago

Remains To Be Done: The Unique and Unfinished Contributions of Today's Women's Liberation Movement...

Women's Liberationist for 25 Years Chicago

To me, "philosophy" can be seen throughout the whole 12 pages of the January-February issue of N&L...

Young worker Chicago

The excitement that four intellectuals who are not Marxist-Humanists feel about the new edition of Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution...

Teacher Illinois

WORKERS - JAPANESE AND U.S.

When the Japanese politicians are insulting U.S. workers, the real enemy they are after is their enemy at home...

Black worker New York

It's been almost 150 years since Marx pinpointed the division between mental and manual labor as the Achilles heel holding back development of our full human potential...

capitalists—who invented the damn assembly line. Now they're all talking about "empowering" workers by putting us in "self-managing" teams...

Office worker Chicago



LATIN AMERICA STRUGGLES

In response to "Oil for Cuba" in the January-February N&L: the author says, "we are clear that the government of Fidel Castro is...authoritarianism and...state capitalism..."

John Marcotte New York

I have read some of Raya Dunayevskaya's writings about Marxist-Humanism. It is a vision that speaks very much to our continent and its political movement for liberation...

reformulate positions, and put aside dogmatism and sectarianism. That is why we have formed an alliance of ecologists, artists, political, cultural, social and indigenous movements...

Correspondent Ecuador

MARTHA PHILLIPS

We should not overlook the murder on Feb. 9 in Moscow of the U.S. Spartacist League member, Martha Phillips. Whether it was politically motivated...

G. Emmet Chicago

WHY SUPPORT N&L?

It's refreshing to read a Left paper that is philosophical rather than agitational, and which can be seminal for future history.

Prisoner Graterford, Pa.

As always, the January-February issue engendered both fury at this state-capitalist world and excitement at the direction it gave for creating a new one. The gift subs I am enclosing will go to a white, disabled homeless man...

Sheila New York

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS FROM NEWS & LETTERS

—BOOKS—

- Marxism and Freedom ...from 1776 until today
Philosophy and Revolution from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao
Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution
Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution: Reaching for the Future
The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism: Two Historic-Philosophic Writings by Raya Dunayevskaya...

- Constitution of News & Letters Committees
Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis
The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S.
25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. A History of Worldwide Revolutionary Developments by Raya Dunayevskaya
American Civilization on Trial, Black Masses as Vanguard.

—PAMPHLETS—

- Frantz Fanon, Soweto and American Black Thought, by Lou Turner and John Alan
Selections from Raya Dunayevskaya's Writings on the Middle East
Working Women for Freedom by Angela Terrano, Marie Dignan and Mary Holmes
Dos ensayos por Raya Dunayevskaya. Spanish language pamphlet 1989 edition

—ARCHIVES—

- The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development
Guide and Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development

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Essay Article

Marx's Doctoral Dissertation

The origins of Karl Marx's concept of *praxis*

by Neda Azad

The years 1991-92 marks the 150th anniversary of Marx's Doctoral Dissertation, one of the least discussed works of Marx which, nevertheless, figures prominently in the writings of the Marxist-Humanist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya, particularly her *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.¹ The 1841-42 Dissertation shows Marx as a practicing dialectician several years before he either broke with bourgeois society, or found a new revolutionary subject, the proletariat. Thus in singling this work out, Dunayevskaya was taking issue with a whole generation of Marxists after Marx who had reduced his philosophy to economics, science and politics, denuded it of its concept of humanism and dialectics and segmented it into a Young Hegelian period, which had to be jettisoned, and a mature non-Hegelian period, which was to be embraced.

Even so great a theoretician as Rosa Luxemburg could write in 1902 that Marx became a "scientific socialist" after discovering the class struggle, the writing of the *Communist Manifesto* and the discovery of the economic laws of capitalism. But the Dissertation is an excellent place to examine Marx's notion of dialectics as he first articulated it, and his working out of the notion of *praxis*—critical, theoretical, practical activity—which was distinguished from both idealism and materialism.

What Dunayevskaya was most enthusiastic about in the Dissertation was Marx's concepts of self-movement and self-determination, which she called the "energizing principle" of Marx's philosophy as he broke with scientific determinism.

How does Marx's study of two Greek Atomists—Democritus (about 460-370 B.C.) and Epicurus (about 342-270 B.C.)—speak to the question of self-determination for Marx? And how is this discussion related to Hegel's concepts of dialectics and self-determination? These are some of the issues we will be probing in this essay.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DEMOCRITICAN AND EPICUREAN PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE

When the Dissertation was published in German in the 1920s as part of the Moscow-based edition of Marx's collected writings, Cyril Bailey, author of the classic study *The Greek Atomists and Epicurus*, praised it for its originality, but criticized Marx for having approached the subject matter from the vantage point of the problematic of his own age, rather than strictly following the period of the ancients.² Marx had indeed related his dissertation, which dealt with the merits of the Epicurean philosophy, to the philosophical issues he was facing as a Left Hegelian. Living in conservative Germany which had not yet experienced a revolution, as had France, Marx was concerned with the tremendous gap he faced between the heights of the Hegelian philosophy on the one hand, and the depths of German reality on the other. He wondered what there was for philosophy to do after Hegel.

What Marx did was to turn to an aspect of Hegel's philosophy which was not very developed, Hegel's treatment of the Greek materialists. But in doing so Marx used the very method of Hegelian dialectics to demonstrate his own break with both traditional materialism and Hegelian idealism.

The two ancient philosophers, Democritus and Epicurus, had been preoccupied with the following question: How do atoms operate and create matter in this world? The pre-Socratic philosopher Democritus was one of the original atomists. He is credited along with another atomist, Leucippus, with originating the theory that all matter is composed of single, invisible and indivisible elements called atoms. The atomists were materialists through and through and believed that all reality, including body and soul, was composed of either atoms or a void. Atoms moved in a void because of an initial vortex. They collided with each other and formed compounds or matter, Democritus argued.

Epicurus was born several decades after Democritus in the period which followed Aristotle. He thus appeared at a time when Greek philosophy had already reached its heights. A humanist, Epicurus considered the purpose of his philosophy to be one of bringing about a happy life for human beings. His famous Epicurean Garden was open to both slaves and women, from among whom emerged several thinkers with considerable philosophic reputation. Epicurus was not viewed as an original thinker by most philosophers, including He-

gel, but was seen as a talented philosopher who at best reproduced the ideas of Democritus.

Marx's appreciation of Epicurus challenged this predominant view, and argued instead for the originality of the Epicurean position. There was much that Marx appreciated in Epicurus including the fact that Epicurus as a humanist and atheist rejected the fear of punishment by the Greek gods, as well as the whole notion of life after death in Greek mythology.

Democritus traced everything back to the concept of necessity. The vortex of atoms, the origin of all, was the Democritean necessity. These physical laws determined everything in the world, not only movements of atoms, but also human action and destiny. In contrast, Epicurus was the philosopher of free will. He rejected the scientific determinism of Democritean philosophy and argued that there were things in the world that were products of accidents and things that depended upon our capacity to exercise free will (Marx-Engels Collected Works (MECW) 1: 42).³ In breaking with the deterministic views of earlier materialists Epicurus quoted Seneca who wrote that "It would be better to follow the myth about the gods than to be a slave to the destiny of the physicists. For the former leaves hope for mercy if we do honor to the gods, while the latter is inexorable necessity. But it is chance, which must be accepted, not god, as the multitude believe. It is a misfortune to live in necessity, but to live in necessity is not a necessity. On all sides many short and easy paths to freedom are open." (Cited in MECW 1:43.)

