

# NEWS & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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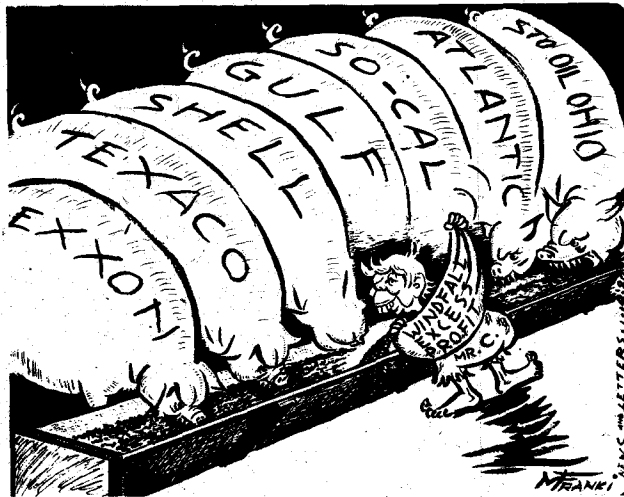
## OIL, IRAN CRISIS, AND DRIVE FOR WAR

by Peter Mallory

In their December meeting in Caracas, Venezuela, the OPEC oil cartel, which displayed total disintegration, supposedly came to no new agreement on oil pricing. Actually, exactly like the U.S. "Seven Sisters" of the international oil cartel, the oil barons in each of the state-capitalist sheikhdoms are going to pillage their own peoples, the Third World countries, and the industrial nations, under the illusion that they can dig the graveyard of U.S. power. All they are doing is intensifying the world crisis that will be their own graveyard.

Here are the facts: Saudi Arabia set the price of oil at \$24 a barrel, Libya at \$30, and Iran at \$35. The American "Seven Sisters" oil cartel immediately jumped the price at the gas pump by 6c a gallon. With 900 million barrels of the lower-priced oil in their storage tanks, this one move gave them a profit of \$2.97 billion.

The so-called "windfall profits tax" that has passed both houses of Congress has more loopholes than a fishnet. First, the compromise figure bandied about in the press, \$227.3 billion, is the estimate for the next 10 years. The oil lobby will manage to cut this back after the elections this year. Secondly, the tax takes only 51 percent of their "excess" profits, leaving them 49 percent of those excess profits. Who determines what profits are "excess" and how much loot it takes to provide an "incentive" for a further rip-off of the gasoline consumer?



The Political Action Committee (PAC) of the oil industry gave \$1.1 million to congressional candidates last year alone, in sums ranging from \$690 to \$5,000. Over 80 percent of the 236 congressmen who voted for the pro-oil Jones-Moore amendment received funds from PAC; those opposed got only the \$690 payment.

Senator Long of Louisiana, head of the Senate delegation on the tax bill, has long been in the pay of the oil industry, as is Robert Dole of Kansas, Bill Archer of Texas, and countless others. John Connally, U.S. Presidential candidate, has so much oil money behind him that he can afford to pass up federal contributions to his campaign and therefore does not have to account for contributions.

### CARTER'S 'ENERGY PLAN' A BAIL-OUT FOR OIL MONOPOLISTS

On April 27, 1977, Carter first revealed his so-called "energy program." What he did not reveal is that the plan had been prepared for the Department of Energy by consulting firms which are the same ones employed by the oil industry. One firm, Energy and Environmental Analysis, received two government contracts, one for \$194,000 and another for \$34,000. Its other clients are Exxon, Shell Oil, and Standard Oil of Ohio. All told, the Department of Energy has spent \$8.5 billion on over 5,000 contracts for oil-dominated consulting firms to tell them what to do.

The American Petroleum Institute (API), the official lobbying arm of the oil industry, dominates the U.S. Department of Energy. All proposed Department of Energy policies are first passed on to the API for review before being submitted to Congress. Anything API disapproves never sees the light of day.

No Congress or investigating committee has ever been able to break up the oil monopoly. The first attempt, in 1911, resulted in Standard Oil being broken into 11 parts. One big pig became 11 little pigs which continued to grow into the "Seven Sisters" we know today.

During the period 1953-1962, the average production cost for a barrel of crude oil in Iran was .14c, in Saudi Arabia, .09c, and in Kuwait, .06c. Their entire operating costs were 3c-5c per barrel. The oil industry's profits for this period ranged from 45-125 percent, and during this period they controlled 91 percent of the output of Middle East oil.

Is there any wonder that there is so much hatred in Iran for U.S. imperialism when the entire nation has, for no less than a half-century, been held hostage to the oil cartels headed by the U.S.?

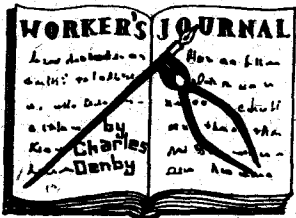
### OIL CRISIS AND IMPERIALIST POLITICS

The present crisis over the hostages in Iran has created such a great sympathy for them that it has given President Carter the great illusion that he can use this sympathy to continue with his imperialist vision and transform the sympathy for the hostages into a drive for war. That is exactly what the American people will not permit. On the contrary, what the American people want from Carter is a resolution of the economic crisis at home, the unemployment, the inflation, and the ever-increasing defense budget.

A backward glance at the origin of how both production and marketing of oil were controlled by the imperialists will also illuminate the present situation. Ever since 1949, when the Federal Trade Commission issued a report on the international petroleum cartel (which, incidentally, was not published until Aug. 2, 1952), the calls for "investigations" about the oil cartel became endless. And so was the total lack of any results.

In 1952, President Truman ordered the Attorney General to bring a criminal anti-trust suit against the oil cartel. The oil cartel won several court battles and was able to withhold data required to pursue the case, on the grounds of "national security." Under Eisenhower

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## Automation kills farm and auto workers

by Charles Denby, Editor

Author of Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal

To sit and listen to some of the arguments that some congressmen and senators gave in opposition to the loan for Chrysler makes me shiver. These congressmen and senators want workers to work harder and give \$400 million to Chrysler, which means a 20-month wage freeze.

There have been petition drives going on here in Detroit by some Black ministers. People have been standing in the cold for hours to get signatures on those petitions; they don't want to see Chrysler go under either. But they mean something entirely different than the congressmen and senators. They want to see everyone working. The UAW mainly wants to keep the company in business, let them have a free hand in their exploitation of workers, so the union can collect dues from them.

A worker at one Chrysler plant here—Huber Foundry—said their working conditions are unbelievable since Chrysler got into all this trouble. They have a computer that directs production, and tells a worker what to do and how long it must take. It even disciplines workers. It gives workers time off. There's no need of going to your union. Their reply will be that the computer laid you off for that length of time, and you should know they cannot fight progress.

### AUTOMATION ON THE FARMS

During the holidays, I saw the effects of "progress" taking on an even more horrible form in the South—and on the farms, not in any factory—when I went down in the southern part of Alabama to see my brother, who had just got wrapped in a haybinder. The doctors told him he was very fortunate to be alive because many who had gotten caught up in them could not be saved.

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## Our Life and Times

### Afghanistan: new flashpoint for superpowers

by Peter Mallory and Ron Brokmeyer

In the last week of December Russian imperialism, devoid of subtlety, spewed out in a blitz with a massive air and land invasion of Afghanistan. The Russians claimed they were "invited" into Afghanistan by the government—whereupon they immediately had Hafizullah Amin, the then-current ruler, executed.

The Russians had been praising this same Amin and "the aims of the Afghan revolution" on Dec. 5, the anniversary of the Soviet-Afghan treaty of friendship, just a few weeks before the invasion/coup. Babrak Karmal was flown into Afghanistan in a plane full of Russian troops, to take over the government, two days after the air strike began. Karmal had been in exile, tucked away by the Russians, since mid-1978. He was forced to make his first public appearance in Kabul on Jan. 2, since there was continued speculation that his radio messages were coming from the other side of the border.

By Jan. 1 there were 50,000 or more Russian troops in Afghanistan. Aside from the capital, Kabul, Russian troops were also patrolling most regional centers like Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat. After some initial tank battles with troops loyal to Amin, the Afghan army, which had worked closely with the Russians in the war against the Moslem insurgents, was assigned to its barracks.

The installation of Karmal in power destroyed any illusions, if there ever were any, of independence from Moscow in Mohammed Daoud's 1973 anti-monarchist revolution which Karmal helped to carry out. In 1978, Noor Mohammed Taraki overthrew Daoud. Last September Amin killed Taraki. Even though Taraki had just returned from a warm welcome in Russia, the Russians were now playing up Amin as their friend and supporting his murderous consolidation of power and his escalation of the war.

(Continued on Page 12)

Iranian woman writes

**New Constitution, new repression for women**

Los Angeles, Cal.—Much of the so-called Left has ended up tailending Khomeini's alleged "anti-imperialism" in the Iranian crisis. This is especially evident in an article by a Trotskyist, Suzanne Haig (Intercontinental Press, Dec. 17, 1979, p. 1244), printed under the shocking title "No Return to Dark Ages: Revolution Opens Road to Liberation of Women". Her proof? "Armed women are taking part in the defense of the demonstrations outside the U.S. embassy in Tehran."

But far from that being proof of liberation, it is part of the Big Lie that is, under the name of "anti-imperialism," harnessing Iran with a new oppression.

Can it be any accident that the embassy takeover paralleled the completion of the new counter-revolutionary constitution? Let us look at what the new constitution and recently enacted laws mean for women. Is the road truly "progressive," as the Trotskyists claim,

—when the new constitution identifies "the raising of children as the primary task of women," therefore confining her to the house, while thousands of women, even teachers, have "voluntarily retired" from their jobs since the draft of the constitution?

—when women are considered to be "too sensitive" to be qualified as judges, since their emotions may prevent them from being impartial, and in other legal matters the testimony of two women equals one man's?

—when the family protection laws, which had only barely restricted polygamy to the court's approval, have been totally abolished and we are back to four permanent wives and many temporary wives; back to incidents of burning the "Havu" (the other wife) with hot oil and setting her on fire; back to Joseph's time, when step-children who suffered because their mother isn't the favorite of the house are ready to do anything, even murder the other woman, the other children, or the father for that matter?

—when one-sided divorce has been reimposed by Khomeini's government, and the authority to conduct family law has been taken away from the judicial system and left to the hands of the clergy?

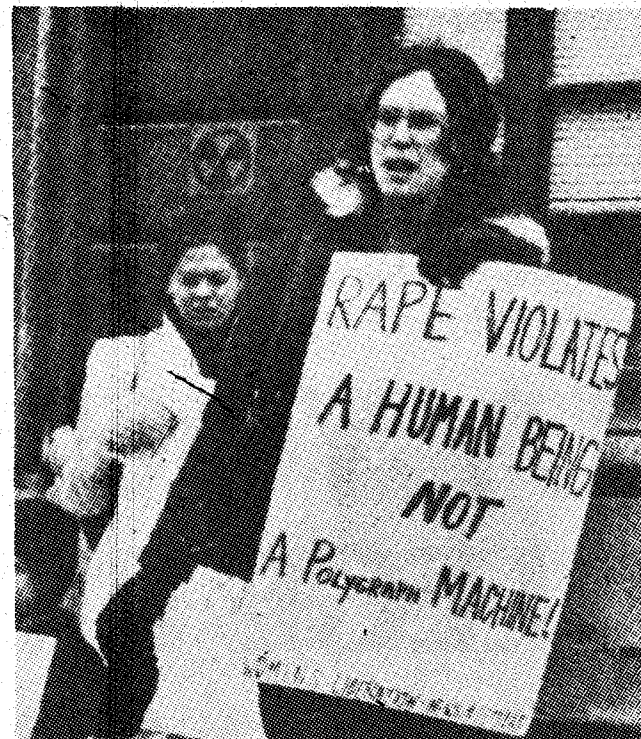
Bani-Sadr, ex-Foreign Minister and current Minister of Economics, member of the Assembly of Experts which drafted the new constitution and candidate for President of the Islamic Republic, commented on his view of the man/woman relationship: "A man has no right to beat his wife, unless the woman takes pleasure in cruelty. The only time a man may beat his wife is when she refuses to have sexual relations with him."

As for the chador being the "symbol of national liberation," as the article states, if this were true during the initial stage of the revolution in Iran, the experience of the Algerian woman, who first opposed "Europeanization of the colonized" through wearing the chador, proves that narrow nationalism after the revolution does not lead to women's liberation and socialism.

Nor, despite the Trotskyists' claims, is it anything so simple as stating that "material conditions . . . alone can lay the basis for real equality between the sexes." Rather, a total philosophy which encompasses material changes but holds fast to human development as its end is necessary; one which regards women not only as force of revolution, but as Reason of revolution — a philosophy and an activity which holds as its objective the altering of the most fundamental of human relationships, man/woman. If one wants to call oneself a revolutionary in Iran, he/she could begin with undertaking to change this relationship.

That the Left can label this most degrading, humiliating stage relating to Iranian women as "progress" shows how far away they are from both the concrete reality that women face today in Iran, and from the humanism of Marx which could aid in pointing a way out.

—Neda



Members of several Detroit women's groups picketed Police Headquarters on Jan. 11, to protest the proposed re-instatement of lie detector tests for rape victims. At the Police hearing following the protest, it was announced that the proposal would be withdrawn pending "further investigation."

**WOMAN AS REASON**

**Study of Luxemburg needed by WL today**

In reading the new draft chapter, "Before and After the 1905 Revolution: Two Turning Points in Rosa Luxemburg's Life," (see page 5), several points struck me and gave me a new and much needed sense of direction as a woman revolutionary.

I was very surprised to find that what most excited me in the chapter was Dunayevskaya's discussion of Luxemburg's participation in the 1907 Congress, when she and Lenin felt that they should not proceed without an analysis of the nature of the revolution to that point. Trotsky opposed this by saying, "I need political directives and not philosophic discussions about the character of the present moment of our revolution . . . Give me a formula for action!" as if all theoretic differences would disappear behind a formula.

