

## Theory/Practice News & LETTERS

'Human Power is its own end'—Marx

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25¢

### Editorial

## Reality: Bush can't wrap it in the flag

"...for all the fine confidence professed...just now, distrust, deep distrust, underlies it; and ten thousand strong, like the Irish Rebellion, breaks out in you now."

—Herman Melville, *The Confidence-Man*

"It's the president that defines the character of America," Vice-President George Bush's campaign ad confidently assures us. With flags waving, a 50-foot American flag backdrop, and the interminable litany of pledges of allegiance to the flag bellowed across the campaign trail, George Bush has sought not only to define Michael Dukakis, but more importantly, American reality.

One look at what the media has helped the "Reagan/Bush" ticket to score reveals the "American character" they want to define: gun control, the racist innuendo of prison furlough ads, hypocritical conceits about protecting the environment in the face of unending revelations about American Chernobyls waiting to happen at nuclear facilities around the country, and, once again, that last refuge of scoundrels—"patriotism." This is the "fine confidence" of Reagan's ideological masquerade of American reality. The utter failure of Dukakis and the whole "liberal" establishment to strip away the disguise is what this election is all about.

### THE AMERICAN MEDIA

Nor has the American media done any better. It has revelled in what the German philosopher Hegel called "the giddy whirl of self-perpetuating disorder" that Bush's "handlers" and so-called "spin doctors" conjure up after every debate, after every McCarthyite speech. And conjure they must to keep Bush's reality from glaring forth.

In September revelation after revelation surfaced that high-level officials in the Bush campaign were anti-Semites and open Nazi sympathizers. At the first presidential debate Bush declared that he would pursue the criminal prosecution of women who had abortions. He defined the "American character" further, at the end of September, when he made a disgusting display of his opposition to the United Farmworkers' boycott by eating California grapes at a campaign rally, while Cesar Chavez recuperated from a near-fatal hunger strike.

American reality this election year is a painful one, for the working class, the poor and the homeless.

- A young meatpacking worker in Cherokee, Iowa, who debones one ham every 10 seconds, 360 hams an hour, 2,520 hams a day, 12,600 hams a week for Wilson Foods, and who has already had four operations on his fingers, wrist and shoulder, still lives in agony, unable to even hug his children without experiencing tremendous pain.

- The reality of those dependent on welfare is also a

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## Time to end starvation wages



by John Marcotte

My friend Juan works two jobs. Days, he walks, delivering circulars for \$4 an hour. Nights, he works in the kitchen for the airlines. It probably used to be a union job, before airline deregulation. Now it's subcontracted, and the subcontractor hires through a temporary agency. Juan gets \$3.35 an hour, no holidays, no sick days, no vacation—and no raises. It's hard, hot, fast work. His friends say he doesn't look too good. He's not eating enough; he's not sleeping.

Juan is working two jobs because he's trying to bring his wife and son here from Latin America, so they can live together. It costs thousands of dollars to get a tourist visa, and plenty more for all the paperwork and airfares. When they do get here, he'll have to keep work-

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## Russia's two worlds: growing revolt vs. state-capitalist rule



Politburo replacing Andrei Gromyko (center) as President with Mikhail Gorbachev, (right).

by Olga Domanski

Throughout October, the events in the Russian world that filled the daily headlines gave new proof of the "two worlds" there—the world of the ruled and the world of the rulers that exist in each country. On the one hand, there was the sudden assembling of the 1,500 deputies of Russia's Supreme Soviet in the Great Kremlin Palace on Oct. 1 to dutifully approve a "shake-up" of the Communist Party leadership and elect Mikhail Gorbachev, already head of the Party, as President of the Supreme Soviet, as well.

On the other, was the ever greater turmoil in the "Russian Empire," including the explosion of the long-suppressed nationalities right within Russia itself—from the massive upheavals in the Ukraine and Armenia where unrest was put down with force, to the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, where "popular front" groups were allowed if they would support "perestroika" (restructuring). Significantly unpublicized by the media was the news reported by dissidents of spontaneous strikes by workers against the austerity measures of "perestroika" throughout Russia. (See story, p.3)

Far from all the turmoil being the result of Gorbachev's "glasnost" (openness), as the media would have us believe, it is the other way around. "Glasnost" is the attempt to deal with and contain the deep opposition from within to Russian state-capitalism and its constant crises.

### GORBACHEV, ANDROPOV AND THE KGB

The swift, 44-minute meeting on Oct. 1, which was all it took for Gorbachev to consolidate his power, appeared to the media experts a sharp contrast to the much-ballyhooed three-day Communist Party (CP) Conference in June. There, Gorbachev had played "glasnost" as debates in the press, questions of party policies, and even well-orchestrated picket lines outside the CP headquarters denouncing the selection of some so-called "Old Guard" as delegates. But the brusque Oct. 1 "election" was precisely what all that show of "democracy" in June had been working toward when it had approved a plan for a new kind of President who will, for the first time, have the authority to manage both domestic and foreign policy, including chairmanship of the Defense Council—that is, the role of Commander-in-Chief.

In short, what the "reform-minded" Gorbachev is on his way to attaining, as new President of a soon-to-be-remodeled Supreme Soviet, is concentration in his hands of authority such as Russia has not seen since Stalin.

Nothing makes that clearer than the way the major changes extracted in those 44 minutes on Oct. 1 have increased Gorbachev's control over Russia's secret police, the KGB—by replacing Chebrikov, a Gorbachev critic who had been on the Politburo, with Kryuchkov, a strong Gorbachev supporter who is nonetheless not on the Politburo, but subordinate to it.