Democritus had seen only two movements in nature. Atoms could fall in a straight line, or they could repel each other, a movement that was caused by the original vortex of atoms. Significantly, Epicurus added a third movement to this binary system. He argued that atoms did more than merely follow the laws of repulsion and attraction alone. They also made a slight curve in their motion and that was how the meeting of atoms and the many combinations they made could be explained. Modern nuclear physics has substantiated Epicurus' notion, this swerving movement of the atom and its particles.⁴

Marx in his time, however, was concerned with the philosophic implications of Epicurus' ideas and the liberating effect it had brought to mind. Marx wrote that atoms, as Democritus had argued, could only travel downward as a result of their own weight and gravity, which implied that nothing was within human control, since the motion of the atoms was determined and necessary. But the third movement of Epicurus had presented a chance to escape the realm of necessity. Moreover, this concept of "declination of the atoms" was not an accident in the philosophy of nature of Epicurus, rather it embodied his whole philosophy.

The purpose of action in Epicurean philosophy, Marx writes, was to rid oneself of—to swerve away from—pain, misery, and confusion. "While the atom frees itself from its relative existence, the straight line, by abstracting from it, by swerving away from it, so the entire Epicurean philosophy swerves away from the restrictive mode of being. . . ."⁵ For Marx this meant that Epicurus had gone beyond all Greek philosophers as a whole in rejecting the worship of the system of celestial bodies and in smashing the concept of the afterlife, concluding that, "He is, therefore, the greatest representative of Greek Enlightenment" (MECW 1: 73).

MARX'S DISSERTATION AND HEGEL

While some studies of Marx's Dissertation have argued that this work shows the paramount influence of Epicurus, rather than Hegel, on Marx,⁶ a close examination of the Dissertation in conjunction with Hegel's *Science of Logic* suggests other explanations. Hegel had included a discussion of the atomists in several of his works, including his *History of Philosophy*, where he rejected the Epicurean philosophy as unoriginal. But he had also taken up the atomists in his *Science of Logic*, in the Doctrine of Being, at the juncture where Quality becomes Quantity. In this very important section of the *Logic*, Hegel first introduces the concept of self-determination by showing what constitutes the difference between finite and infinite.

For Hegel, the difference between finite and infinite is not, as in common understanding, based on the fact that one is limited, and the other is unlimited and goes on forever. Thought is infinite if its development is not blocked by an other. Therefore, to be infinite, thought has to be self-determined.⁷

From here on, the concept of self-determination figures prominently in Hegel's *Logic*, marking the many

stages of transition in this work. But in the section on finitude and infinity, Hegel also takes up the Greek atomists and criticizes them on two points: 1) for not recognizing that even matter is metaphysical, since it involves human beings thinking and conceptualizing about atoms and matter; 2) for not seeing that the atoms do not crash into each other either by accident, or by some external force and outside vortex. Rather they combine with each other because the elements of attraction and repulsion are right there within the atoms and not introduced from the outside.⁸

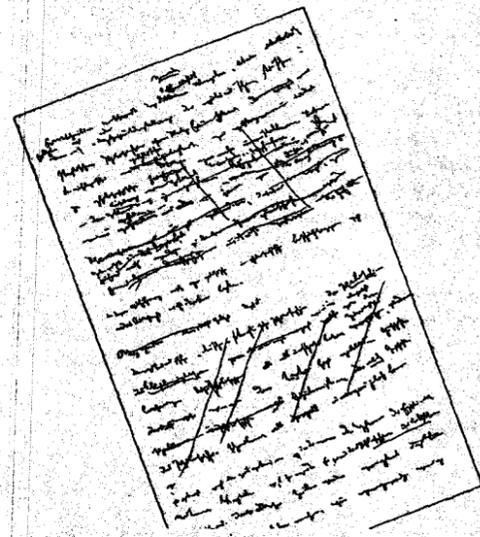
Thus Hegel had argued for the concept of self-determination instead of either the materialist notion of determinism, or the Epicurean emphasis on the notion of choice and accident. It can thus be argued that while Marx in his Dissertation rejected the interpretation of Epicurus in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, his own reading of Epicurus does seem to have been in line with that in Hegel's fundamental works such as the *Science of Logic* and the smaller *Logic*.

Thus in presenting a reading of the Epicurean philosophy, grounded to a great extent in Hegel's thought, Marx shows his tremendous differences with the determinism of the traditional materialists, and embraces instead the notion of self-movement. He thus moves towards resolving the riddle of how one remains a materialist and an idealist at one and the same time.

This crucial dimension of Marx's philosophy, however, got lost to several generations of post-Marx Marxists. A revealing example appears in Franz Mehring's "classic" biography of Marx where he disparages the Dissertation arguing that Marx praises Epicurus as the founder of the science of atomism, "despite the latter's arbitrariness in the explanation of physical phenomena



Marx as a student



Draft of preface to Marx's doctoral dissertation

and despite the abstract individual self-consciousness he preaches." Mehring then went on to give a final verdict on the atomists, arguing that the deterministic materialism of Democritus had proven itself valid in modern physics since it supposedly explained everything in nature, and concluded that "Today the matter is no longer open for discussion. . . . Democritus was the pioneer and not Epicurus."⁹

After World War II, the writings of the young Marx on Humanism finally began to get the attention they deserved. For some, this included not only the 1844 *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts*, but also the *Doctoral Dissertation*. The founder of Marxist-Humanism in the U. S., Raya Dunayevskaya recognizes the significance of the "energizing principle" Marx was looking for in the Epicurean philosophy. She argues that in the Dissertation Marx had "developed his most original interpretation of *praxis*. That was to remain his unique category for breaking both with 'idealism' and 'materialism.'"¹⁰

MARX AND THE CRISIS IN GERMANY

The fact that Marx's concern was with the relationship of philosophy to the crisis in his age is best manifested in the Notes which Marx wrote as part of the Dissertation for an intended book on the Epicurean philosophy, as well as the Dissertation itself. The Left Hegelians, as radical followers of Hegel, had criticized Hegel's political reconciliation with the Prussian state. To Marx, however, such a critique was inadequate. He argued instead that it was not only a question of exposing Hegel politically. One also had to "discover the inadequacy of the principle which compelled that accommodation. Only in this way could the critique produce an advance in knowledge which would create the possibility of a new beginning."¹¹

A philosophic critique of Hegel required a thorough comprehension of Hegel's philosophy. The "intellectual

(continued on page 10)

1. Raya Dunayevskaya's *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991). Marx's Dissertation was written in 1841; its preface was written in early 1842.

2. See Bailey's review in *Classical Quarterly* (July-October, 1928).

3. All references to the Dissertation are from the English text which appears in *Marx-Engels Collected Works* 1 (New York: International Publishers, 1975). Hereafter MECW1.

4. See Lawrence Baronovitch, "German Idealism, Greek Materialism, and the Young Karl Marx," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 24, no. 95 (September, 1984): 253.