Lenin's reply, "Practice does not erase differences but enlivens them . . ." reminded me so much of my first participation in women's liberation meetings in Detroit, when the desire of so many women to discuss philosophy was smothered by the Socialist Workers' Party and others, who thought that by reducing women's liberation to the single issue of abortion rights and strategy and tactics, they would be able to mobilize all women. What actually happened was that we could not even agree on a slogan, or who should be asked to speak. This kind of single-issue theoretical conciliationism is the kiss of death to any movement — but at that time we did not realize what was missing.

But whether it's in looking at Luxemburg's high points or at the high points of our own Women's Liberation Movement, this chapter has helped me to ask questions which I could not have asked before, and which we need to answer. Why, for example, was Luxemburg able to be so magnificent in her defense of the Marxist dialectic against the revisionism of Bernstein and yet to be so wrong in her own later analysis of Marx in Accumulation of Capital? Why was she so correct in her evaluation of the revolutionary potential of the Russian peasantry vs. the bourgeoisie and yet so wrong on the National Question?

In our own day, why were we as women's liberationists of the early '70s able to be so total in our expose of male chauvinism in bourgeois society as well as of the sexism and elitism in most of the Left and yet not able to develop to this day, a new philosophy of women's liberation? I think it is because we took for granted that what the male Left told us of Marxism was true and never dug deeply into Marx for ourselves. And that kind of digging into the only truly "new continent of thought," which takes the liberation of women as one measure of completeness is what this chapter requires

if we are to be able to understand it and prepare for the even harder task of grappling with Luxemburg's failures — and our own.

Among the many points in this chapter which have never been made by anyone but Dunayevskaya, is the effect of the "Woman Question" on Rosa Luxemburg in spite of her refusal to be "pigeonholed" into writing just on women. Even though the SPD tried to confine her to the "Woman Question," and her own comrades told her not to go to Poland during the 1905 Revolution because the danger to her as a woman revolutionary was so much greater, she made it clear that she would "brook no limits on her range of interests."

But in spite of not wanting to be confined to the "Woman Question," she did have a relationship with the women's movement and knew that she could go to them for support. That tremendous German women's movement is what Dunayevskaya points to as "a new revolutionary force which would become the genuine center of international anti-war activity at the very moment when the parent organization itself, the German Social Democracy, would collapse once the imperialist war broke out."

There is no reason why our own movement cannot become a new revolutionary force and reason of revolution if we will begin a critical re-examination of our movement and Marx's philosophy of revolution. In Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution, Dunayevskaya is offering us an opportunity to do just that by participating in its process. We invite all who read this to join with us in developing our own "Lands of boundless possibilities." —Suzanne Casey



**women-worldwide**

A district judge has ordered Simpson Timber Co. in Shelton, Wash., to reinstate, with full back pay and seniority, Toni Gilbertson, the 29-year-old woman who was fired after she refused to drop charges of sexual harassment against the company. Over 3,000 members of International Woodworkers of America, the majority of them men, had been out on strike for eight weeks to protest Ms. Gilbertson's firing.

On Dec. 17, Israeli Prime Minister Begin's coalition succeeded in passing an amendment which would repeal a section of law allowing abortion for family or social reasons. The amendment was demanded by the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel party in return for remaining in the coalition. Protesters outside Parliament shouted, "Down with Khomeinism," and likened the increased influence in government by the ultra-Orthodox to the rise to power of Islamic orthodoxy in Iran.

In Papua, New Guinea, there is a growing movement among women and some young men against the practice of paying bride price. Recently, a young widow hanged herself after her husband's parents refused to let her remarry—four years after his death—because they had paid a high bride price for her and intended to keep her.

(Thanks to Bonnie in New Guinea)

**Where is Art Steel contract?**

South Bronx, N.Y. — A Black night shift worker at Art Steel was suspended for the night for insisting on his right to go to the men's room. That same night his foreman, Ramon Ramos of large weld department, was heard to say he would get rid of all Blacks and Black Puerto Ricans from his department.

On hearing this, the workers got very upset and vowed that any harassment from him would not go unchallenged, even if it meant someone losing his job over it. But so far Ramos has not pushed his luck.

Another problem that has come up is that new workers who came in after the last raise are getting \$150 a week, while everyone else gets a minimum of \$159. When this was brought to the UAW District 65 union steward's attention, he first said that there was a mistake, everyone should get the same pay. But when the same problem came up the next week, the foreman said that's what the contract called for—and the steward repeated the same thing the foreman said!

Either the steward doesn't know the contract, or there is no contract, as no one on either shift has ever seen the contract in the two years since it began. The union even had to admit, a year-and-a-half ago, that the company had not yet written up the contract, and promised to "have it soon."

—Worker, Art Steel

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## Auto, steel: continuing layoffs, speed-up

by Felix Martin, West Coast Editor

What has been happening in the auto plant where I work—elimination of the second shift, increased speed-up, and daily retirements of older workers—reflects what's happening to workers in all industries: plant closings, shut-downs; and for those left on the job, speed-up and wage cuts.

Recently, a U.S. Steel plant in Torrance, Cal. shut down after 62 years, and 3,000 workers received a holiday "gift" of being unemployed. This follows the closings of 16 steel plants across the nation.

The most paralyzing series of steel plant shut-downs occurred in Youngstown, Ohio. Yet, a Youngstown steel executive insisted that the local economy was sound despite 8,000 steel workers out of their jobs because, he said, most of those workers got other jobs. He went on to say people who have made "\$12 an hour and refuse \$8 an hour jobs" are the ones still out of work. In other words, if you want a job, corporate business says, take a cut in pay!

The most glaring example of this is the effort to save Chrysler Corporation. Both Fraser and Iacocca hailed Congress' final approval to help finance the auto company, saying to Chrysler workers, "here's your

## Conditions worsen as Uniroyal threatens plant closing

Detroit, Mich.—For the last two months we have been working at Uniroyal with the threat that the plant here might be closed. As of Jan. 6 we have had no news as to whether it will happen or not.

The threat of closing is a way of forcing us to accept worse working conditions than we have now, especially the "Continental" work week, a rotating week which would allow the company to save money on overtime pay for absentee replacements and for week-end work. It would also allow them to set up any kind of production schedule they want.

They are trying to force this on us because our union negotiators left a hole in the contract big enough to swallow all of us. It says that the company can't change the work week UNLESS mutually agreed on by

Christmas presents—your jobs." The only one who really received a "Christmas present" was Chrysler!

Last year has shown itself, with a 13 percent increase in the cost of living, to be the worst inflationary year since 1946. This, too, means wage cuts for working people. This, together with massive lay-offs, bears out what Raya Dunayevskaya predicted in 1975 about the U.S. economy: "There will be no next boom," and indeed, no recovery from the post-Vietnam War recession.

The only thing capitalism has to offer workers in this period is more automated labor, which translated, means continued lay-offs and speed-up. One worker from South Gate went to the new, highly-automated GM plant in Oklahoma and came back vowing he'd fight before keeping up with that line!

In an age when leaders of this country's largest trade unions wink their eyes or—like Fraser sitting on the Chrysler Board of Directors—even assist in layoffs, wage cuts, and speed-up, there can be no doubt that workers' only salvation is their own self-organization, an organization whose "freely associated labor" stands opposed to the despotic plan of capitalist production.

both the union and the company, which means that all the union "leaders" have to do is to agree to it and we're stuck with it.

Even after a long strike over the local contract the Opelika, Ala. workers ended up with that kind of week. In general there is a lot of disunity between the Uniroyal locals. There is a lot of talk about looking out for "Number One", about not giving good support to Opelika but to get even because they worked during the 1976 strike, and now we have the weakening effect of the new Opelika settlement.

This lack of cooperation only makes things much worse. We need to think about all the rubber workers if we are going to be strong enough to keep our jobs and improve our work conditions.

—Uniroyal worker

## Worker in a 'Workers' State

*A Worker In A Workers' State, by Miklos Haraszti; New York, Universe Books, 1978.*

The book *A Worker in a Workers' State*, by the Hungarian poet-militant Miklos Haraszti, marks a new departure in literature about work and the workplace. Originally entitled *Piece-rates*, it records his experience as a miller in the Red Star Tractor Factory in Budapest, Hungary. In the poet's life, the book represents but another in a series of confrontations with the authorities.

What attracts a worker like myself to this book is that the situation described differs little from conditions in shops and factories in the U.S. When a welder, which is my trade, works piece-rates, he undergoes the same maddening process that is depicted in this book. He is obliged to cheat in order to make his rate (and management from foremen on up know this). A welder, for example, always looks for shortcuts and whenever possible you weld "downhill"—the welding is easier and faster, but it will not withstand nearly the stress of a proper weld.

How then, asks Haraszti, does the worker earn money? To begin with, the minutes of the factory clock have been converted into jobs done, and the output into piece-rates. He proceeds, "I only have to fix the speed, the rate of feed and the cutting depth, then I'm ready to start off a run of fifty pieces." But soon he discovers that his calculations are complicated because his jobs are specified to be run on two machines and not one.

The shrewd worker sees that the two machine system was more likely to reduce the rate per piece. On two machines the worker rarely earns more than he did formerly on one. The piece-rate worker consequently, Haraszti finds, "does not earn money just by working, but rather because he works without observing the regulations." This is called the worker's jargon "looting."

But looting—"a strange kind of cheating"—does not make work easier. On the contrary, it intensifies it. The cutting speed of the machine is stepped up and the job is fed faster than prescribed. When this is done—the iron screams, the machines tremble and shriek, and the workers' nerve, muscle and bone are subjected to extreme stress—but money is made, the production plan fulfilled.

In fact, we find, the production plan "cannot be implemented if this compulsion to loot is not built into it in the first place. The boss banks on it." The process Haraszti is describing, however, does not end here. "The pursuit of maximum gain forces the pay per piece downwards. This comes about through the progressive reduction of the time-rate per piece, and it prevents us from controlling our rate of production."

But even so, something completely outside this vicious cycle survives, and the image Miklos Haraszti offers us of it may be unique in literature about work, though it exists everywhere. In the Red Star Tractor Factory it is called the "homer"—objects of utility made for the worker's home. In the factory, he finds, there is a real addiction for the homer, although those who make them know they do themselves more harm than good. Because to management the homer is theft—not so much theft of material, because homers are usually made out of scraps, but theft of factory time—it constantly wars against this instinct in the worker.

"Without doubt," concludes Haraszti, "the reason"—for this passion for the homer—"is that we plan this work ourselves, and can complete it as we think best." But then the creators of this system, which makes the worker a slave and an enemy, "have no interest in production as the fruit of the living will of workers."

For writing *Piece-rates* Miklos Haraszti was put on trial and given a suspended sentence. The book has not been published in Hungary.

—Joe Green

## FROM THE AUTO STOPS

### GM South Gate

South Gate, Cal. — There's a whole lot more to speed-up than just pulling a switch to increase the speed of the belt line. The most vicious form of speed-up does not touch the line speed at all (as it's "controlled" by contract) but instead lays off workers and combines the operations left vacant with other jobs. The result is a killing burden on the worker not laid off.

That is what is happening here now. Time-study men can be seen walking the body shop looking for ways to eliminate job operations. Two of them approached one worker who was threatening to write a grievance on his job after work had been added. One of them said, "Look, if you've got time to talk, you've got time to do all the work assigned." The worker replied, "If I can't have 20 seconds out of every minute to do as I please, then there's too much work!"

As lay-offs and speed-up increase, so do the 78s (grievances) and the workers' realization that the company means to force them to early retirement or early graves.

—South Gate worker

### GM Oklahoma City

Oklahoma City, Okla. — I've been working for three weeks now at the new GM Plant in Oklahoma City, which was unionized just before I got here. They've hired a bunch of workers from the area who've never worked in auto. Already the line speed is 57 cars an hour, 14 cars an hour faster than the last plant I worked in.

Job classifications are not spelled out, and they've got people doing two jobs at once. They're working the janitors harder than you can believe. And management is trying to get workers to work against each other.

Before the UAW came in, they had a system of "team captains." Groups of workers got placed under temporary supervision by another worker, so they had workers competing with each other to make team captain. That's over now, but so far the union hasn't responded to the workers. There's yet to be a single election for officers, even for committeemen.

They're holding up the plant as some sort of model

for workers facing lay-offs elsewhere. Some locals sent out form letters to laid-off workers at other plants saying they could have a job out here. But as soon as they mailed off the letters, all positions were filled and they stopped hiring!

I was working last week when the line broke down. As I was sitting down, the foreman came over and asked what I was doing. He wanted to know if I couldn't think of anything else to do, if my work was perfect. I said, no, nobody's perfect. He then tried to write a corrective on me.

Management meanwhile is telling workers here that we don't have a lay-off because of the "high quality" work we do. But you know its only because the models we're building are selling, and we're making so many. Some workers who came from other plants are so disgusted they want out. But not me. I'm going to stick it out and fight them all the way.

—GM worker

### Fleetwood

Detroit, Mich. — There are more lay-offs in the plant every week, and many are facing unemployment with bleak futures and few benefits. But there are also those workers who are left inside the plant to face the daily horrors in production.

One worker told what it is like being a hi-lo driver inside the plant and how it is not an easy task. Today, one hi-lo driver does the work of three workers put together. You are constantly putting up stock and taking away the empties. That means you are constantly in motion, without time to rest. But that's not all. If you don't put up stock in a certain way, it means that you have to readjust it, and that just puts more pressure on you.

This worker spent six years in the military, and he said that being in the plant is like a war. He received a "direct order" from a foreman to get back to his job. When he took a grievance to labor relations about this, they accused him of walking off the job! But he fought back by saying "how can you expect a person to be in a thousand places at once? You give me all this work to do — but a person has his limits. When you're in a war, you have hopes of returning home, and that everything will be different. But when you return, you are faced with a war inside the factory."

—Afternoon shift worker

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# Readers' Views

## 'GRAVE CONTRADICTIONS IN IRANIAN REVOLUTION'

Your article, "Grave Contradictions in the Iranian Revolution," was very timely. The situation brings discredit on all who support either side. I don't know what Marx would say about taking hostages as having something to do with revolution, and I have noted what you say about Marxists in Iran who are working underground.

There cannot be any permanency to the present situation. The dangers in America are made worse by the criminal policies of an insane religious leadership, and it does nothing but aid reaction to say that what is happening in Iran is revolution.

Harry McShane  
Glasgow, Scotland

Khomeini is trying to divert the people's struggle to his own conception of anti-imperialism. True, the people have cause to hate the Shah and American imperialism but they don't know what Khomeini is doing. That hatred of US imperialism is the motive force of the people taking the streets, and it is not enough to say Khomeini is counter-revolutionary. The question is: as revolutionaries what is our responsibility to these people? To say that counter-revolution is the issue now is to not make the link between the anti-imperialist feelings of the Iranian people and the search for a true and clear position of anti-imperialism that is revolutionary. We cannot say the revolution of Iran is a thing of the past.

Iranian student  
Los Angeles

Raya Dunayevskaya's "Grave Contradictions in the Iranian Revolution," printed in the December issue of *News & Letters*, was striking in many ways. That she mentioned a current movie was intriguing. After I saw "Apocalypse Now" I realized that the "greatest danger" she mentions in relation to Khomeini and Carter doesn't have to be nuclear holocaust, though it could certainly lead to that.

What the movie shows is more than anti-war, as it depicts the most intense

### A NOTE ON OUR NEW LOGO

Regular readers of *News & Letters* will have noticed that we are trying out a new logo on page 1 of this special issue. With it, we are opening a period of discussion and experimentation on the make-up of our paper—the voice of Marxist-Humanism. We invite not only your comments, but drawings and sketches of your own ideas as well.

## News & Letters

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retrogressionism of American imperialism in Vietnam through the internal rot of the military and some of its leaders who, in the film, sink to untold depths of depravity. Propelled by an almost unimaginable disregard for human life and critical thought, the apocalypse is shown to already have arrived and become an immediate presence in the Vietnam experience. Khomeini and his "sacrificial hostages" and Carter with his barbaric military preparations are again heading into those depths, from which there may not be another return.

Reader  
New York

## GREAT WHITE FATHER AGAIN

It really infuriated me when Carter sent Secretary of State Vance to the UN to give the U.S. government position in the Iranian crisis. They told him to sit in Ambassador Donald McHenry's seat. Now the truth is plain to anyone with eyes to see: when the chips are down, the Great White Father is sent, and all the talk about McHenry's qualifications was a lot of baloney. I guess Black is just a color to Carter.

Black working woman  
Detroit

## 'INPUT' FROM LABOR: USA

I got a letter from the Abalone Alliance asking me to participate in some of their forums to bring "labor's input" into the discussion. But in the same letter I see they are for the first time officially calling the movement "anti-nuclear/pro-solar"! Since when did we all agree that what we are fighting for is solar technology? That is not why I am marching against nuclear power, and I don't think many other workers whose "input" they want would go along with that narrow view either.

Working woman  
Bay Area

El Cuhamil, the newspaper of the Texas Farmworkers Union, is in serious financial trouble. They have been carrying news of all the struggles of farmworkers against slave wages and conditions in South Texas, and they joined in the campaign to end the scab shop ("right-to-work") laws throughout the Sunbelt. Now they are facing the prospect of going under unless 1,500 subscriptions are found. I would like to ask your readers to help in this cause. You can subscribe to El Cuhamil for \$6.00 a year. Please write to:

El Cuhamil/TFU  
P.O. Box 876  
San Juan, TX 78589

At my plant a lot of the discussion has been on how the price of everything is shooting out of sight. One worker said that it is due to the oil companies stealing millions. Another argued that the cause was Carter spending all the money in the U.S. on the military. For myself, I think both are true. It seems like every year the work gets harder and the paycheck buys less. *News & Letters* has it right: we have to turn this system upside down.

GM Fleetwood worker  
Detroit

## ... AND POLISH STRUGGLES

I wanted to add some new developments to my article on East Europe in the last issue of *N&L*. The anniversary of the 1970-71 Polish revolt was marked in the Gdansk shipyards by a rally of

5,000 on Dec. 18. Speakers recounted the events of nine years ago, noting that the real death toll reached 50. The shipyard workers who forced Gierk to come to their occupied yard then have never forgotten that moment. Neither have the police, who evidently made 110 "preventative" arrests.

In Czechoslovakia, a transcript of sorts of the VONS trial of Czech activists was smuggled out, and will be published in France as a book. French intellectuals who were outside the court Dec. 20 in Prague at the VONS defendants' appeal were arrested and beaten, but they report that resistance continues.

Kevin A. Barry  
New York

## AFGHANISTAN CRISIS

Despite all the talk of "parallels" in the press, it is fantastic to think that Afghanistan is "Russia's Vietnam." Where in Vietnam, the U.S. was thousands of miles from home, here the Russians have a common border. And where America had no roots or organization, Russia has not only a party, but a history of invasion. What is clear is that Russia's eyes are now focused on Iran, and it will thus be no easy task to throw them out of Afghanistan.

Observer  
Chicago

As a Polish-American I am outraged by Carter's statement that he condemns Russia's invasion in Afghanistan because Afghanistan is not a Warsaw-pact country. I guess the fact of invasion did not bother him nearly as much as that the invasion was outside of the Russian "hunting grounds."

Urszula Wislanka  
Chicago

## WHAT IS 'SELF-DEVELOPMENT?'

Thank you for the tapes of *News & Letters*. I especially appreciated the stories of strikes which you don't get in the straight press. As I read, I hear the word "self-development" all of the time, and I would like to know more about what you mean by that.

Blind feminist  
Minnesota

Ed. note — Cassette tape copies of the current issue of *N&L* are available for loan to blind readers. To obtain a list or copies of our other publications on tape, contact *N&L* in Detroit.

## PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION

I want to let you know that the translation of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Philosophy and Revolution* in Japanese will be published next fall.

This year I have enjoyed Raya's study of Hegel and Marx in *Philosophy and Revolution*, and have been deeply impressed by her method of arranging Hegel and Marx's massive works in concise chapters.

In Japan Marxism had a great influence after the First World War. Just after the war Japanese scholars of the Ohara Institute of Social Problems competed with Ryazanov in buying Marx and Engels' articles and manuscripts in Germany. It is said that the complete works of Marx and Engels published in the Japanese language in the early 1930's ranked with those published in the USSR. Hegel's complete works were also published in the 1930s. As a result of language reformation after the Second World War, those works were all retranslated. Only a latter part of Hegel's *Phenomenology* was delayed, but it has just

been published, and we can refer to it in our translation.

Isao Nishida  
Japan

I was talking with a member of the SWP at a meeting recently, and asked him how they can make Castro into the world leader of revolution when they themselves would be illegal in Cuba. He responded "No, the Cuban government orders hundreds of copies of our Spanish-language paper, *Perspectiva Mundial*, each week and puts them on sale in Cuba." Now there's a cozy relationship!

Enlightened  
New York

I was really interested to read your paper last month. I think it's a good paper with interesting ideas on the role of the vanguard party. I read *Marxism and Freedom* and I totally agree with your analysis of Lenin's split with the Second International and his return to Hegel's Logic and the dialectic.

As a member of the Socialist Workers Party, I was astounded at the crude interpretation of Lenin in Cliff's four volume history of "the party." Cliff calls his book an organizing weapon, but the crude party, party, party approach negates the real advances Lenin made after 1914. The unity of theory and practice is so important and so forgotten by a vanguardist party like the SWP.

The question must be asked of the party: "how do we grow?" — since it hasn't for three years. Is this due to a leadership crisis of the working class (the traditional Trotskyist view), or is it more importantly a serious misconception in the organization and leadership fetish in the Party? I look to the second point, and I wish to further my ideas by reading more of your literature...

New reader  
Wales

## RUDI DUTSCHKE

Revolutionaries here and around the world were shocked at the news of the sudden death Dec. 25 of the West German theoretician and activist Rudi Dutschke. We mourn the death of our German comrade, who first came to prominence in 1968 as a leader of the student movement, where he earned the name "Red Rudi" for his fiery speeches against the Shah of Iran and West German capitalism. Shot down at a meeting that year by a fascist-assassin who stated that he had been "inspired" by the murder of Martin Luther King days earlier, Dutschke barely survived.

His relationship to *News and Letters* Committees had actually begun two years earlier, when he first wrote to us of his search for a "humanist Marxism." An exile from Communist East Germany and a student of the late Herbert Marcuse, Rudi never hesitated to oppose Chinese or Russian-style "Communism" as well as capitalism.

This fall, when Chinese leader Hua Guofeng toured Germany, Rudi, as correspondent for the independent Left daily *Die Tageszeitung* was the only reporter who dared to ask any critical questions. He shouted out at Hua: How do you feel about the thousands of people you murdered as head of Public Security in China? While West German security agents hustled Rudi out of the conference room, they could not silence the questions he was raising. Neither can his tragic death silence the revolutionary ideas for which he gave his life.



# BEFORE AND AFTER THE 1905 REVOLUTION:

*"The Russian Revolution was not so much the last act in the series of bourgeois revolutions of the Nineteenth Century as the forerunner of a new series of future proletarian revolutions, in which the conscious proletariat and its vanguard, Social Democracy, are destined historically to play the leading role."*

—Speech of Rosa Luxemburg on the 1905 Revolution at the 1907 London Congress<sup>1</sup>

(C) 1980 Raya Dunayevskaya

## ENTRANCE ON THE GERMAN SCENE

**R**OSA LUXEMBURG'S very entrance, May 1898, into the German arena, center of the Second International, shook up the largest and most prestigious of world Marxist organizations — the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). From the start, she became a subject of contention—contention that would not abate until her life was snuffed out by the most vicious counter-revolutionary murder, January, 1919.

No sooner had she arrived in Germany than she plunged to meet the greatest challenge ever to the theory of Marx, by no less a person than Eduard Bernstein, the literary executor of Marxism, so designated by Marx's closest collaborator, Frederick Engels. This first revision of Marxism, entitled *Evolutionary Socialism*, was answered by many orthodox leaders, but it was Luxemburg's *Reform or Revolution* (1899) that became the classic answer to revisionism. That a young woman of 27, within a year of her arrival, could rise to such high stature tells a great deal more than just how dramatic was her entrance. It discloses the type of theoretician, the type of personality, the type of activist she was.

It is true that, with Leo Jogiches, she already headed the small underground party in Poland; at age 22 she already had been made editor of its paper, *Workers' Cause*. But, in German eyes, that would not have counted for much alongside the achievements of the massive German Party with its unchallenged international reputation. And surely, the quick acceptance of her as theoretician was not due to the fact that she had already shown Marxist-economist acuity in her doctoral dissertation on the Polish economy. Though *The Industrial Development of Poland* was considered an important contribution — "for a Pole" — the German Social Democratic Party had many economic theoreticians with reputations greater than hers.

Furthermore, the fact that she related this economic study to her intense opposition, as an internationalist, to self-determination for Poland — especially since it meant turning Marx's own position on Poland upside down — would hardly have won her the high praise she achieved within a single year. On the contrary. Such overly bold self-confidence would only have led the German Party hierarchy to keep her out of the leadership, as, indeed, was evident from the fact that they tried, at first, to limit her work to what was then called the "Woman Question." While this didn't mean that she was oblivious to the "Woman Question"—though she herself, as well as today's Women's Liberationists and old male colleagues alike, try to picture it that way—she categorically refused to be pigeonholed.

Not only that. She did, indeed, feel herself to be "a land of boundless possibilities." As she wrote to Jogiches on May 4, 1899:

"I feel, in a word, the need, as Heine would say, to 'say something great.' It is the form of writing that displeases me. I feel that within me there is maturing a completely new and original form which dispenses with the usual formulas and patterns and breaks them down . . . But how, what, where? I don't know yet, but I tell you that I feel with utter certainty that something is there, that something will be born."

On the "Woman Question," too, she had something to report in her letter to Jogiches of Feb. 11, 1902, about her organizational tour, which discloses that she was both theoretically and practically aware of the question:

"I was formally interpolated on the women's question and on marriage. A splendid young weaver, Hoffman, is zealously studying this question. He has read Bebel, Lili Braun and Gleicheit, and is carrying on bitter argument with the older village comrades who keep maintaining 'a woman's place is in the home' . . ."

## two turning points in Rosa Luxemburg's life— 1898-99, and 1905-07

by Raya Dunayevskaya

(A draft chapter from a new work-in-progress, *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.)

She naturally sided with Hoffman and was pleased that her advice was accepted as "the voice of authority."

It was that theoretic "voice of authority" — not on the "Woman Question," but on revisionism — that made the Party hierarchy recognize Rosa Luxemburg as one who would brook no limits to her range of interests. No matter what limitation would be attempted—be it the "Woman Question," or anti-Semitism (which, though never admitted, was not too far below the surface)<sup>1</sup>, or concentration on any single issue—it was the totality of the revolutionary goal that characterized the totality that was Rosa Luxemburg.

She was uncompromising in her many-faceted involvements and made clear that they were as far-reaching as the whole new revolutionary continent of thought Marx had discovered. She had every intention of practicing it on an international scale, beginning right there, and right then, at that world focal point of the Social Democracy: Germany.

As she was to be throughout her life, Luxemburg was active enough that first year in Germany. And, whether or not it was her activity that energized the German Party, it was, in her case, intellect become will become act. For that matter, it was not only the German Social Democracy that her intellect challenged. Living in Germany also meant experiencing certain changes in herself insofar as her relationship with Jogiches was concerned. All one has to do to see the changes is to compare the letters she wrote from France in 1894 and those she wrote from Germany in 1898-99.