5. Cited in Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, 122.

6. See for example Baronovitch, "German Idealism, Greek Materialism." See also Mikhail Lifshitz's *The Philosophy of Art of Karl Marx* (London: Pluto, 1973), which discusses the Hegelian inheritance of the Dissertation and Marx's critical attitude to Epicurus: "Figuratively speaking, the atom as an aspect of materiality is nothing but a bourgeois; as an absolute form of existence it is a citizen of the French Revolution. Epicurus had emphasized the principle of atomicity, that is, independence and hence individual freedom; but the contradictions of the principle were obvious even in his 'atomistic science'" (pp. 23-24).

7. See the discussion on finitude and infinity in G. W. F. Hegel, *Science of Logic* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1989), 129-156. Translated by A. V. Miller.

8. See *The Logic of Hegel: The Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 182-183.

9. See Franz Mehring, *Karl Marx: The Story of His Life* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1966), 30.

10. See the illuminating section "Prometheus Bound, 1841-1843" in Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 122-123.

11. Dunayevskaya, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, 122.

Black/Red View

by John Alan

If you went to a shopping mall, a library, a museum or watched television, during the month-long celebration of African American history this February you should know by now that African Americans have written many outstanding novels, composed much of popular American music and have produced noted artists, politicians, army officers, scientists, opera singers, Hollywood and Broadway stars, etc. In fact, this celebration has shown that we have done everything except live in the segregated slums of the large cities and be poorly paid members of the working class!

"Black History" has now become an exhaustive paean to mythological middle-class values which has little to do with realities of past or ongoing African American history. What we have is a sanitized, commercialized image of Black history which makes everyone feel good and, at the same time, blurs the original idea and reason for celebrating African American history.

WALL OF SILENCE

It was indeed an original idea. It was an act of Black self-determination, internally motivated to tear down the hostile wall of silence used by white historians to conceal Black history.

Far into this century African Americans were practically excluded from American history by white historians. We were seen as a non-historical people who achieved little or nothing in the long story of human history. What was incredible about this historic bias was that all records showed that African Americans were a viable force in American life.

In 1915, Carter G. Woodson, the African American historian, decided to take action against the racism of the established academic historians. He founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and the publication *The Journal of Negro History* in order to begin a life-long task of resurrecting African American history. He later proposed that a week should be set aside in February to celebrate "Negro History." By the end of the 1920s he was able to persuade some African American teachers in the Washington, D.C., public school system to surreptitiously introduce "Negro History" to their pupils.

No one can question the fact that Dr. Woodson was the pioneer in establishing both the popularity and the academic foundation for Black History. He went beyond the study of prominent individuals to do a remarkable history on the memories of Black ex-slaves. As great as Woodson was as the "father" of African American history, his originality can only be seen when placed in the context of his time.

His idea for the "need" of Black history in post-

Revolutionary roots of Black history

WWI America, when racial tensions were at their highest, was the self-same "need" of the hundreds of thousands of newly urbanized Black workers: to have knowledge of their past history, as they were experiencing a new self-consciousness, a new self-certainty, as they encountered the Garvey Movement, the Harlem Renaissance, unions and Marxism as alternatives to what they had left in the South.

Thus the birth moment of Black history was also the birth of a new consciousness in a revolutionary period.

This year's open commercialization of African American history is not an accident, because the accepted theory of history in this society is the "great man" theory, i.e., the abstract bourgeois personality that has risen not so much in history, but above the masses in history.

BLACK MASSES AS VANGUARD

In contradiction to this image of the bourgeois personality, Marxist-Humanists dug deep into the past and ongoing African American history to show in *American Civilization on Trial* (see ad page 7) that at every historic turning point in American history it was Black masses who proved to be the vanguard. In this study, the movements of history are seen not so much as the progression of great men, but as the progression of great masses. It differs from the old radicals because it focuses not on the oppression of the masses but on the creativity of masses as the subject and not the objects of historical development.

Not only does *American Civilization on Trial* single out Black masses in motion as revolutionary subject, but as the revolutionary subject which places American civilization on trial. Here the historical struggle for real Black liberation becomes a major dimension of American civilization. This is the real history of African Americans in this country and it must be central to the celebration of African American history month.



Carter G. Woodson

Malcolm's challenge to youth

Los Angeles, Cal.—In his essay article on "The Marxist Humanist Legacy of Frantz Fanon" in the December N&L, Lou Turner brings forth the indispensability of rethinking Marx's dialectic that Fanon was creatively able to achieve. He quotes Raya Dunayevskaya on Marxist "orthodoxy" as not being "a question of whether Marx could or could not be wrong.... It [is] a question of dialectics, of the methodology of approaching opposites." It is this that I would like to direct specifically towards Black youth today.

It is not difficult to convince Black youth of what is an obvious reality for us—that the "greater" American society has no place for the majority of us who are "ill-educated" and "unskilled." We must take our social and political lives into our own hands. We have accomplishments in the form of communication through rap music. However, we cannot stop at the projection of ghetto life—the murders, the family conflicts, the police beatings.

We must be willing to attain what Fanon meant when he spoke of a transformation into "a consciousness of social and political needs, in other words, into humanism." It is that "new Humanism" that Marx, Fanon and Dunayevskaya were developing for our age.

The Lead article by Michael Connolly in the December issue, "Crises in labor and Black movements compel new philosophic beginnings," quotes a Black youth who is studying Malcolm X. I also have been reading about Malcolm X, and have found that in his last year he issued a challenge to Black youth.

He said: "We are issuing a call for students across the country, from coast to coast, to launch a new study of the problem—not a study that is in any way guided or influenced by adults, but a study of their own. Thus we can get a new analysis of the problem, a more realistic analysis. We are going to ask those same students (by students I mean young people, who, having less of a stake to lose, are more flexible and can be more objective) for a new approach to the problem."

My challenge to myself and to other Black youth is to build upon the magnificent discoveries of the revolutionaries before us, to erect a movement that not only opposes the historical and contemporary vicissitudes of racist capitalism, but one which creates a new human being, a thinking, creative new man and new woman.

And to start, I'd like to pose a study into the subjective element of Malcolm X's struggle, his concept of organization, in order to reveal the objective reason for his break with the Nation of Islam. This is very timely for today.

—Maurice Miller

Black World

(continued from page 1)

In the voting rights case which sought to overturn the exclusionary practices which prevented Blacks from being elected to office in majority-Black counties, Thomas concurred with Justice Kennedy's Confederate-style state's rights opinion that "if federalism is to operate as a practical system of governance and not a mere poetic ideal," states must be free to structure their governments without interference from the "intrusive mechanisms" of the Voting Rights Act!

As Linda Greenhouse noted for the *The New York Times* (Feb. 2, 1992): "The force of this language suggests that the political judgment reached decades ago, requiring some aspects of state sovereignty to yield to the constitutional imperative of a meaningful franchise for all citizens, may no longer be inviolate."

However, the Thomas opinion that has been most disturbing to his confused Black petty-bourgeois supporters like Clarence Page is not one in which he either concurred or wrote for the majority, but one which he recently wrote for the narrow minority of himself and his ideological mentor, the far right ideologue Justice Antonin Scalia. Back in November, Scalia had argued against the majority opinion in a Minnesota case where he sought to grant constitutional protections of "free speech" to white supremacists who burned a cross in the front yard of a Black family. Scalia thought that the Minnesota statute which made such terrorist cross-burnings even a mild misdemeanor, "the rankest kind of subject discrimination"!