From Paris she wrote of love and sadness and complained that she could not share her impressions with her comrades, since "unfortunately, I don't love them and so I have no desire to do this. You are the one I love, and yet . . . but I just said all that. It's not true that now time is of the essence and work is most urgent. In a certain type of relationship you always find something to talk about, and a bit of time to write." From Berlin on April 21, 1899, she wrote: "Dziodziuchna, be a philosopher, do not get irritated by details . . . In general, more than once I wanted to write, that you are extending your methods, which are applicable only in our Polish-Russian shop of 7½ people, to a party of a million." And she followed that up with a postcard, April 23, where she wrote: "Oh, Dziodziu, when will you stop baring your teeth and thundering . . ."

She may not have been fully aware of all that that signified. After all, there was not only deep love between them and deep comradeship, as well as shared leadership, but she held him in especially great esteem when it came to organization. Though he was nearly as young as she when they met in Zurich — four years separated them — he had already founded the first revolutionary circle in Vilna in 1885, had already been arrested twice, had already escaped from jail, and at the very assembly point for army conscripts again escaped into exile. At the same time, as Clara Zetkin, who knew them both intimately, was later to express it, Jogiches "was one of those very masculine personalities — an extremely rare phenomenon these days — who can tolerate a great female personality . . ."<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it was a fact that Rosa Luxemburg was beginning to take issue with him in his very specific preserve — organization — where not only had she previously acknowledged his superiority, but where she, herself, was quite indifferent to the whole topic.

As it happened, by no means accidentally, she had at once to plunge into the burning debate in Germany and in the whole International; in meeting the very first challenge to Marxism from within Marxism by the original revisionist, Eduard Bernstein, she established herself as the one who delivered the most telling blow, because it was so total. She battled Bernstein on all fronts, from analysis of Marx's economic laws of capitalism leading to collapse, through the political question of the conquest of power, to the proletariat's need for the dialectic.

<sup>1</sup> See letter to Leo Jogiches, May 1, 1899, which makes reference to an anti-Semitic Polish jingle: "Hard up—what to do? Go to the Jew./Hard times are through?/Out the door, Jew!"

<sup>2</sup> Paul Froelich, *Rosa Luxemburg: Her Life and Work* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), p. 14.



Rosa Luxemburg

As against Bernstein's nightmares about the fatal effect that would result from the proletariat's attempt to gain political power "prematurely," she maintained, in *Reform or Revolution*:

"The proletariat is not capable of seizing power in any sense other than 'prematurely.' Once or even several times it must inevitably take power 'too soon' in order to capture it permanently and so the opposition to such premature seizures is nothing else than opposition to the very notion of seizure of power on the part of the proletariat."

And as against Bernstein's demand that "the dialectical scaffolding" be removed from Marx's theories, she wrote:

"When he directs his keenest arrows against our dialectic system, he is really attacking the specific mode of thought employed by the conscious proletariat in its struggle for liberation. It is an attempt to break the sword that has helped the proletariat to pierce the darkness of its future. It is an attempt to shatter the intellectual arm with the aid of which the proletariat, though materially under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, is yet enabled to triumph over the bourgeoisie. For it is our dialectical system that . . . is already realizing a revolution in the domain of thought."

Those first two years in Germany where she had experienced so many changes were also where she manifested that flash of genius on imperialism as the global shift in politics. Before even that word, imperialism, was coined by Hobson (to whom all later Marxists, from Hilferding to Lenin, expressed their indebtedness) she posed the world significance of Japan's attack on China in 1895 which led to the intrusion of European powers into Asia and Africa. Indeed, an entire new epoch of capitalist development—the emergence of imperialism—had begun. As she wrote to Jogiches on Jan. 9, 1899, she had meant to include this analysis in the *Reform or Revolution* pamphlet. On March 13, 1899, she wrote on

(Continued on Page 6)

# BEFORE AND AFTER THE 1905 REVOLUTION: two turning



Rosa Luxemburg, with Japanese socialist Sen Katayama and Russian Georg Plekhanov at 1904 Amsterdam Congress of the International, where they demonstrated international solidarity against the Russo-Japanese war.

(Continued from Page 5)

this global shift in politics for the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*. She was to call attention to it, again, in the 1900 Congress. It became even more concrete, that is to say, directly related to the Social Democratic Party silence on the "Morocco incident" and was to become, of course, an underlying cause for the break with Kautsky in 1910. And, we must emphasize, once again, that all happened long before anyone, including Lenin, had sensed any reformism in the unchallenged world leader of Marxism. It became, as well, the ground for her greatest theoretical work, *Accumulation of Capital*.<sup>3</sup>

## II THE FLASH OF GENIUS AND THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

**H**ERE WHAT IS EXCITING is to see that flash of genius at its very birth, in the letter to Jogiches on Jan. 9, 1899:

"Around 1895, a basic change occurred: the Japanese war opened the Chinese doors and European politics, driven by capitalist and state interests, intruded into Asia. Constantinople moved into the background. Here the conflict between states, and with it the development of politics, had an extended field before it: the conquest and partition of all Asia became the goal which European politics pursued. An extremely quick dismemberment of China followed. At present, Persia and Afghanistan too have been attacked by Russia and England. From that, the European antagonisms in Africa have received new impulses; there, too, the struggle is breaking out with new force (Fashoda, Deleoga, Madagascar).

It's clear that the dismemberment of Asia and Africa is the final limit beyond which European politics no longer has room to unfold. There follows then another such squeeze as has just occurred in the Eastern question, and the European powers will have no choice other than throwing themselves on one another, until the period of the final crisis sets in within politics . . . etc., etc."

By the beginning of the 20th century the extension of capitalism into its imperialist phase opened a totally new epoch because there also emerged its total opposite — revolution. Beyond any doubt this new global dimension — the Russian Revolution of 1905 that was signaling a new world stage in the East as well — made the dialectic of history very real for Luxemburg. Far from dialectic being either just an abstraction or a journalistic euphemism for attacking revisionism, it was now the very breath of new life. Soon the dialectic of revolution, as of history, came alive before her very eyes in the 1905 Revolution in Poland, which was then part of the Tsarist Empire.

She wished to become one with the proletariat in making history. Jogiches, who was already in Poland making that history, and her German colleagues, were hardly encouraging her, however, to return to Poland during such tumultuous times. The so-called "Woman Question" was no longer any sort of generalization, but

galled her in a most personal form as she kept being told that the risks to her, as woman, were greater than to the male revolutionary emigres, who were returning. Although she was delayed in leaving for Poland, this type of argument only assured her going.

She reached Poland on Dec. 30, 1905 and, at once, plunged into a whirlwind of activities. There was nothing she didn't attempt — from writing and editing to taking revolver in hand to force a printer to run off manifestoes, articles, leaflets, pamphlets; from participating in strikes and demonstrations to making endless speeches at factory gates. Within three days, on Jan. 2, 1906, she wrote to Kautsky: "Mere general strike by itself has ceased to play the role it once did . . . Now nothing but a general uprising on the streets can bring a decision . . ."

It was awe-inspiring to see the familiar strikes of advanced German workers become a General Political Strike of "backward" Poles. No wonder that the whole concept of "backward" and "advanced" underwent a total transformation in the ongoing revolution. Luxemburg now saw the so-called "backward" Russian working class as the vanguard — not only of their own revolution, but of the world working class movement. The leaflets and manifestoes made clear not only the class content of the revolution but the totality of the change that the revolution was initiating—from the General Political Strike as the new method of class struggle, to the Soviet as a new political form of organization; and from the call for, and actual practice of, the eight-hour day to the demand for "full emancipation of women."

She was to make a category of the General Political Strike both as road to revolution and as theory of revolution, as well as relationship of Party to spontaneity of masses. As we shall see later, when we deal with what, theoretically, resulted from the experience—*The Mass Strike, The Trade Unions and the Party* — the actual events that gave rise to the so-called theory of spontaneity were happening before her very eyes. Moreover, it was not only the activities of the masses; it was also the phenomenal organizational growth that made a crucial impact on Luxemburg.

To witness a small underground Party which had no more than a few hundred members after a decade of work, grow nearly overnight into a mass party of 30,000 was proof enough that it was neither conspiracy nor experience accumulated over slow years, much less the wisdom of the leaders, that "taught workers" either organization or class consciousness. It was the masses themselves, in motion, who brought about the end of her "German period." She began to "speak Russian"—Russian and Polish — rather than German.

With her participation in an ongoing revolution, her personal leap to freedom included also freedom from Jogiches, though she was not to become aware of that until the following year. Now there were endless activities, common principles, the momentum of an ongoing revolution. She was soon arrested and imprisoned. No sooner had she got out of prison than she proceeded to Kuokkala, Finland, where a group of Bolsheviks, including Lenin, were living in exile; and she joined them in intense discussions on the Revolution. It was in Kuokkala that she wrote one of her greatest pamphlets — the one on the mass strike, which she hoped to present to the German party so that they could see it was not only a Russian event but could be "applied" in Germany.

When she returned to Germany and presented those ideas, she met with such great hostility that she wrote to Clara Zetkin on March 20, 1907:

"The plain truth is that August (Bebel), and still more so the others, have completely pledged themselves to parliament and parliamentarianism, and whenever anything happens which transcends the limits of parliamentary action they are hopeless — no, worse than hopeless, because they then do their utmost to force the movement back into parliamentary channels, and they will furiously defame as 'an enemy of the people' anyone who dares to venture beyond their own limits. I feel that those of the masses who are organized in the party are tired of parliamentarianism, and would welcome a new line in party tactics, but the party leaders and still more the upper stratum of opportunist editors, deputies, and trade union leaders are like an incubus. We must protest vigorously against this general stagnation, but it is quite clear that in doing so we shall find ourselves against the opportunists as well as the party leaders and August."

A Congress of all the tendencies in the Russian Marxist movement was to meet in London in April, 1907<sup>4</sup> and Rosa Luxemburg participated in a dual capacity—both as bearer of greetings from the German Party and as Polish delegate.

An endless series of reports, analyses, disputes, re-examinations continue to pour forth, very nearly ad infinitum, about the 1903 Second Congress, where the division between Menshevism and Bolshevism first appeared on the "Organizational Question." That avalanche notwithstanding, it is the 1907 Congress which was pivotal, because it centered about an actual revolution. It was that, just that, which became the Great Divide between Menshevism and Bolshevism, with all other tendencies needing to define themselves in relationship to it. As Luxemburg wrote while the revolution was still ongoing: "The revolution is magnificent. All else is bilge."

At the same time, it was that Congress which illuminates some of the major problems we face today. This is so in relationship not only to Rosa Luxemburg's life and thought, but to the very concept of the theory, the philosophy of revolution in Marx. Everyone at the Congress, no matter what their interpretation of that revolution was, focused on the 1848 German Revolution.<sup>5</sup> That the intellectuals have paid so little attention to this Congress shows a great deal about how much more adept they are at rewriting history than at writing it.

Here we had a Congress where all tendencies came together to discuss a single topic which, though it seemed to be on the relationship to bourgeois parties was, in fact, on the nature of revolution. Here we had a Congress where everyone, everyone without exception was present—be it a Plekhanov who was then a right-wing Menshevik and the only one who didn't return to Russia during the revolution, or a Leon Trotsky who was the actual head of the first, and until 1917 the greatest, revolutionary Soviet, in St. Petersburg—as well as the one who drew a theory of Permanent Revolution out of the revolution of 1905; be it a Lenin who was supposedly "all centralized organization", or a Rosa Luxemburg who was "all spontaneity"; be it a Martov who was a left Menshevik, or the Bund. Here was a Congress where all were talking about revolution—a very specific, ongoing revolution—and all were supposedly still grounded in the most unique philosophy—Marx's; where everything was fully recorded, so that it is very easy to prove or disprove almost any point of view. And yet, to this date, 72 years after the event, we are yet to have an English translation of the Minutes. Why such total disregard for so revealing a Congress?

About all we have are participants' memoirs—and the authors of these are so busy emphasizing its "chaos" that we get not a whiff of the significance of that Congress.<sup>6</sup> Of course there was chaos; it began with the fight over the agenda precisely because the Mensheviks opposed Lenin's proposal that they put on the agenda the character of the present moment of revolution. And they were not alone. In supporting the Mensheviks, Trotsky, surprisingly enough, insisted that this Congress must be "business-like", must not go in for abstract theoretical resolutions:

"What I want to say is that the Congress, from beginning to end, should be political, that it has to be a meeting of the representatives of revolutionary parties and not a discussion club. . . . I need political directives and not philosophic discussions about the character of the present moment of our revolution. . . . Give me a formula for action!"<sup>7</sup>

"Who would have thought that under such circumstances the proposal would be made to remove all questions of principles from the Congress agenda?" Lenin asked, as he offered his explanation: "What is this but sophistry? What is this but a helpless shift from adherence to principle, to lack of principle?"

Later, Lenin expanded this to stress the relationship of theory to practice: "Our old disputes, our theoretical and tactical differences, always get transformed in the course of the revolution into direct practical disagreements. It's impossible to take any step in practical politics without bumping into these basic questions about the evaluation of the bourgeois revolution, about the relationship to the Cadets . . . Practice does not erase differences but enlivens them. . . ."<sup>8</sup>

5 We will later develop the fact that none, nevertheless, brought out the conclusions Karl Marx drew in his 1850 Address to the Communist League following the defeat of the 1848 revolution.

6 In *My Life* (New York: Pathfinder, 1970) p. 202, Trotsky writes: "It was a protracted, crowded, stormy and chaotic Congress." And in *Impressions of Lenin* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1964), Angelica Balabanoff stresses that "The discussion about the inversion of the agenda alone lasted over a week." (p. 17).

7 From Minutes of the 1907 Fifth Congress of the RSDLP, in *Pyati Londonskii S'ezd RSDRP, Aprel'-mai 1907 goda, Protokoly* (Moscow, 1963), p. 49. (My translation.)