These rulings leave little doubt that we are on a reactionary course back to the statutory racism of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in which the Supreme Court made racist segregation the law of the land. However, what can we expect from the "moral character" of Scalia's minion, the man from Pin Point, Georgia, the self-defined "uppity Black who deigns to think differently," who used to boldly display a Confederate flag behind his desk, and who told the Senate Judiciary Committee that he would bring "something different" to the Supreme Court?

Here, it is better to look at the "something different" Clarence Thomas has brought to the Court through the rose-colored glasses of his sycophantic apologist, Clarence Page of the *Chicago Tribune*. Thomas had gone too far for Page, who alleged that Thomas' reactionary opinion in the *Hudson v. McMillian* Eighth Amendment case on "cruel and unusual punishment" is "a betrayal of true conservatism."

The case involved a Black inmate, Keith Hudson, who sued the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola for damages from a brutal beating he received at the hands

Overturn racist injustice

Los Angeles, Cal.—Many people have heard of the murder of 15-year-old Latasha Harlins, who was shot in the back of the head by Soon Ja Du, a Korean merchant who falsely accused Latasha of attempting to steal a \$1.79 bottle of orange juice. Du was given only a slap-on-the-wrist sentence with no jail time. (See N&L, December 1991.) This enraged the Black community, which has seen racist Police Chief Daryl Gates' "war on crime" waged as police sweeps and stiff sentences against Black youth.

On Feb. 15, I attended a meeting of the Latasha Harlins Justice Committee, where concerned citizens, about 20 Black and one white, came together to discuss the current developments in the demand for justice in the Latasha Harlins case, as a case that demands human recognition from an unjust system.

One woman at this meeting characterized Latasha's murder by Du as a "shot heard around the world"—she reported that she had met a man from Britain who was familiar with the injustice of this case. A man stated that he felt a need to come out and express his support because Latasha was for him the Rosa Parks of the 1990s, in the sense that the signal had been given for a new movement.

This committee wants to make it clear that their struggle is not a racial struggle against Koreans, or just a Black question of justice, but that the system's injustice against Blacks is an injustice against all of humanity. "We cannot fall into the trap of the David Dukes and the Pat Buchanans who have made it socially acceptable to be a racist in this society," someone said.

Another woman at the meeting, who is a lawyer, stated that Judge Karlin, who sentenced Du, violated the law. Judge Karlin's action gives voice to the concept that merchants have the right to kill people if they think any small part of their property is threatened, whereas California law says that to use deadly force against an intruder you "must be in honest and reasonable fear of losing your life." In the case of Du, neither her life nor her property were threatened.

The Latasha Harlins Justice Committee has fought for and won a review of Judge Karlin's sentencing of Du, and there is a petition drive to remove Judge Karlin from the bench. But regardless of what happens, the Justice Committee will continue to attempt to change an unjust system.

I felt within this organization a certain rawness and spirit of something new emerging. For myself, I see nothing short of a social movement as what is needed to change this "justice system" built on slavery and discrimination throughout history. We need a total vision towards the transformation of society.

—Gene Ford

of prison guards. In a 7-to-2 majority opinion, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote for the plaintiff that "When prison officials maliciously and sadistically use force to cause harm, contemporary standards of decency always are violated. This is true whether or not significant injury is evident. Otherwise, the Eighth Amendment would permit any physical punishment, no matter how diabolic or inhuman...." and against the malicious insensitivity of Thomas' dissenting opinion, which held that the Eighth Amendment does not protect inmates from harsh treatment, O'Connor concluded that "To deny, as the dissent does, the difference between punching a prisoner in the face and serving him unappetizing food is to ignore the concepts of dignity, civilized standards, humanity, and decency that animate the Eighth Amendment."

Two weeks before Page wrote his "Memo to Justice Clarence Thomas: Turn back before it's too late" (*Chicago Tribune*, Mar. 1, 1992), he had written a column attacking the 28-page open letter Judge Leon Higginbotham wrote to Clarence Thomas in the University of Pennsylvania Law Review. Higginbotham had lumped together Thomas and Page's other Black conservative friends with no one less than David Duke. This outraged Page, who had just hosted a curious little PBS special on Black conservatives. Along with warning Thomas not to come under the ideological spell of Scalia, Higginbotham pointed out the "stunted knowledge of history and unformed judicial philosophy" found in Thomas' writings and speeches.

Now belatedly, our "liberal" sycophant sees the snake that departing Justice Marshall warned would bite you whether he was Black or white, the one Clarence Page has taken in.

Philosophic Dialogue

(continued from page 5)

New Year's greeting now? Then see to it that you stay human...Being human means joyfully throwing your whole life 'on the scales of destiny' when need be, but all the while rejoicing in every sunny day and every beautiful cloud. Ach, I know of no formula to write you for being human...

Dunayevskaya's point, whether she is discussing Luxemburg, women's liberation today or Marx, is that the concept, the vision of human self-development has to be total at the start and has to be re-created anew by each new force of revolution. Luxemburg's feminist dimension isn't a question of autonomy in and of itself; it has to do with women insisting on the freedom to develop, both as force and as Reason; what Marx called "revolution-in-permanence."

—Laurie Cashdan

The unfinished tasks of today's women's liberation movement

(continued from page 1)

en away or when they are fired because their sexual preference is discovered.

The attack is total: From state governments' pursuit of complete control over a woman on welfare—who she lives with, how many children she has, what birth control she uses—as they slash, again, grants already cut to the bone; to the impact of this “recession” that is a depression for women, many of whom have now lost even their part-time jobs, where they received the lowest wages and no benefits; from the horrible fact that women and children are becoming homeless by the thousands; to the brutal truth that in the U.S. every six minutes a woman is raped, every 15 seconds a woman is beaten, that one woman in four will be sexually assaulted during her lifetime and that domestic violence is the single largest cause of injury to women.

'A THOUSAND POINTS TO FIGHT'

The totality of the attack is no accident whatsoever. It is because no matter how much the Right may insist that the Women's Liberation Movement is dead, it is not. Nor do we live in any so-called “post-feminist” era. The truth is that women have never stopped fighting back. As feminist writer Ann Jones put it, the reality of George Bush's “thousand points of light” is that women have “a thousand points to fight.”

● At the National Organization for Women's 25th Silver Anniversary Celebration/Global Feminist Conference in January, the workshop titled “The Backlash Against Feminism” was jammed and president Patricia Ireland was pushed to say: “Our obstacle is our entire government.” This year's 22nd National Conference on Women and the Law in March likewise acknowledges the war against women and their determination to fight back by titling their meeting, “Women Under Siege: A Call to Action.”

● To mark the Jan. 22 anniversary of the Supreme Court decision legalizing women's right to abortion, women from universities, high schools and rank-and-file women workers joined in pro-choice activities in towns and cities from coast to coast: from the 450 in Chicago, Ill., who held a high-spirited protest in pouring rain; to the 2,000 in Boston, Mass., who attended a march and rally; and the 3,000 who came out in Salt Lake City, Utah, including women from Brigham Young University whose picket signs read: “BYU Women for Choice.”

● In reaction to the sexist, racist Senate hearings on Clarence Thomas' nomination, where Anita Hill was vilified, African American Women in Defense of Ourselves—a grassroots organization—was created in a few short weeks and raised over \$50,000 needed to place a full-page ad in *The New York Times* condemning Thomas' nomination to the Supreme Court. In the latest issue of *Ms Magazine*, Black feminist theorist Barbara Smith wrote: “Never have so many black women publicly stated their refusal to pit racial oppression against sexual oppression.”

● Working women have never stopped fighting their conditions of life and labor. On Feb. 7, 28,000 hospital workers came out in New York City to protest Governor

Mario Cuomo's proposed budget cuts of more than \$1 billion in Medicaid payments to hospitals (see story page 3). Their fight mirrored those of protesting Los Angeles county workers who have also protested budget cuts that hurt health workers and their patients. St. Paul, Minn., women filed sexual harassment lawsuits against the Stroh Brewery Co., stating that their sexist TV commercials exacerbated the harassment at work. And 800 Black women workers took on plantation-style working conditions and attitudes at Delta Pride Catfish in Mississippi and won.

Yet despite the fact that women have taken on the “thousand points to fight,” we find ourselves, in 1992, not only losing the limited right to abortion but seeing all our hard-won gains rolled back. How, from such a high point reached by the Women's Liberation Movement in the mid-1970s, have women come to be totally



Outraged demonstrators in Dublin, Ireland, protest the court order barring a 14-year-old, pregnant from being raped by her friend's father, from traveling to England for an abortion.

on the defensive? It is clear that “activism” alone is not enough.

When, in the late 1960s, the Women's Liberation Movement burst forth from the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-war movement, women were fighting for new human relations—a revolution so deep and so total that all would be free. In that very fight we were experiencing a self-development that was not separated from what freedom should mean. What was so important about the Women's Liberation Movement was that it critiqued the Left from a revolutionary perspective, demanding a deeper idea of what revolution must become.

What 1992 reveals is that just as women's battles against this sexist, racist, capitalist, degenerate world are a matter of life and death, so too is the battle of ideas. Yet so unconnected is much of what passes for feminist theory from the reality of women's daily lives that, instead of mounting a total assault on this society's deadly limitations on freedom, some theorists end up attacking the concept that freedom is a universal necessity for humanity's self-development.

While post-structuralists and deconstructionists want to do away with the concept of the Subject altogether and throw out all Universals—including the universal of Freedom—women's daily struggles for survival, for workers' rights, for a decent life for themselves and their children, our quest for wholeness and our determination to create a world where all can experience self-development, prove them dead wrong.

WOMEN'S 'UNFINISHED TASK'

Since that is the case, what has made it so difficult to answer not only the Right that blatantly opposes revolution but all those who think we must accept the ground of this degenerate society? In *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*

(see ad page 2), Raya Dunayevskaya wrote that the “unfinished tasks” of today's Women's Liberation Movement centers on the need to work out its relationship to the concept of a total uprooting found in Marx's Marxism.

It is only a total philosophy of liberation—which is what genuine Marxism is—that can give us the basis to fight the attacks from all who would try to limit freedom. If women—or any force fighting for freedom—don't have that philosophic ground, then they get swept up into the ideological pollution.

Take someone as serious and important as Patricia Hill Collins, who wants to work out Black feminist consciousness to fight the reactionary 1990s. In her book, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*, Collins shows the indispensable nature of Black women's thought and explores it. But because she accepts the deconstructionists' rejection of Marx and dismisses the universal of freedom, despite the revolutionary richness she finds in Black women's thought, the Reason that Black women have expressed throughout history is lost.

Because she dismisses Marx's thought as part of the “Eurocentric masculinist knowledge validation process,” Collins ends up asserting that there is no truth; rather, “Afrocentric” feminist thought becomes but one form of knowledge. The freedom ideas expressed by Black women are thus lost to Collins.

This same trend appears in feminist labor history. While a new wave of feminist labor historians has posed innovative analyses of man/woman relations in U.S. labor struggles, hostility to Marx's concept of alienated labor and to his view of the worker's “quest for universality” threatens to cripple their studies. They argue that labor history needs to shift its focus from Marx's allegedly “work-centered” perspective to a “home-centered” one. This is needed, they assert, because all the focus on women's alienation from, and opposition to, the production process, has obscured women's role in creating the production relations of the world in which we live.

For some, this has meant devaluing women worker-leaders from Mother Jones to Clara Lemlich as “class-war heroines” in male-defined unions, and counterposing “social-welfare” activists like Jane Addams and Frances Perkins as models for study. What gets lost is the whole category of women workers as revolutionary leaders and thinkers—just as with Collins' work, Black women's revolutionary thought gets limited.

THE PHILOSOPHIC CONTEXT NEEDED

Raya Dunayevskaya, who created the philosophic category, “woman as revolutionary force and Reason,” and appreciated what the Women's Liberation Movement had raised, nevertheless always warned that “woman as Reason... depends on women practicing the immediate problems inseparable from the philosophic context.” Never has that warning been more concrete, never more important.

That there is an objective thirst, a drive to work out paths to freedom and liberation, is seen in the seriousness with which Adrienne Rich, feminist theorist, poet and activist, has viewed the work of Raya Dunayevskaya and, through that lens, Marx. In her greetings (see page 2) sent to the Chicago book party for Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, she wrote: “We can be sure that Marxism is no more dead than the women's liberation movement is dead, and the ways of reading Marx that Raya mapped for us are more challenging than ever in our time. What Raya taught me is that Marxism itself is yet to be discovered...”

That discovery of Marxism that Rich talks about is a two-way road. Each age needs to re-create Marx's Marxism anew. That cannot be done without the Women's Liberation Movement—in practice and theory—taking responsibility to deepen and develop Marx's Marxism, just as, in the 1960s and 1970s, it showed the world how deep and total revolution must be for all to be free.

Essay Article

(continued from page 8)

carriers” of a philosophy, Marx argued in his *Dissertation*, have a “double-edged” demand. On the one hand they were to turn against the existing world, making philosophy a liberating factor in the world of reality: “It is a psychological law that the theoretical mind once liberated in itself, turns into practical energy... and turns itself against the reality of the world existing without it” (MECW 1: 85).

As against the Left Hegelians, who refused to turn their eyes to the world of practice, Marx hailed Prometheus, the most worldly of the Greek gods, writing that “As Prometheus, having stolen fire from heaven, begins to build houses and to settle upon the earth, so philosophy, expanded to be the whole world, turns against the world of appearance. The same now with the philosophy of Hegel” (MECW 1: 491).

But at the same time these “intellectual carriers” of a philosophy were attempting to free themselves from the chains of the particular philosophy out of which they came. “Their liberation of the world from un-philosophy is at the same time their own liberation from the philosophy that held them in fetters as a particular system” (MECW 1: 86). Since these “intellectual carriers” had not “yet theoretically emerged from that system” they ended up only realizing the “individual moments” of the Hegelian system, which was a sad retrogression. Or in Marx's words, “the objective universality of a perfected philosophy breaks down first into merely subjective forms of consciousness of an individual philosophy which has grown out of it,” so that the Left Hegelians were in effect trying to have a partial reform of Hegel's philosophy, rather than concretizing it as a new beginning.

Marx's *Dissertation* thus demonstrates how from the very early years of his intellectual pursuits Marx attempted to break with all forms of deterministic materialism. As early as 1841, he moved toward incorporating Hegel's idealistic philosophy into a new kind of humanism, whose origins could be found in Epicurus, one which rested on the notions of subjectivity, self-determination, and free will. It was a most creative unity of idealism and materialism.