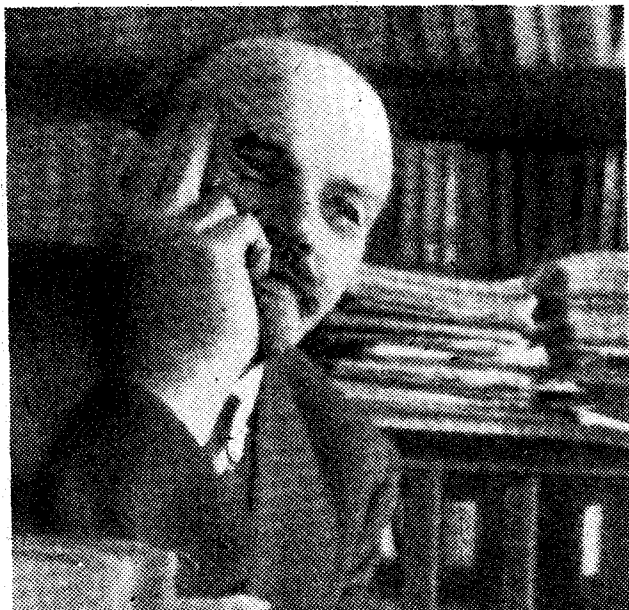
8 Lenin's concluding remarks at the May 14 session of the Fifth Congress, reproduced in Vol. 12 of his *Collected Works* (Moscow: 1962, 1978), p. 470.

3 For my critique of that work, see the Appendix to *State-Capitalism and Marx's Humanism* (Detroit: News & Letters, 1967).

4 The Fifth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party is abbreviated in Russian as RSDRP, in English as RSDLP.



# Events in Rosa Luxemburg's life—1898-99, and 1905-07



LENIN: in study and in party debate



What Lenin had called "sophistry" does contain part of the answer to why the Fifth Congress has been so long disregarded, but it is not the whole answer, as is evident from the fact that, under the topic of relations of Marxists to bourgeois parties, they did, in fact, touch the subject of the nature of the revolution. The full answer, rather, lies in the fact that most were not ready to stand up for the theory underlying their tactics; that is to say, the contradiction between theory and tactics was so glaring that evasiveness about the relationship of theory to practice ineluctably followed. The exceptions were Luxemburg and Lenin. And even then it took Lenin a full decade, and the simultaneity of a world war and the collapse of the Second International headed by Karl Kautsky, before he would recognize Kautsky's affinity to the Mensheviks, and the right-wing Mensheviks at that.

## III THAT PIVOTAL YEAR: 1907

LUXEBURG'S PERSONAL BREAK from Jogiches had come just before the London Congress, which both attended and where they acted as one politically. That Luxemburg allowed none of the grave pressures — political and personal — to interfere with her very active participation and profound analysis of the burning question of the day, the Russian Revolution, was brilliantly clear from her three speeches to the Congress:

In her very first speech, when she was merely supposed to be bringing greetings from the German Party, Rosa Luxemburg, in fact, helped to determine the revolutionary character of the Congress, clearly separating herself from the Mensheviks. It is necessary here to reproduce at least the central point of that speech, which appears in full as an Appendix:

"The Russian Social Democracy is the first on whom fell the difficult task of applying the principles of Marxist teaching, not in a period of quiet parliamentary events, but in a stormy revolutionary period. The only experience that scientific socialism has previously had in practical politics during a revolutionary period was the activity of Marx himself in the 1848 revolution. The course itself of the 1848 revolution, however, cannot be the model for the present revolution in Russia. From it we can only learn how not to conduct oneself in a revolution. Here was the schema of this revolution: the proletariat participates with usual heroism but cannot utilize its victories; the bourgeoisie drives the proletariat back in order to usurp from it the fruits

of its struggle; finally, Absolutism tosses away the bourgeoisie in order to defeat both the proletariat and the revolution. The class isolation of the proletariat finds itself in the most embryonic state.

"It is true that it already had the **Communist Manifesto** — that great charter of the class struggle. It is true that Karl Marx participated in the revolution. But . . . the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was not so much an organ of the class struggle as of the extreme Left wing of the bourgeois revolutionary camp. It is true that Germany was not yet a bourgeois democracy, the idealistic expression of which was the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. But this is precisely the politics that Marx had to carry through with iron discipline in the first year of revolution. Undoubtedly, his politics consisted in this, that Marx had to support with all means the struggle of the bourgeoisie against Absolutism. But in what did the support consist? In this, that from the first to the last he mercilessly, relentlessly, whipped all the half-way measures, inconsistency, weakness, cowardice of bourgeois politics. (Applause from Bolsheviks and part of Center.) . . .

"Marx supported the national struggles of 1848, holding then that they were allies of the revolution. The politics of Marx consisted in this, that he pushed the bourgeoisie to the limit every moment to bring them to the revolution. Yes, Marx supported the bourgeoisie in the struggle with absolutism, but he supported it with whips and kicks. . . . From this, it is clear, comrades, that at the present time in Russia it is necessary to begin, not where Marx began, but where Marx ended his politics in 1849: with the clearly expressed independent class politics of the proletariat. . . . The Russian proletariat, in its actions, has to show that between 1848 and 1907 a half century of capitalist development has occurred, and, from the point of this development, taken as a whole, we are not at the beginning but at the end of this development. He has to show that the Russian Revolution is not just the last act in a series of bourgeois revolutions of the 19th century, but rather the forerunner of a new series of future proletarian revolutions in which the conscious proletariat and its vanguard, the Social-Democracy, are destined for the historic role of leader. (Applause.)"

So sharply did Luxemburg express the class nature of the revolution, that what emerged was the relationship not only of the proletariat to the peasantry, but of the Russian to the international revolution. One could see, as well, the germ of future revolutions within the present Revolution. What had been clear from the very start of Bloody Sunday when the Tsar's army fired on that first mass demonstration on Jan. 9, 1905, was that Rosa Luxemburg was developing the question of continuous revolution.

And eight days before that mass demonstration, at the fall of Port Arthur to the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war, Lenin had written:

"Yes, the autocracy is weakened. The most skeptical of the skeptics are beginning to believe in the revolution. General belief in revolution is already the beginning of revolution . . . The Russian proletariat will see to it that the serious revolutionary onset is sustained and extended."<sup>9</sup>

It is necessary to stress: revolution was in the air. Not only had both Mehring and Kautsky used the expression "permanent revolution" in the year 1905, but so had even the most right-wing of Mensheviks, Martynov.

"Bloody Sunday:" Russian Czar's cossack attack on workers and other demonstrators in St. Petersburg square on Jan. 9, 1905, sparked first Russian revolution.



nov. A good part of Trotsky's speech at the 1907 London Congress was devoted precisely to Martynov, contrasting the difference in his 1905 and 1907 positions. Lenin, of course, had seriously analyzed the revolutionary aspect of "the democratic revolution" going over "to the socialist revolution. We are for continuous revolution, and we shall not stop halfway" (Sept. 14, 1905). Ten days later he extended it even to Europe: "We shall make the Russian Revolution the prologue to the European socialist revolution."

Nevertheless, it is true that it was Leon Trotsky alone, at the conclusion of the 1905 Revolution, when he was in prison, who created out of the 1905 events what later came to be known as a theory of Permanent Revolution. At the Congress, itself, however, that subject was not on the agenda. No whiff of it came from Trotsky, although Lenin, glad that Trotsky was voting for the Bolshevik resolution on the relationship to the bourgeois parties, said: "Quite apart from the question of 'uninterrupted revolution,' we have here solidarity on fundamental points in the question of the attitude toward bourgeois parties."

With much later hindsight, Trotsky referred to the affinity of Rosa Luxemburg's view to his on the question of Permanent Revolution in *My Life*:<sup>10</sup> "On the question of the so-called Permanent Revolution, Rosa took the same stand as I did." At the Congress itself he said: "I can testify with pleasure that the point of view that Luxemburg developed in the name of the Polish delegation is very close to mine which I have defended and continue to defend. If between us, there is a difference, it's a difference of shade, and not of political direction. Our thought moves in one and the same materialistic analysis."<sup>11</sup>

But Luxemburg had not spoken on the question of Permanent Revolution, which was nowhere on the agenda. There is no doubt that, in speaking about the relationship of Marxists to the bourgeois parties, she was developing ideas of the dialectics of revolution and the role of the proletariat as vanguard. But it is more likely that what Trotsky suddenly found an affinity to in her speech as Polish delegate was her taking issue with the Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks. She had said: "True genuine Marxism is very far from a one-sided over-estimation of parliamentarianism as well as from a mechanistic view of revolution and over-estimation of the so-called armed uprising. On this point my Polish comrades and I differ from the views of the Bolshevik comrades."

She, however, did not at all like the idea that the Mensheviks and other non-Bolsheviks suddenly applauded her. Which is why she decided to re-emphasize, in her concluding remarks, what she thought was the essence of her speech:<sup>12</sup>

"Truthfully speaking, the brooha into which my critics fell just because I tried seriously to illuminate the relationship of the proletariat to the

(Continued on Page 8)

<sup>9</sup> See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 54. See also Ivar Spector, *The First Russian Revolution: Its Impact on Asia* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962). This study, which develops the impact of the 1905 Revolution on Iran, China and India, is also important for its Appendices, which reproduce the original "Petition of the Workers and Residents of St. Petersburg for Submission to Nicholas II on January 9, 1905" as well as the Soviet article on the 20th anniversary of that Revolution by M. Pavlovitch. For the relationship of that revolution and its impact on the 1979 revolution in Iran, see my *Political-Philosophic Letter*, "Iran: Unfolding of, and Contradictions in, Revolution" (Detroit: News & Letters, 1979).

<sup>10</sup> Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930).

<sup>11</sup> Minutes of Fifth Congress, *op. cit.*, p. 397.

<sup>12</sup> Excerpted from Minutes of Fifth Congress, *op. cit.*, pp. 432-437.

# two turning points in Rosa Luxemburg's life—1898-99, and 1905-07

(Continued from Page 7)

bourgeoisie in our revolution seems odd to me. After all, there is no doubt that precisely this relationship, precisely the definition, above all, of the position of the proletariat in relationship to its social antipode, the bourgeoisie, constitutes the core of the dispute, is the crucial axis of proletarian politics around which the relationship to all other classes and groups, to the petty-bourgeois, to the peasantry, and so forth, is crystallized. And once we conclude that the bourgeoisie in our revolution is not playing and cannot play the role of leader of the proletarian movement, then, in its very essence, it follows that their politics is counter-revolutionary, whereas we, in accordance with this, declare that the proletariat must look to itself, not as an assistant of bourgeois liberalism, but as vanguard to the revolutionary movement, which defines its politics independent of all other classes, deriving it exclusively from its own class tasks and interests . . .

" . . . Plekhanov said: 'For us Marxists the working peasant, as he appears in the contemporary commodity capitalist milieu, represents only one of the many petty, independent commodity producers, and, therefore, not without reason, we consider him to be part of the petty bourgeoisie.' From this follows that the peasant, as petty bourgeois, is a reactionary social element of society, and he who considers him revolutionary, idolizes him and subordinates the independent politics of the proletariat to the influence of the petty-bourgeoisie.

"Such an argument is, after all, only a classic example of the infamous metaphysical thinking according to the formula: 'Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.'<sup>13</sup> The bourgeoisie is a revolutionary class — and to say anything more than that cometh of evil. The peasantry is a reactionary class and to say anything more than that cometh of evil . . .<sup>14</sup>

"First of all, to try to make a mechanical transposition of the schema about the peasantry as a petty bourgeois reactionary layer onto the peasantry in a revolutionary period is, without doubt, a perversion of the historical dialectic. The role of the peasantry and the relationship of the proletariat to it is defined the same way as the role of the bourgeoisie, that is, not according to subjective desires and aims of those classes, but according to the objective situation. The Russian bourgeoisie is, despite its oral declamations and printed liberal programs, objectively a reactionary class, because its interests in the present social and historical situation compel a quick liquidation of the revolutionary movement by concluding a rotten compromise with Absolutism. As for the peasantry, despite the confusion and contradictions in its demands, despite the fogginess in its multi-colored aims — it is, in the present revolution, an objectively revolutionary factor because it has placed the question of land overturn on the agenda of the revolution, and because it thereby brings out the very question which is insoluble within the framework of bourgeois society, and which therefore, by its very nature, has to be solved outside of that framework.

"It may be that just as the waves of revolution will recede, just as soon as the land question finds, in the end, one or another solution in the spirit of bourgeois private property, substantial layers of the Russian peasantry will again be transformed into a clearly reactionary petty bourgeois party in the form of a peasant union like the Bavarian Bauernbund. But so long as the revolution is continuing, so long as the agrarian question is not solved, the peasant is not only a political rock against Absolutism but a social Sphinx, and therefore constitutes an independent ferment for revolution, giving it, together with the urban proletarian movement, that wide expanse which relates to a spontaneous national movement. From this flows the socialist utopian coloration of the peasant movement in Russia, which is not at all the fruit of the artificial grafting and demagoguery of the Social Revolutionary Party, but that which accompanies all great peasant uprisings of bourgeois society. It is enough to remember the Peasant Wars in Germany and the name of Thomas Muenzer."