From the writings of Raya Dunayevskaya

(continued from page 4)

pire.....?” Sound today-ish, what?

NOW THAT DOESN'T mean that he was either an anarchist, or just a utopian, or like the guerrilla warfare types chose any old “Subject,” any one that “dared and dared and dared some more.” Nonsense. The Subject has to be objective as well as subjective, it has to be elemental as well as historical, and above all, out of its self-development you have to be able, as a theoretician, to make explicit what has only been implicit in its actions, BUT YOU CANNOT LECTURE DOWN TO THEM [even if you are] AS GREAT A REVOLUTIONARY AS ROSA who, after all she said of revolution and spontaneity, and proletariat, proletariat, and only proletariat, turned around when they actually were building a new form of organization—the Shop Stewards—and said, Well, how, you cannot build dual unions, you must return to the union structure and fight from within, etc., etc.

I cannot go into the current world capitalist economy other than to say its crises have nothing whatever to do with absorption or non-absorption of the non-capitalist world; its crises stem not from markets but from Auto-

mation and wars, and if there is anything Marc [Chirik] is more wrong on, it is to say that just when capitalists have absorbed all, it would have “no labor reservoir to draw on for production”: Holy cats, if capitalism will have anything—it is millions and millions of workers out of production. And, far from the national struggles “only helping capitalism,” it has not given capitalism a moment of peace though it had won the war, “even won the peace” so far as Europe and the Marshall Plan was concerned. Who is keeping it in turmoil if it isn't all the struggles for national liberation from Africa to Latin America, Algiers to the Middle East, Vietnam to Djibouti?

You must develop a method, internalize the method I used in *Marxism and Freedom* by studying all these new lectures on Philosophy and Revolution, for all any one can give another is method. It isn't, however, anything that can be gotten either through blueprints, formulae, or science. It requires a lot of hard “labor, patience, seriousness and suffering of the negative” but nothing has ever been more needed if we want to overcome not only capitalism but the regressions of revolutions.

Youth **The infinite degradation of rape**

by Sheila Fuller

of being a woman in this society means being constantly afraid of rape and abuse. We not only have to live with this fear wherever we are, at home, at school, at work, on the street; we are also often told that if a woman is raped it is her fault, or she must keep quiet about it because no one will listen to her anyway.

I wouldn't help but cry after reading a recent report in the New York Times about a woman doctor at an Oaklawn neighborhood clinic. She spoke movingly about how, in the process of getting to know her teenage patients, she hears harrowing stories about the physical and sexual abuse they have suffered, and how she doesn't dare to talk about these experiences with them because they are afraid of being punished or arrested. This story is not only about teenagers in Oakland; it is the story of many adolescents in the U.S. Inhuman as our society become that it treats children this way?

When women do denounce the men who have raped them and take the case to court, they continue to be harassed. Desiree Washington, a young Black woman who was raped by boxer Mike Tyson to court where he was charged with raping her, continues to receive a barrage of verbal attacks. Why should she be blamed? The fact is that a woman has been raped and dehumanized.

TESTS ON CAMPUSES

Women are fighting back against these vicious attacks on college campuses where one out of every four women is raped, protests against rape continue.

At Northwestern University (NU) in Illinois, women have been writing the names of men who raped them on bathroom walls. Many vocal activists on campus are being subjected to police harassment because the university president claims that the women received a threatening package with an anti-rape message. The police are questioning, fingering and investigating these women because they have written explicitly feminist letters to the university newspaper. In response to this "witch" hunt, several protests have been held at NU. Now the university is videotaping these demonstrations to intimidate the anti-rape activists for further harassment and intimidation.

At the University of Chicago, students are protesting the university administration's initial silence on the gang rape of a woman student. Many other women on that campus and in the neighboring universities go unreported or unnoticed. And if a woman is raped on the campus is not a student, the university does not mention it at all.

At Duke University, in North Carolina, during a rape awareness week, women and men were asked to write statements about why they were participating in anti-rape activities. This led to an outpouring of responses from women and men students about their memories of abuse. These statements were published in the student alternative newspaper, The Miss-

ing Link. They reveal that every person in this society has been hurt directly or indirectly by sexual abuse.

The fact that women are most often raped and sexually abused by acquaintances and men who claim to "love" us, makes women challenge the degenerate state of man/woman relations in our society. One woman student from the University of Chicago told me: "Acquaintance rape happens because men are socialized into it. They think if they've asked someone out they have a right to her body. They don't recognize rape as rape and think rape is normal. That is what is really sick."

OBJECTIFICATION VS. HUMANISM

Rape is about men's objectification of women in a society where a woman is considered nothing more than an object. As one woman activist put it: "Rape has nothing to do with sexuality but is a power relationship. Men think they can take out their aggression on women and have control over women." This opposition to the dehumanization of women makes me think of what Karl Marx expressed about the man/woman relationship back in 1844:

"The infinite degradation in which human beings exist for themselves is expressed in this relation to the woman...For the secret of the relationship of human beings to each other finds its unambiguous, definitive, open, obvious expression in the relationship of man to woman...Consequently in it [this relation] is revealed to what degree the natural behavior of human beings has become human...to what degree another human being is needed as a human being."

He was not only expressing the idea that the relations between men and women are the measure of how human or inhuman a society is. He was also articulating a vision of new human relations between men and women on the basis of mutual self-development and growth instead of possession and abuse.

It seems so difficult, in a world where relations between men and women are so degrading, to imagine the possibility of new human relations. There are no easy or ready-made answers. But Marx's vision of revolution and new human relations does remain a challenge to our activities against rape and for women's freedom.



On Feb. 6, several hundred students at Evanston High School, in Illinois, walked out to protest an explicitly racist statement by a white teacher and demanded that he be fired.

Editor's response

The anti-war movement and democracy

Editor's note: Below we publish excerpts from a letter from a young anti-war activist and philosophy student at Duke University, North Carolina, in response to Sheila Fuller's column, "Rosa Luxemburg's concept of democracy" (December 1991 N&L). We welcome your comments.

The first question concerns Luxemburg's view of the importance of the "battle of ideas" to create public discourse involving the masses before, during, and after revolution. You connect Luxemburg's view to the anti-war movement. In your words, the anti-war movement failed to promote "alternative visions of the future" and this led to the ultimate collapse of the move-

ment. In your experience, the anti-war movement on college campuses often lacked such a discourse and was primarily focused on the details of organizing responses to war. I personally have found a similar problem in activist groups, where activity is predominantly a reaction to injustices instead of an active discussion and development of an alternative.

As to the anti-war movement, when our group did devote some time to talking about reasons for opposing the war, long-term visions, etc., the group bogged down in arguments between moderate liberal and hard-core leftists, "peaceniks" and "revolutionaries," theory-heads and those acting out of religious or moral conviction. I believe this kind of dialogue, though frustrating and sometimes divisive, is necessary for a group to have. However, I don't think it is possible for all these different kinds of folks to reach an agreement concerning the long-term vision of the group should be organized around.