Luxemburg also took issue with Plekhanov who had said: "Comrade Lieber asked Comrade Rosa Luxemburg on which chair is she sitting. Naive question! Comrade Rosa Luxemburg is not sitting on any chair. She, like Raphael's Madonna, reclines on clouds . . . lost in day

dreams . . ." But, in this case, it is better to quote Lenin who had risen to his feet on that point, not for purposes of defending Luxemburg, who needed no defense, but to stress what a miserable evasion of the whole point of social revolution was Plekhanov's speech:

"Plekhanov spoke about Rosa Luxemburg, picturing her as a Madonna reclining on clouds. What could be finer! Elegant, gallant and effective polemics . . . But I would nevertheless like to ask Plekhanov: Madonna or not — but what do you think about the substance of the question? (Applause from the Center and the Bolsheviks.) After all, it is a pretty bad thing to have to resort to a Madonna in order to avoid analysing the point at issue. Madonna or not — what must our attitude be towards 'a Duma with full powers'?"<sup>15</sup>

And, indeed, there was a great deal more involved than just the topic under discussion, because what they were really discussing was: who were the genuine forces of revolution — the proletariat and the peasantry or the bourgeoisie? Lenin had already written about the "in-born creativeness" of the masses, had called the Soviets "embryos of revolutionary power," and in singling out the proletariat, considered it not only force but reason:<sup>16</sup>

"The point is that it is precisely the revolutionary periods that are distinguished for their greater breadth, greater wealth, greater intelligence, greater and more systematic activity, greater audacity and vividness of historical creativeness compared with periods of philistine, Cadet, reformist progress . . . They shout about the disappearance of sense and reason, when the picking to pieces of parliamentary bills by all sorts of bureaucrats and liberal 'penny-liners' gives way to a period of direct political activity by the 'common people,' who in their simple way directly and immediately destroy the organs of oppression of the people, seize power, appropriate for themselves what was considered to be the property of all sorts of plunderers of the people — in a word, precisely when the sense and reason of millions of downtrodden people is awakening, not only for reading books, but for action, for living human action, for historical creativeness."

And for Rosa Luxemburg, too, it was not only "the

proletariat supported by the peasantry" but, as we shall see from her 1906 pamphlet on the General Strike, she was already posing totally new questions of spontaneity and organization — and not only about this revolution, but future revolutions. That, in fact, it was a question of wars and revolutions became ever clearer in that pivotal year of 1907, as they all prepared to go to the International Congress in Stuttgart in August.

At that Congress, what, not accidentally, became known as the "Luxemburg-Lenin Anti-War Amendment" (though it was not only Lenin but also Trotsky and Plekhanov who helped to formulate it) was meant to issue a warning to the bourgeoisie that, if they dared to start a war, the masses of Social Democratic workers would oppose it. As Luxemburg put it in her speech to the International: "Our agitation in case of war is not only aimed at ending that war, but at using the war to hasten the general collapse of class rule."

In that same month of August, 1907, just before the Stuttgart Congress met, Luxemburg was also involved in the International Socialist Women's Conference. There she reported on the work of the International Socialist Bureau; she was the only woman member of that august body. Urging the women to keep their center for the Socialist Women's Movement in Stuttgart, and stressing the importance of having a voice of their own, i.e. Gleichheit, she concluded: "I can only admire Comrade Zetkin that she has taken this burden of work upon herself."<sup>17</sup> In a word, far from Rosa Luxemburg having no interest in the so-called "Woman Question", and far from Zetkin allegedly having no interest outside of that question, the truth is that both of them, as well as Kollontai and Balabanoff and Roland-Holst, were determined to build up a women's liberation movement that concentrated not only on organizing women workers but on having them develop as leaders, as decision-makers, as independent Marxist revolutionaries.

Through that Fifth Congress of the RSDLP in London when all tendencies were discussing the 1905 Revolution, 1907 let us in fact be witness to the dress rehearsal for 1917. And just as that Russian Congress was followed by the International Congress in Stuttgart where Luxemburg-Lenin attempted, with revolutionary anti-war politics, to prepare the proletariat to meet the challenge of the coming war, so what preceded the International Congress — the first International Socialist Women's Conference — proved that a new revolutionary force — women — had arisen which, in embryo, would become the genuine center of international anti-war activity at the very moment when the parent organization itself, the German Social Democracy, would collapse once the imperialist war broke out. That pivotal year, 1907, also was the year when Rosa Luxemburg, as brilliant teacher of theory at the Party school, would get to develop her magnum opus, *Accumulation of Capital*. And because that was the year when she began "to apply" to a technologically advanced land what she had learned from the Russian Revolution — a development which was to lead to the breakup with Karl Kautsky in 1910 — it is imperative that we now turn to her mass strike pamphlet and grapple with that totally new phenomenon, the concrete relationship of spontaneity to organization.

<sup>17</sup> See Rosa Luxemburg, *Gesammelte Werke*, Band 2 (Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1974) for her speech to the International Conference of Socialist Women held Aug. 17-19, 1907, first published in *Vorwärts*, No. 192, on Aug. 18, 1907. See also Alexandra Kollontai, *Women Workers Struggle for Their Rights* (England: Falling Wall Press, 1973), and Angelica Balabanoff, *My Life as a Rebel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973).

<sup>15</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 471.

<sup>16</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 261. This, 1906 pamphlet, *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party*, remained so integral to Lenin that he quoted large sections of it, after power, in 1920, in an article, "A Contribution to the Question of Dictatorship."

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<sup>13</sup> Luxemburg is quoting from the Sermon on the Mount, *Matthew*, 5:37.

<sup>14</sup> Luxemburg is here being sarcastic about the way the "authoritative" Plekhanov had quoted that section of the *Communist Manifesto* where Marx speaks about the bourgeoisie being a revolutionary class in the overthrow of feudalism as if that was applicable to the 1905 Russian Revolution.



# Discussion Article: On the origins of News and Letters Committees

by Andy Phillips

With the following article, we continue the discussion on forms of organization which began in the December, 1979 issue of *News & Letters*. These discussion articles do not represent any "official viewpoint" of *News and Letters Committees*, and we welcome your response.—Ed.

The constitution of News and Letters Committees sets forth the general form and content of our organization. The form is a decentralized committee structure of freely associated local groups and individuals acting through and with a centralized National Editorial Board responsible for implementing decisions determined in the process of free and open discussions at annual plenary sessions and conventions. The content of the organization is the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, manifest in the revolutionary principles elaborated in the constitution, and embodied in practical operating relationships and perspectives. But more than that, the constitution explicitly incorporates as integral to organization the two comprehensive works articulating the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism: *Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution*.

No other revolutionary organization in the world has so consciously and inextricably united the philosophy of Marxism with concrete organizational activity — not Marx's First Workingmen's International, no Social Democratic party, no anarchist, Communist, Bolshevik, Trotskyist or Maoist party. None.

It is not the committee structure which distinguishes us from other organizations. What does mark us off from all others is the content of our committee, the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, and our activity aimed at concretizing that philosophy in our organization and in life. Now on the surface this might appear to be a simple statement, but it is deceptively so, because the only way that the philosophy of Marxist-Humanism can be concretized is through the transformation of society, through, in short, socialist revolution.

We chose the committee form of organization because it permitted the greatest flexibility and did not preclude any future organizational development. We are not opposed to the political party form on principle; we are opposed to the concept of the vanguard party to lead the masses and the practice that flows from that.

News and Letters Committees, while founded as an independent organization in 1955, was comprised of members with long and rich prior revolutionary histories that included activity with Communist, Trotskyist, anarchist and militant industrial trade union movements in the '30s and '40s. While all were in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) at the time of the late '40's, they were united in an opposition group led by C. L. R. James and Raya Dunayevskaya who had developed the theory of Russia as a state-capitalist society and had established a political tendency within the SWP (the Johnson-Forest Tendency).<sup>1</sup>

Just as it is impossible to practice vanguard party-to-lead politics for an organization that believes the workers and other revolutionary social strata can and must lead themselves in the creation of a new society, so is it inevitable that the vanguardists must base themselves on the conviction that the masses are backward and incapable of achieving a new society without the leadership of the vanguard party.

It is true that in 1903 Lenin believed, as he stated in *What Is to Be Done?*, that the working class by itself could only reach trade union consciousness, and that only the vanguard party could introduce socialist consciousness. But he changed his mind completely after the 1905 Russian Revolution, declaring that workers through their struggles must inevitably reach socialist consciousness, and admitted he was wrong about what he had written in 1903.

The change is both profound and historically significant for both Lenin and the Russian Revolution of 1917, but its significance is lost on such contemporary Trotskyists like Tony Cliff who, in his four-volume work *Lenin*, while noting that Lenin did indeed change his position on the role of the vanguard party,<sup>2</sup> obviously clings to the outmoded conception of party-to-lead despite Lenin's repudiation of it. Lenin's call after 1905 is for the party to open its doors to all workers, and he attacks the vanguardist party committeemen imbued with elitist

<sup>1</sup> The creation of a new political tendency is a relatively rare historical phenomenon, and a serious study of the development of the state-capitalist tendency still remains as an important task for our organization.

<sup>2</sup> Tony Cliff, *Lenin*, Vol. 1, (London: Pluto Press, 1975) p. 176.

## Dunayevskaya's response to an Iranian revolutionary

We excerpt below a letter from Raya Dunayevskaya written in reply to Raha, an Iranian revolutionary activist and thinker, whose discussion article on "Iran—philosophy and form of organization" appeared in *NEWS & LETTERS*, December, 1979.—Ed.

November 3, 1979

Dear Raha,

You are the first who saw anything about form of organization in Marx's early writings. The opposite is true; the early writings are always quoted as if Marx was both "pre-Marxist" and very nearly dumb on the question of "the Party", so when you quote what Marx said on "communist artisans form associations" and that these "association(s) itself creates a new need—the need for society—and what appeared to be means has become an end," it is clear that you have sensed something that does indeed reconnect with Marx on the question of freely-associated men and women, and that you have every right to conclude "that theoretical result is that we should seek a kind of organization which is, at one and the same time, in unity with philosophy of the revolution and with the aim of the proletariat as a class."

Where I disagree is that you make too quick a leap to the present with the result, much as you want to do the opposite, you are really once again separating philosophy and organization. For example, we, of course, are not only emphasizing "new forces" but Reason, and that is absolutely indispensable. So that you cannot possibly jump to the Fedayeen where every word you say is correct (both against hierarchic form of organization and guerrilla warfare, that unholy combination of vanguardism and voluntarism), and yet it would appear at the end as if it were only because they were separated from the masses instead of it being both that and completely lacking in philosophy.

I think you ask the right question—"how a theory can be materialized"—but then make that materialization only that which relates to objective conditions, as if that meant economics, whereas in fact to Marxist-Humanism, objective conditions are both economics and the masses revolting against that economics. It's very dangerous because that's exactly what has been wrong for the whole Second International and with Trotskyism, that somehow in the process of the economic analysis, the proletariat itself became object. To Marx, however, material did not mean just economics. It meant the whole form of life, so that the need naturally was first and foremost food and shelter, but also all that was

needed, by no means limited to whether you had a spoon to eat with or you were eating with your fingers, but the need for what Marx called "quest for universality."

I disagree that the proletariat were not the first in the Iranian revolution. Of course, the so-called first, whether it's Father Gapon leading masses with icons to the Tsar's palace, or whether it's poets in Iran revealing the horrors of the Shah's prisons, or whether it's the journalist-editor in Nicaragua who was murdered by Somoza, precedes the actual proletariat outburst. But it doesn't become revolution until the proletariat, both in strikes and in demonstrations, that is to say, as masses in motion, appear. When Marx, as you quote, writes that both as a "movement of enthusiasm" and when the proletariat arouses the kind of interest that is an actual universal, that it's possible for "a particular class to claim general supremacy."

I believe that the really important thing is when you say "What appears to be an end is rather a new beginning." It isn't true, however, that that new beginning can be only workers' councils, even when you correctly add to them the new forces like women's liberation, because one of the real deviations in Lukacs was his concentration on totality, but not totality as a new beginning, and that totality also meant more of a summation rather than that Absolute Idea which is both theory and practice, and that as new beginning. I'm sure the Trotskyists would be for workers' control of production, and I'm sure that they would consider the councils "a socialist institution"—and by no means do I wish to play them down, because that definitely is the height of workers' control of production being in their own hands rather than being in a trade union or in a state.

But again, unless they, too, do not separate themselves from philosophy; unless they, too, feel as strongly the need for work on intellectual, as the intellectual feels the strong need for the workers; and unless that "intellectual sediment" (to use a Luxemburgian phrase) has philosophy and organization and revolution and Reason as well as new force, we will once again lose. And, I should add that when Marx writes "revolution is necessary also because it revolutionized the class itself," that's exactly what he meant, the proletariat as Reason as well as force, as objective as well as subjective, as new man/woman.

Yours,  
Raya

leadership concepts who oppose him and charge him with "diluting" the party.

Unfortunately, the vanguardists have learned little from Lenin, and how important the difference is can be demonstrated by developments in the historic nine-month-long U.S. coal miners strike of 1949-50 against automation.

In the coal heartlands of West Virginia, all of us in the SWP were members of the state-capitalist tendency, and several of us worked in the mines. The perspective of the SWP was, and is, to recruit the "advanced," militant, class-conscious workers — usually union officials or office aspirants.

The strike tactic of United Mine Workers (UMW) President John L. Lewis in the summer of '49 was to alternate pulling out miners in different districts, and thus avoid a national strike and the use of the Taft-Hartley slave labor act against the union and miners, as President Truman had done the year before. In the fall of '49, however, rank-and-file miners in West Virginia rejected Lewis' order to return to work and sent pickets throughout the region to close the mines.

Those of us in the state-capitalist tendency, who had supported rank-and-file actions before and during the strike, were thrust into the leadership of the strike by the miners.

The revolutionary working class lesson this taught us was that the true vanguard of the working class movement does not result from self-proclaimed assertion, but emerges in the process and development of mass actions. In this process, the workers face the question of organization: what kind of organization that is different from the union? The miners were faced with this very question, and what we did had nothing to do with the Johnson-Forest Tendency or the SWP. What we did had everything to do with the kind of organization we created and used in our struggle.

Lewis, aware of the determination of the rank-and-file miners, called a national strike, and President Truman invoked the Taft-Hartley act to prohibit the UMW from giving any aid to the miners and to try to force them back into the mines. Lewis ordered the miners to return to work, but they refused his order, declaring they would stay out on their own since the government could not pass a law against an individual in a strike situation. The strike dragged on, and miners and their families became horribly destitute as local community sources of aid dried up.

Of all the radicals who were in the mine fields to analyze the strike, only Raya Dunayevskaya, who was in West Virginia, understood and articulated what the miners had achieved in their strike actions. In opposing the continuous miner, which they dubbed "a man killer," they had made a leap in cognition and had moved the historic question to be resolved through their own actions from "What should be the pay for one's labor" to "What kind of labor should human beings do." Arrayed against them were not only the coal companies, but also their own union, the federal government and the Supreme Court.

The leadership of the SWP, instead of taking its direction from the actions of the striking miners, demanded that the state-capitalist tendency strike leaders obtain approval from the UMW district bureaucrats before taking any action whatsoever. This was not only crass opportunism in a time of serious crisis among the miners, it was pure and simple class betrayal.

In total contrast was Dunayevskaya, who suggested that a rank-and-file miners' relief committee be set up to establish a simple post office box number and send out striking miners throughout the country to appeal for aid. The committee was established despite a last-minute effort of the UMW district bureaucracy to scuttle it, and the rank-and-file miners—magnificent orators who had demonstrated their abilities at many mass meetings to articulate what the rank-and-file miners were feeling and thinking—went out to make their appeals. A tremendous national response resulted in thousands of dollars in food, money and clothing pouring into the coal mining areas, enabling the miners to hold out and win.

I have detailed this experience not because it is the only one—far from it—or only that it is but prologue to the development of Marxist-Humanism, but because I want to raise the question of form of organization. An organization, a committee, was obviously formed. But is this form the answer to the elitist parties? Or is it only one of the answers?

We have maintained that organization is critical to revolutionary activity. Since the concept of the elitist party has failed, we have rejected the party to lead and substituted the committee form of News and Letters. We say we don't have programs, but each year our activity is established through a perspectives presentation. Just how much difference is there in essence? Is there a relationship in this to form of organization, and if so, what is it?

## EDITORIAL UAW-Chrysler-Congress line up to ram through contract

For Chrysler workers, the first week of 1980 saw not only the closing forever of the huge Dodge Main assembly plant in Detroit on Jan. 4 — a shut-down that added 2,800 more to the jobless rolls — but the government-mandated re-opening of the contract they had ratified only two months ago. The congressional decision to "bail out" Chrysler came accompanied by the demand that UAW members add another \$260 million to the \$203 million UAW President Douglas Fraser had already agreed to take from the rank-and-file toward Chrysler's rehabilitation.

A unanimous chorus of praise for the deal was sung by management, the UAW leaders, the Democrats and Republicans in government — from Ronald Reagan to Detroit Mayor Coleman Young — and by the press, who proclaimed it as "proof that our nation has a conscience." Never was the monolithic character of our state-capitalist system more evident, as the integration of politics and economics suddenly drowned out the old pretensions of "free enterprise."

Only the rank-and-file refused to join the party. For them, the deal meant that no less than \$6,600 will be extorted from each worker over the next three years. This, on top of the concessions already extracted in the first Chrysler contract, which, on paid time off, on sickness and accident insurance, and on annual raises, did not even measure up to the retrogressive deals signed at GM and Ford. Using the language of the assembly line, workers described that deal as one that "began in the hole," with a de facto one year wage freeze, while inflation soars at 14 percent or more each year.

Such "takeaway" contracts have by no means been limited to Chrysler, nor even to companies in trouble. In fact, the current attack by capitalists big and small was launched by the coal operators against the miners two years ago. The miners fought back with a four month strike, ignoring union officials who eagerly accepted the contract the miners despised.

Thus, UAW negotiators today give a green light to



Hundreds jam Detroit unemployment office.

crackdowns on absenteeism — one measure of worker revolt — by joining management on a new National Attendance Committee. And company and union leaders agree to replace the hated "Impartial Medical Opinion Plan" set up under the 1976 agreement with the new "Disability Evaluation Program," which turns out to be a computerized version of the same thing — a method for denying workers their sick leave protection.

The perfect proof that Fraser's appointment to Chrysler's Board of Directors — far from being "free of any conflict of interest" — is a giant step toward full company-union integration, is seen in the way the "new" grievance procedure submits to the latest in company discipline. Now a company-wide computer registers the disciplinary measures to be taken for each worker's absence or production error — whether actually committed or not. Naturally, the computer wins over the worker at the first step of the grievance procedure on the shop floor.

The truth is that the only promise Fraser made and kept was the promise not to call a strike.

## BLACK-RED VIEW

by John Alan

Now that the 1970s have passed into history and the 1980s are beginning, it is the time to think of the successes and failures of the Black Liberation Movement in the U.S., both in its philosophical and practical dimensions. We do this not because we are simply concerned with an intellectual interest in history, but because we want to develop a perspective for the 1980s that can transform the present exploitative, capitalist society, with its racism and sexism, into a truly human society of freely associated labor and new human relationships.

We know that no decade ends abruptly and everything that happened is not hermetically sealed off from the present. The starting point for the present is what was achieved in the past, as well as those unresolved problems that still stand in the way of human liberation. One of the social phenomena that we witnessed in the last ten years was the growth of a well-defined, conscious, Black middle class, with a certain amount of political clout in governments, both local and national.

The more historically-conscious segment of this class extoll their new role as a continuation of the Civil Rights Movement. This is only a half-truth. In no way can their "success" be a yardstick to measure the success of that movement, when millions of Blacks enter this decade of the '80s with the horrible inhuman legacy of racism, unemployment and underemployment, job discrimination, segregated and inadequate education and poor housing. Parallel with this is the increase in the number of poor Blacks, especially youth, being killed by the police.

All through the '70s, constant attacks have been made upon the rights gained by the Black mass revolts of the 1960s. The Klan and the Nazis have grown bolder with their racist filth. Yet these hate groups, although small in number, cannot be dismissed as "crack-pots" because their activity reflects and meshes with the reactionary "legal" attacks on school desegregation and affirmative action programs for Blacks, Chicanos, Asians and women.

Despite these obvious setbacks, the Black middle class leaders did not seek the power or the opinions of the Black masses against this noxious growth of reaction. The word power is mentioned often, but always in connection with some Black political personality. This is the final corruption of the Black Power idea that was born out of the Black mass struggles and revolts.

At the very beginning of the '70s, both the Black masses and the Black middle class understood the meaning of "Black Power." It meant then, that the Black masses had given the Civil Rights Movement the direction and method of struggle whereby Blacks were united in a determined effort to turn the country around in a radical way, for permanent change!

## Black movement in the '70

The end of the decade witnessed ever-widening separation between Black masses and Black leadership. Black politicians are almost totally involved in the quid pro quo political games of U.S. capitalism. The Congressional Black Caucus and the Black mayors of large cities have become adroit at this tit-for-tat farce, offering support, i.e. delivering Black votes, to the candidates who promise to do the most for "the human priorities of this nation."

What this type of capitalist politics does, no matter how beneficial it may appear to be for Black people, is to reduce Black humanity to an abstract quantity of votes in exchange for an uncertain promised quantity of civil rights, jobs, etc.

As the U.S. enters the 1980s, facing permanent economic crisis and the irrevocable separation of Black leaders from the Black masses, the question of real Black Power becomes the priority.

## Finger of racism everywhere

A long time ago a little blond-haired girl, smaller than I was at the time (which irked me!), pointed her finger into my face and screamed "Doesn't she speak?" I refused. For Japanese Americans, talking can draw attention to yourself and get yourself in trouble, can land you in a concentration camp. But although things like this have happened countless times before, almost like a scenario, it's different now.

In Pasadena recently, a white high school student was beaten up by other white kids in the cafeteria for talking to some Vietnamese who had just moved into the neighborhood. The finger is pointing this way now, or let's say, everywhere. Two white men in a passing car gunned down Black teenagers outside a social club in Queens and the police said it was not a racial incident, but an effort "to shake up the social club".

The Asians were, in the '60s, packed neatly away as a "success story". Obviously times are changing now. We're bigger in numbers. In this racially-crazed society, is "success" ever in permanence for a minority group — can success ever disguise the color of your skin, your hair, your being "here" and not "there", "where you belong", as they say?

We've got to start talking in bigger terms. -I am a third-generation Japanese American who uses that last term with hesitation. I want to know who are the Real Americans. I propose that they are those who care about the future of the world, those who know, for sure, they'll challenge any finger pointed at them.

—Teru Ibuki

Indeed, that promise was made to Lee Iacocca's board, not to the UAW membership — and the result was not only Fraser's appointment to the board, but an emboldened government demanding yet more sacrifices by Chrysler workers.

Iacocca has made it plain that he intends to take the workers' money and use it in an ongoing five-year, \$7.5 billion modernization program, complete with new robot technology. This scheme can have only one result: fewer and fewer workers to build cars, and greater and greater numbers permanently unemployed.

That is exactly what is already evident — and not only at Chrysler. Whether one looks at the rest of auto, where GM and Ford have laid off over 100,000, or at steel, where mill after mill has either closed or cut production drastically, it is clear that the recession is far more severe now than any of the government forecasts for its "bottom" — predicted for late summer, 1980.

In Michigan, new unemployment benefit claims reached 88,000 in the first week of January, with lines of 1,000 extending around the block at many offices. Standing in line, one can hear the proof that the opposition is not limited to the frustrations of long lines, or even to joblessness alone but to every aspect of this crisis-ridden society. Unemployed ex-Marines and laid-off Ford Rouge workers compare notes on the military discipline of both employers, and the failure of this society to offer anything like a human form of activity. Out of the new stage of recession, inflation and "takeaway" contracts blessed by union leaders, come workers' own ideas of a free society. That clash of opposites means serious class battles are brewing in the year ahead.

## Who We Are and What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees, an organization of Marxist-Humanists, stand 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. News & Letters was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard not separated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation. A Black production worker, Charles Denby, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, is the editor of the paper. Raya Dunayevskaya, National Chairwoman of the Committees, is the author of *Marxism and Freedom and Philosophy and Revolution*, which 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.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcats against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation — activities which signalled a new movement from practice which was itself a form of theory. Vol. 1, No. 1, came off the press on the second anniversary of the June 17, 1953 East German revolt against Russian state-capitalism masquerading as Communism, in order to express our solidarity with freedom fighters abroad as well as at home. Because 1953 was also the year when we worked out the revolutionary dialectics of Marxism in its original form of "a new Humanism," as well as individuality "purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e., with freedom itself," we organized ourselves in Committees rather than any elitist party "to lead."

In opposing the capitalist, 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 the mass activities from the activity of thinking. Anyone who is a participant in these freedom struggles for totally new relations and a fundamentally new way of life, and who believes in these principles, is invited to join us. Send for a copy of the Constitution of News and Letters Committees.

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## High school anti-nuke view

*I am turning my column this issue over to a high school student as part of the continuing dialogue on Marxist-Humanist ideas in anti-nuke and ecology struggles—Peter Wermuth.*

Recently I have been active in an environmental club in my school. The purpose of this club is to inform the students of the dangers that are threatening our environment. But what we are mostly concerned with are the dangers of nuclear energy.

Because of my involvement in this club I have also had contacts with members of Alliance for Survival, an anti-nuclear organization, and I have gone to a few of their meetings. As a result of these encounters I have realized how important it is for an organization to have a correct philosophy.

For example, a few months ago I went to listen to a lecture given by Barry Commoner. He was saying that if the U.S. stops the use of nuclear energy and switches to solar energy many problems will be solved.

He also expressed his dissatisfaction with the way solar energy is only available to the people who are quite wealthy. He mentioned that we can use gasahol instead of gasoline, and now that the government is giving financial aid to the Chrysler Corporation, why shouldn't it have the right to order Chrysler to build small and efficient cars that can use gasahol.

It would be very good to stop the use of nuclear energy and to use solar energy. Also, it would be very good to build small and efficient cars. But in this system, the capitalists' sole purpose is to increase their wealth, and therefore they will use solar energy and build devices that work with solar energy only as a profitable business enterprise.

The idea of building small and efficient cars is very good, but if the Chrysler Corporation or any other company begins to do that, it would still have its assembly lines. It would still have the same type of labor in the factory, an alienating labor in which the workers do not have real control over how they work, where work does not develop their creativity as human beings. It is not a question of these workers building small cars instead of big cars, but what kind of labor builds cars.

Therefore, I have come to the conclusion that

## Music of revolution and counter-revolution

*TESTIMONY, The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich, edited by Solomon Volkov; Harper & Row, 1979; \$15.*

This book will be fascinating to anyone interested in music, cultural history, or Russia. The life of a truly great composer is partially illuminated, as he discusses many of the political and artistic figures of his time, with whom he interacted—chiefly Stalin, whose lethal tyranny pervaded society; the composer Glazunov, an alcohol addict; Marshal Tukhachevsky, Shostakovich's friend before he was shot; the writer Zoshchenko, whose humor disappeared at the fiat of Commissar Zhdanov; the critic Sollertinsky, who knew 20 languages and the art of irony; and the director Meyerhold, who disappeared without a trace.

The hidden Shostakovich emerges here as never before—not the official composer who weathered denunciations to retain a leading place, learning from "just criticism," but a tragic, melancholy figure who hated Stalin and all his works and managed to express in the medium of music, alien to "criminals," the tragedy of the many millions of lives sacrificed to the plans of the "great leader and teacher."

Remembrance for him is horrible, for he sees only "mountains of corpses," but how else to record how his friends really were? "The majority of my symphonies are tombstones."

The tragic tone, however, relents often, as Shostakovich skewers bureaucrats, sycophants, opportunists and phonies with ironic, sarcastic wit. The meaning of his not-easily-accessible music becomes much clearer.

Did the "Leningrad" symphony depict the advancing Nazi army? No, we now learn that it was written, in the wake of the Great Purge, with "other criminals" in mind. (Musicologist Albert Weeks has divulged the meaning of the four-note theme of the Tenth Symphony, a joyous "Sta/lin u/mer"—Stalin is dead.) In a country with anti-Semitic policies, the significance of choosing "Babi Yar" as theme for the Thirteenth was clear even to Western critics.