In your paper, I'm concerned that an underlying assumption is that we should all be able to come to such an agreement. I feel that such an assumption is dangerous because it is often connected to the view that there is a single correct vision for everyone to have. If the "battle of ideas" is meant to lead to one correct vision, there are no dangers for groups like anti-war coalitions: the needs for action can be ignored in favor of endless debates aimed at trying to achieve full agree-

ment; and, the group may become smaller and smaller by excluding those who don't agree with the required vision.

All of this is not meant to belittle discourse and theory. I guess the question I wish to ask you concerns the goals of the 'battle of ideas.' I know you value Luxemburg's insistence on free and open debate at all stages of organization, but I would like to know what you think would be the minimal framework of agreement for a progressive group like an anti-war coalition to function and last, and furthermore, how to establish this agreement and maintain it.

You mention the tension in Luxemburg between vanguardism and advocacy of the spontaneity in mass movements. I think this tension connects to the question above because the confidence in theory and one true vision is a pillar of vanguardism. In order to move away from vanguardism, you argue that we cannot simply advocate spontaneity, but we need to develop a model of organization based on the present. I definitely agree with your position, but I'd like to see how you develop this more fully, and two questions come to mind. First, how is this model to be developed? Should we rely heavily on theory, or will the model be generated solely within practical movements? Second, you mention "a concept of organization in which every human being takes responsibility for developing the philosophic vision of the future." Could you elaborate on this concept? It is definitely an intriguing one.

For further reading—

Chapter 4, "From the National Question' and Imperialism to the Dialectics of Revolution; the Relationship of Spontaneity and Consciousness to Organization in the Disputes with Lenin, 1904, 1917" in *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.

See ad, page 2.

No cuts! No fee hikes!

Oakland, Cal.—On Jan. 17 at the University of California at Davis 300 students broke through police lines, storming into the auditorium where the Regents had just voted to raise student fees \$500. Over a thousand students occupied the hall for several days, participating in teach-ins and mass meetings. The 22% fee increase was made in response to Governor Pete Wilson's call for massive cuts in education and social services.

Students across the state immediately responded to the spontaneous mass action at Davis. Demonstrations, hunger strikes, and mass meetings were quickly organized at many campuses.

Over 100 students and community members attended a meeting on the Berkeley campus. The next week 200 attended a meeting where a sit-in was planned in response to a student take-over of the library at University of California-Santa Cruz. Students at Santa Cruz had declared it an "open-up" as opposed to a "shut-down."

The next day at Berkeley 350 students and people from the community staged a rally and sit-in at Moffitt library on the campus. The university administration has barred non-students from using the library because of budget cuts. The sit-in lasted several hours until closing time, and 68 people were arrested for refusing to leave. Several were beaten by campus police.

Despite the whirlwind of activity, attendance at the Berkeley meetings has gone from over 200 to 30. One student said, "It's lost a lot of wind even though we had a great action. I'm not sure why."

At the first few meetings, those who wanted to discuss the concept of what the movement was about were told that is the role of the publicity committee. Even when over 100 people came to a separate "platform" meeting to discuss the direction of the movement, discussion got bogged down into discussing what we were allowed to discuss. After the meeting one student said, "After the Gulf war everyone thinks we can't win so we start by limiting ourselves."

Despite the aversion to discussion of theory there is general agreement that the struggle against the fee increase is not separate from that of welfare recipients, state employees, and everyone affected by the state budget cuts. This includes the immigrants who are being made scapegoats for the state's economic crisis. The ad hoc organization at Berkeley has not limited its membership or voting rights to students and has established itself as a community organization.

—Tom Parsons

Homeless youth

Los Angeles, Cal.—It is estimated that there are from a few hundred to a few thousand people under 25 living on the streets of L.A. Most are runaways, who leave home because the streets are often better than home where they are beaten and abused, which most can't take after a while.

Some are just "throwaways." Their parents simply don't want them anymore, so they kick them out. A lot of these "throwaways" have been living in foster homes, group homes, and Maclaren Hall their entire lives. And to them, living on the streets means freedom from the abuse they've suffered under this system.

But instead of being free, which is what they really want, they have to spend their time on the street just surviving; trying to live from day to day hoping and dreaming for a better life.

Few find this better life. Many are forced to sell themselves for sex on Hollywood Blvd. If they are "lucky," they may meet a Sugar Daddy, a man who will take them in and look after them in exchange for sex. But once they get too old or burned out, it's back to walking the Blvd. A lot of the young boys also have to sell themselves for sex. Many go to "Boys' Town" in West Hollywood to look for Chicken Hawks, older men that are attracted to young boys.

A lot of people assume that having to live on the street is the runaways' fault because "there are so many programs to help runaways." This is simply not true. To get into any runaway program when you are under 18, you have to have parental permission. Some parents won't give permission, and others can't be found.

Most programs and shelters have a two week limit. So after two weeks you have to leave, even if you don't have a place to go. Some require you to go to school, which many youth on the street can't do because they have to find a job to support themselves.

Instead of staying in a shelter, a lot of runaways are forced to live in squats (abandoned buildings) or under the freeways. Both of these places are highly dangerous, and it's not uncommon to hear about a friend getting killed in a squat.

Youth on the street die at a very rapid rate. The only thing that keeps the number of runaways up is that every year more and more kids run away. Many are in gangs, which frequently have fatal fights on the streets. Many others die from constant drug use, overdoses and drug-related crime. Each year, more youth are on the street and spending on everything from education to medical care for runaways and other youth is cut.

As soon as you start to live on the street, you suddenly don't count anymore. Your life has no value to anyone especially the authorities. You become a "criminal." Being on the street is just as depressing as it is difficult. Your human needs for love, security, stability and peace cannot be and are not met. You become alienated from society and separated from what your true goals are in life, as they become increasingly unreachable.

—Teenage woman

Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

President Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela literally dodged a bullet in escaping a coup attempt by military officers staged Feb. 4. It was the first coup attempt in that country since the early 1960s.

Estimates are that 10% of the army took part in the coup attempt. Over 1,000 officers are under arrest. At least 80 people were killed, many of them civilians caught in the crossfire. Reports from captured documents state the officers wanted to do away with Venezuela's "so-called democratic experiment." During the coup there was no widespread support for either the

Ivory Coast student protest

Students from the University of Ivory Coast began a series of protests in January against President Houphouet-Boigny, who has ruled the country since its independence from France in 1960.

Students were infuriated by Houphouet-Boigny's codding of Gen. Robert Guei, who was indicted in a 139-page official report as the "sole initiator" of a May, 1991 raid on the University's working-class Yopougon district. At that time elite troops invaded student hostels, beating and raping students who had been protesting in support of "multiparty democracy."

The protests against Houphouet-Boigny's failure to discipline Gen. Guei reached a peak in February when the President was in Paris to award a personal "peace prize" to South Africa's President de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela. University and high school students led demonstrations which grew to 20,000 before authorities could suppress them by force and mass arrests.

The shakiness of Houphouet-Boigny's regime was evident when he said he would not punish Gen. Guei because he was "not the kind of leader to divide his armed forces" at a time when the military was "intervening" in politics in Africa.

Korean strike crushed

A strike and plant occupation by Korean auto workers in January went largely unreported. Workers at the huge Hyundai Motor Company complex in Ulsan put forward demands last December for pay bonuses, improved working conditions, and the release of jailed union activists.

Workers began a work slowdown and refused overtime. In January, the 30,000 workers approved a strike vote. When Hyundai responded with an attempted lock-out, some 5,000 workers occupied the plant on Jan. 15.

The battles which followed embodied the realities of state-capitalism in Korea today. The South Korean government in effect initiated the lockout by telling Hyundai Motors to refuse workers' demands for wage increases.

The government broke the strike and occupation on Jan. 23 by amassing a force of 10,000 police on foot, in patrol boats, helicopters and tear gas trucks, which surrounded the plant and occupied the center of Ulsan. Still, hundreds of workers stayed on strike and battled police after the plant was reopened under guard by riot police.

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."

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

Failed coup in Venezuela

military or the Perez government.

Perez had served a term as president from 1974-79, ruling over a boom in oil wealth and government corruption. In the 1980s, Venezuela's oil-driven economy left it with the second highest per capita national debt in Latin America. Following mandates of the International Monetary Fund, Venezuela instituted austerity measures.

Ever since Perez was elected President again three years ago, there have been some 5,000 street protests. The explosive protests of February, 1989 took place only three weeks after his return to power. Labor and student unrest have increased with the recently worsening economic conditions.

"Free market reforms" including privatization of state-run enterprises have aided the capitalists, while the end of state subsidies for food, utilities and transportation has hit workers and the poor especially hard. One of the most shocking admissions by the government is that only a little over half (57%) of Venezuelans can afford more than one meal a day!

In the poorest neighborhoods, infant mortality has been soaring. The real minimum wage in Caracas has fallen nearly 50% in five years. Hatred of corrupt officials and the newly-rich made many hope the military would at least do away with the Perez government. As one secretary was quoted, "It's not that people want a military government or want to see Perez dead. They just don't want to see Perez at all."

The last coup attempt in Venezuela in 1962 brought out mass protests in support of constitutional rule, but nothing like this happened in 1992. The first response by the Perez government was to clamp down on the press. The crisis wrought by the military's attempted takeover in Venezuela is underlying the hollowness of bourgeois "democracy" in Latin America, where the form of rule is so far divorced from the content and aspirations of people's daily lives.

Fascists gain in France

January elections in France for local offices and a few parliamentary vacancies showed the continued rise of the National Front, Europe's largest and best-organized neo-fascist movement. In the industrial city of Lille, the Front got 15.7% of the vote, more than the 13% received by the governing Socialist Party. Elsewhere, it also scored totals close to or greater than the Socialists.

The Front proposes to expel from French soil all Arab and Third World immigrant workers, now estimated at around four million people. It also denies that the Holocaust ever happened.

Egypt jails novelist

Novelist Alla Hamed was sentenced in Egypt to eight years in prison in December, by a state security emergency court for "blasphemy" to Islam in connection with his 1988 book, *The Distance in a Man's Mind*. His publisher and a bookseller also received eight-year sentences. The trial took place after Islamic authorities had condemned the book. While awaiting appeals, Hamed has already been driven from his apartment and his job. Despite statements of support for Hamed by Egyptian and international writers, there is no sign that Prime Minister Ataf Sedki will commute the verdicts.

rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her recreation of that philosophy for our age as "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.

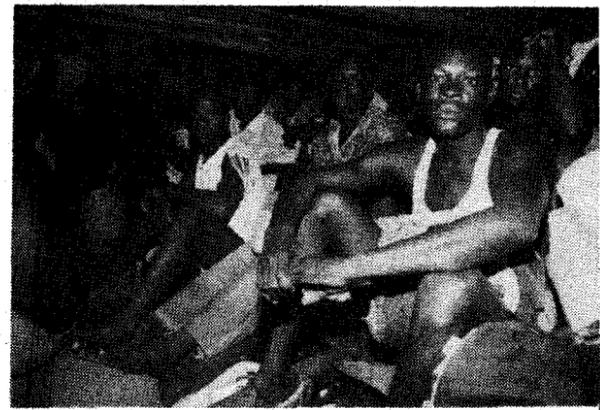
In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks, and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals 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.

Protest Haitian deportations

New York, N.Y.—Feb. 7, the anniversary of the Haitian people's revolution against the Duvalier dictatorship, brought thousands of Haitians into the streets here to protest the U.S. deportation of a new wave of refugees. The demonstration tied up traffic in mid-town Manhattan as it stopped at various government offices and at the UN. U.S. Black groups have also voiced their protest and are demanding that Congress overturn the policy.

The refugees are among the 15,000 people who have fled Haiti since Sept. 30, when a military coup removed the country's first democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Haitians in New York have demanded his return, demonstrating often and holding vigil at the UN every night.

Already many of those forcibly returned to Haiti, who had risked their lives to flee in small boats, have been



On one small boat, Haitian refugees were packed into the hold to act as human ballast.

arrested and persecuted upon their return. Some have fled a second time. Thousands have been imprisoned at the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, where conditions are horrendous. Invoking the 1981 Maritime Interdiction Act, the U.S. has authorized itself to pick up and return everyone leaving Haiti, regardless of where they might be going.

The U.S. is forcing them to return, instead of granting them refugee status, as it has done for so many Cubans and Russians, because it says the Haitians are economic rather than political refugees. Many Haitians have been killed since the coup, and many of the refugees fear for their lives because they worked for Aristide's election, as part of the "Lavalas" group.

There was virtually no migration from Haiti while Aristide was in power, even though the people were just as poor then, so they are not just "economic refugees." But to prove you are a political refugee, you must testify exactly what you did for Lavalas and who you feel will harm you. Knowing that the Haitian military leaders including the current head of the government, were trained in the U.S., refugees are reluctant to give this information to U.S. officials.

The U.S. and the Organization of American States (OAS) just brokered an agreement between Aristide and the Haitian parliament to return Aristide to the presidency. This agreement is unlikely to go into effect, because it was not agreed to by the military. Neither the head of the coup and current leader, Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras, nor the many small factions of the military and police that operate like warlords and answer to no one have accepted the agreement. The U.S. is pushing the agreement because it fears chaos if Aristide is not returned, because it wants to take attention away from the return of the refugees, and it wants an end to the OAS embargo of Haiti.

But the question for Haiti is not alone whether the military will or will not allow Aristide back into the country. Equally ominous is the nature of the agreement itself. Has the U.S. forced Aristide, and Aristide himself agreed, to an arrangement wherein a right-wing clique will have a "democratic face" and U.S. support of it will continue the deprivation of the Haitian people?

British press strike continues

Oxford, England—The strike at Pergamon Press reached its thousandth day on Feb. 18 and the strikers held a 24-hour vigil at the gates to mark the occasion. In the evening, some 60 people took part in a demonstration by candlelight to show support, as the strikers put it, "for our fight to keep the flame of trade union rights alive."

The strike, which involves 22 members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), began at Pergamon, then owned by Robert Maxwell, fired an employee without going through the agreed primary procedures. After an unsuccessful attempt to negotiate, the Pergamon NUJ chapel came out what was intended to be a one-day strike. Management took a hard line and fired them all.

The strikers have been fighting to be reinstated in their jobs and for Pergamon to recognize the union again. Some time before the death of Maxwell and the exposure of the massive fraud which he was engaged in, Pergamon was sold to the Dutch corporation Elsevier. At present, Elsevier is offering the strikers a money settlement but will not allow them to return to their jobs. The strikers insist that they will only accept a deal which includes reinstatement for all who want it. Anything less would be a defeat for union rights.

—Richard [unclear]