Shostakovich calls himself a "proletarian" who in 1975, at 69, produced his final opus, No. 147. His music will certainly survive the obtuse critics and the Kremlin machine now busily working to discredit these captivating memoirs.

—A. Fortunoff

changing the use of energy in order to make it more efficient is not enough, but it is the whole system that has to be changed. The foundations of the capitalist system are built on exploiting human beings and it is only a true uprooting of it that can lead to changes in the use of energy and more important than that, changes in human relations.

## Criticism aired at Iran forum

New York, N.Y.—Over 100 people attended a meeting at the City University of New York Graduate Center recently to discuss the Iran crisis. Sponsored by the Student Association for Marxist Studies, the invited speakers limited their critiques to U.S. imperialism, the crimes of the Shah, etc., but this could not prevent some blistering Left critiques of Khomeini from coming out in the discussion period, when both American and Iranian students criticized Khomeini's regime as well as Carter and the Shah.

I was able to list seven "theses" against Khomeini, from his suppression of the women's marches, to his oppression of minorities such as the Kurds, to the occupation of the Embassy which I called a diversion from problems at home by a neo-fascist regime.

The next person to speak, also from the floor, was a representative of the Iranian Student Association (ISA) and he, too, launched into a forceful denunciation of Khomeini's reactionary regime and its repression of Left groups such as the Fedayeen. He compared Khomeini's repression in Kurdistan with the U.S. in Vietnam and said the Islamic Constitution was "the most reactionary constitution anywhere on this earth."

The ISA representative also pointed out that Khomeini had been losing support before the hostages were taken at the Embassy and that he sought thereby to get people back to his side under the slogan "Down with imperialism! Death to the Shah!" Unfortunately this speaker, like the Fedayeen, did not break with the concept of the vanguard party-to-lead.

Next, a Stalinist Iranian student actually accused us of supporting a U.S. invasion of Iran, but the meeting never got back to its "planned" agenda of criticizing only U.S. imperialism. An Iranian woman student accused the Left of not being sufficiently critical of the Iranian revolution. She called Khomeini's constitution reactionary and sexist (see article, p. 2) and a violation of the spirit of what she called the "mass spontaneous democratic revolution" of 1979.

While some—especially Trotskyists, Stalinists, and Muslim students—were upset that the meeting criticized Khomeini, others, especially women's liberationists, felt it was the beginning of the kind of serious discussion that is necessary at this time.

—Marxist-Humanist student

## Prop. 1: racist law

Los Angeles, Cal.—When Los Angeles voters approved Proposition 1 recently, an anti-busing referendum that restricts the use of "public" funds to send minority students to integrated schools, the right-wing won a victory. But its real effect is even worse—to force down the living standards of Black masses.

It means that a lot of people will have to do what my cousin now does. She decided to send her children to a private school in order to get the remedial courses they wouldn't receive in the segregated ghetto schools. But how many people can pay to send their own children to school?

Many people are acting as if this is just a question of "busing." But to me, it isn't. It's a question of resurgent racism, of cutting back basic speech and remedial courses many Blacks need or want in school, and it means if you want it, you'd better dig deeper into your pocket. And who can pay for that sort of thing when unemployment is so high?

This anti-busing resolution is very dangerous, because it's really about keeping Blacks in poor neighborhoods. Once you knock out integration, it's a way of keeping people down. We have to deal with it not as a legal issue, but as what it is, another racist attack on Black youth that is going to get a lot of attention from racists around the country.

—Black youth

## Marxist-Humanist youth meet

New York, N.Y.—The Queens College Marxist-Humanists sponsored a discussion on Dec. 6, entitled "Today's Unfinished Revolutions and Marxist-Humanism as Philosophy and Organization." Those who participated with us were well prepared and wanted to discuss Iran, Marxist-Humanist philosophy, and organization.

The latter was actually the pivotal question at that meeting as it became transformed into the question of, "What kind of organization is needed today to prevent a situation like Iran from occurring so soon after the people had just overthrown one dictator?"

There was an inner struggle going on within the students—a reflection of an attitude to the Iran situation on campus here that I have noted—as they wished neither to support Khomeini nor U.S. imperialism's harboring of the Shah. They didn't wish to be limited by an either/or question of choosing sides and were instead looking for an alternative to that self-aborting madness.

The question of form of organization was made even more concrete by the fact that each person was actually relating this crucial question to his or her own life struggle for freedom as a Jamaican, Haitian, Latino or Black student living not only in racist America, but in a world capitalist order, and seeking a new, creative way to abolish the old and construct the new.

—Bonnie Mullaney

Queens College Marxist-Humanists

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## OUR LIFE AND TIMES

by Peter Mallory and Ron Brokmeyer

# Invasion of Afghanistan: new flashpoint for superpowers

(Continued from Page 1)

What characterizes the whole bloody succession is the necessity of precisely executing Russian interests. But December's turnover, which took a massive invasion instead of sticking with a puppet who could be armed and "advised", not only magnified a relationship which was already there; it moved the world closer to the brink of superpower confrontation.

After all, the threat of such a confrontation does not come only from the Russian side. No one can be under any illusion that the intentions of Middle East countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, much less Pakistan or the West—especially the U.S.—are as pure as the driven snow. Not only is it a fact that from the start of the genuine revolt in Afghanistan in 1978 all of these powers—large

and small—have looked at the national liberation movement with a jaundiced eye, but the all-too-related fact is that NATO has been busy warming up the Cold War. There is no doubt that the decision to introduce new Cruise and Pershing missiles in West Europe, making Russia an easy target, is what has the Kremlin worried.

Likewise, what has India worried is the arming of Pakistan, including Carter's sudden indifference to Pakistan Gen. Zia's continuing project to produce a "Moslem A-bomb". Indeed, Carter would be hard put to find a ruler anywhere with less support at home than Zia, the murderer of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Nor can anyone ignore the fantastic spectacle of a pious President Carter, in his Jan. 4 TV ad-

dress, returning to the '50s by reviving the image of "atheistic" Russia, whereas he would be the defender of the "Islamic countries". Russia does have a point when it exposes the joint designs of the U.S., China and Pakistan—designs that go back to the 1971 India-Pakistan war. But the greater truth is that no provocation can gild the massive invasion, much less sell the Tass line that Russia is no invader.

The most telling measure of the guilt of all the powers, East and West, is the fact that armament expenditures have now reached the stratospheric level of \$600 billion a year, threatening both future nuclear holocaust and present economic crises. (See lead article, p. 1) The new tensions over the invasion of Afghanistan have thus added explosive new fuel to a fire nearly out of control.

## Panama

Student demonstrations in late December against the tyrannical Panamanian regime and its chief thug, Brig. Gen. Omar Torrijos Herrera, were met with violent suppression by the National Guard. The government's most recent claim to fame is welcoming into exile with open arms the Shah of Iran.

One of the best known casualties of the protests was Trotskyist leader Miguel Antonio Bernal, who was beaten with heavy rubber hoses by 15 guardsmen and had to be hospitalized. As the revolt grew each day, police in riot gear, as well as plainclothesmen, joined the guard in viciously beating protesters with clubs. Scores of young people—sometimes joined by their teachers—were arrested as the government attempted to crush the rising ferment to oust their dictatorial rule.

## Britain

We have received the following report from a correspondent in London:

Fourteen unions representing 150,000 workers in the nationalized British Steel Corporation (BSC) have rejected a final five percent pay offer and called a nationwide strike. BSC's cutbacks plan aims to axe 50,000 jobs next year, so the already hard-hit union in Wales is calling for another strike Jan. 21 for a two-year postponement of the cuts.

The Tory government is, of course, behind the steel bosses, but the steelworkers have been promised full support by the dockers, railworkers and steel unions in all the major European countries. Margaret Thatcher's worker-bashing policies are now being confronted by a section of the working

class which has a lot of economic muscle.

Recently, 35,000 workers in another nationalized company, British Leyland (BL), struck against the sacking of a Communist shop steward who protested against BL's policy of cutbacks by circulating an alternative plan prepared by rank-and-file stewards calling for more government investment. Profit rates and investment in Britain have been declining at an increasing rate for years. BL has had to sign a deal with Japanese Honda to assemble their cars in yet another last ditch survival move.

BL Chairman Michael Edwards has found a new scapegoat in the steelworkers, and is now once again talking about calling in the brokers if the steel strike persists.

It is becoming more and more clear that even if the union leaders and Labour Party politicians got more investment for declining British industry, it wouldn't be sufficient in a world where the ethic is "get bigger and newer than the other or perish."

—Dave Black

## China

China has announced that it is establishing two special economic zones, bordering Hong Kong and Macao, and will provide preferential conditions and facilities for foreign firms setting up enterprises within the zones, permitting them to transmit profits abroad. Japanese and American companies, among others, have already arranged to locate in the special zones.

These export zones are like Juarez and other Mexican towns along the U.S. border, in which workers assemble and process goods for many of the largest U.S. companies. It is national export

of workers' labor power—at wages and working conditions guaranteed below world levels.

But in China, mass movements again and again opposed the concessions to foreign governments and companies that left foreign citizens not subject to Chinese laws, and areas like the Shanghai International Settlement open for taking super-profits out of the Chinese work force. If inviting foreign capital and factory management to return 30 years after the Chinese revolution is a step "forward", that tells us a great deal about present conditions for workers under Chinese state-capitalism.

## Chicago transit strike

Because the City of Chicago was insisting on taking back protection against inflation that had been in the union contract for 28 years, the city's transit workers struck for four days and shut down buses, subways and elevated trains. Mayor Jane Byrne, who got elected on the promise to give city workers fairer treatment but has yet to even sit down and negotiate with the firemen, conducted a vicious campaign, calling CTA workers high-paid and insensitive to the public. Byrne singled out for attack the area of city employment that has the most minorities and women.

The strike, the first since 1919, paralyzed the city. Downtown merchants complained they were losing millions every day in Christmas money. "The snow did Bilandic in," said one bus driver, "but Byrne brought this strike on herself. In the '50's, when inflation wasn't too bad, no one cared about the cost-of-living clause. Now, when it's needed, they want to take it back." The courts have moved the issue to arbitration to be decided in March.

# Oil, the Iran crisis, and the drive for war

(Continued from Page 1)

and John Foster Dulles, the cases against the oil cartel were dropped completely, with the excuse that the National Security Council felt it was "not in the best interests of the nation" to pursue the matter further.

The truth is that nothing was done to curb the U.S. oil monopolists, either then or now. All the hollow talk by Carter about a so-called windfall profits tax is just that—hollow.

The real facts show that the quadrupling of oil prices, as a result of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, still produced no moves against the U.S. monopolists who reaped the highest profits. What has produced movement in the present crisis is that, as distinguished from the 1974 quadrupling of oil prices, the new crisis arose from a genuine revolution by the Iranian masses throwing out Carter's friend, the Shah.

## AND NOW, WHAT?

Put another way, instead of being able to talk imperialist politics with either the Shah or the Saudis, Carter was forced to abandon entirely the old Kissinger-Nixon sabre-rattling policy he too had been pursuing. Iran's Khomeini no more wants a revolution in his land than Carter. But the fact that Khomeini is spelling out his own retrogressive policies by taking advantage of the Iranian masses' hatred of U.S. imperialism, even as Carter is trying to take advantage of the great sympathy of the American masses for the hostages, resolves nothing, nothing whatever.

On the other hand, what masses do are the stuff that changes the objective situation entirely. Thus, when Canadian Prime Minister Clark tried imposing a heavy tax on gasoline and lost his "throne," though he had been on it only eight months, Carter at once decided he

would not, after all, impose a 50c-per-gallon gas tax on the American people. And now we come to the more critical question: will the American people tolerate the heavy defense budget just because Carter is playing politics?

Carter and his war chiefs are suddenly discovering that, despite a bloated war budget of \$139 billion a year, they have no practical bases from which to conduct an

all-out Middle East war, and will need an additional \$100 billion a year for many years. Since missiles are useless against Iran, they feel that 15 new supply ships, a fleet of heavy transport planes, and a mobile strike force are the answer.

They seem to forget that the Shah had a most formidable military machine under his control, which proved to be of no use when facing the revolutionary masses.

## WORKER'S JOURNAL

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He said what helped him was another man standing by who shut it off. But before he could shut it off the machine had stripped him naked, broken three of his ribs, knocked his shoulder out of place and tore most of his chest away.

Another man using a hole digger got caught in it, and he was ground up in the hole that he was digging. My brother told me that the man had on new work clothing, which was hard to tear away from his body. His shirt sleeve got caught in it while sitting on a tractor, and pulled him off and just ground him up.

## KILLER MACHINES

Another two men, one white man and the other Black, had gotten killed working with a bush-hogger, something we did not hear about years ago. It is something a worker fastens behind a tractor to cut bushes. If you happen to hit a high place while the tractor is running you will fall backwards between the tractor and the bush-hogger. They say in a minute it will crush and chop you up as fine as it does small bushes. That is how the white man and the Black man were killed. Anyone can bet that there are many more that

have met with the same fate, and in nearly every case the company will say, if that worker was more careful it would not have happened—just like the companies here. They always blame the worker even when death is involved.

Because of the development of automation and unimation, there is no such thing as rural areas in this country; no such thing as small farmers planting and growing cotton and corn, with mules and horses. All that is something of the past. Everything has changed. And along with these changes have come death and destruction to many farmers trying to cope with those dangerous machines, just as workers face here in production.

Here, where there are so many people out of work, it appears that many companies are eliminating the work force and are just depending on automation or unimation—but these machines cannot buy a car or gas to run it. That is the reason so many are out on the street. But it is hard to conceive that all these workers are just going to sit around and let their families starve to death. There are some saying that what is needed is a revolution, a complete change.