The "final stage of state-capitalist degeneracy" that Raya Dunayevskaya pinpointed when the "cultured" Andropov took over in Russia in 1982,<sup>1</sup> stressed that "never before has a man who has spent 15 years of his

1. Dunayevskaya's writings on developments within Russia in the 1980s are voluminous. See especially her Political-Philosophic Letter of No-



Polish workers marching in Czesochowa.

life heading the most hated of secret police, the KGB, become the ruler of Russia." For the first time Party, Army and KGB were all molded in one command. That is what is now seen in a new form in Gorbachev, who was specifically trained by Andropov both in police work and in ideology, and had been hand-picked by Andropov to succeed him.

### 'ECONOMICS' AND GLOBAL ALIGNMENTS

Gorbachev's much-touted "perestroika" and "glasnost" are not fired only by the economic crisis of state-capitalism, serious as that crisis is. The crisis in Russia is part of the global crisis of capitalism whether supposedly "private" or "state," and it is capitalism's drive for single world domination that drives both poles, Russia and the U.S.

From the moment Gorbachev took over in 1985, he made it clear that he was out to shift Russia's world relations. That there is now serious discussion about a possible Russia-China summit next year—the first, if it takes place, since 1959—is not just about opening economic markets, but about nuclear brinkmanship. The "retirement," in the Kremlin shake-up, of the two most closely associated with the pre-Gorbachev American-centered policy—Gromyko and Dobrynin—bears witness to a drive Gorbachev has been waging ever since he took power. So does the major push Russia is currently making to improve ties with western Europe—with the October visits to Moscow from Chancellor Vranitzky of Austria, Prime Minister De Mita of Italy, Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany, and the trip of President Mitterrand of France scheduled for November.

The drive for world mastery, however, demands, first and foremost, getting the home front in order. "Getting the economy in order" means getting the workers to work harder and harder as they are being driven to fulfill a target of a fantastic 130 to 150% increase in labor productivity by the year 2000. "Getting agriculture in order" means getting the farmers to work harder and harder to end the food shortages that have plagued Russia ever since Stalin's ruthless driving of the Russian peasants onto the collective farms between 1929 and 1932 ended in a famine in which millions died.

For the full six decades since then, the peasants and workers alike have been in revolt against Russian state-capitalism, where it is the relation of capital to labor and the "law of value" that rules and that has determined their oppressive conditions of life and labor. Their "low productivity" is a measure of that revolt.<sup>2</sup> That Gorbachev's new Plan for agriculture now calls for "freeing" the farms from collectivization and leasing them, instead, has nothing to do with a better life for the peasants, but with how to get them to work harder.

vember, 1982, "Andropov's Ascendancy Reflects Final Stage of State-Capitalism's Degeneracy;" her August, 1985 discussion of "Mikhail Gorbachev, the New Russian Ruler" in *Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives*, 1985-86; and her March-April 1987 "Theory/Practice" columns "Two of a Kind: Reagan and Gorbachev and Their Bi-Polar World." 2. It is exactly 60 years since the First Five Year Plan was introduced by Stalin in October, 1928, after he emerged as victor in the struggle after Lenin's death. For a profound analysis of the first three Five Year Plans that sheds illumination on Russia today, see "Russian State-Capitalism vs. Workers Revolt," in *Marxism and Freedom* by Raya Dunayevskaya. A new edition of this work will be published by Columbia Univ. Press in Spring 1989.

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# How do we end trafficking in women?

by Anne Jaclard

The First U.S. Conference on International Trafficking in Women brought together women from around the world and several hundred U.S. feminists in New York, Oct. 22 and 23. Anti-prostitution activists from Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and North America exposed the growing, enslaving sex trade, involving millions of women and girls, especially Asians, who are exported around the globe by multi-national businesses.

Several speakers criticized the U.S. women's movement for having largely ignored prostitution at home and abroad. Lisa Go of the Migrant Women's Programme of the Resource Center for Philippine Concerns in Tokyo said, "We cannot have sisterhood without genuine solidarity with Third World Women." Kathleen Barry, author of the ground-breaking book *Female Sexual Slavery*, critiqued the U.S. feminist movement as "de-radicalized" from its revolutionary politics of 20 years ago.

Today, conditions for women have worsened in many places due to the role of U.S. military bases, poverty and war economies, and the world-wide climate of abuse of women. Yet there are groups in every country organized against the state, the economic system, the culture.

## WOMEN AGAINST THE SEX INDUSTRY

Yayori Matsui of the Asian Women's Association of Japan was a founder in 1973 of the campaign to stop the Japanese "sex tours" to the Philippines and Korea. While they were successful in stopping most tours, Japan in the 1980s has imported 100,000 women "entertainers" from the Philippines, Thailand and Taiwan, who are promised legitimate jobs by recruiters and then literally sold to the sex industry.

Lee Mi Kyung of South Korean Women United said there are between one-half and one million prostitutes in that country, around the U.S. military bases, in the streets, hotels and bars, and available for tourists; and Rudo Gaidzanwa of Zimbabwe described how the destabilization of Angola and Mozambique by South Africa has added to prostitution in all the impoverished countries in the area.

U.S. speakers described prostitution here, where most prostitutes have been victims of incest, rape and abuse. A former prostitute described prostitution as being about power and control, not sex and money, and she denounced those who advocate treating prostitution as a job; we do not want to improve conditions or unionize, she said, but to eliminate it.

## HOW DO WE TRANSFORM THE WORLD?

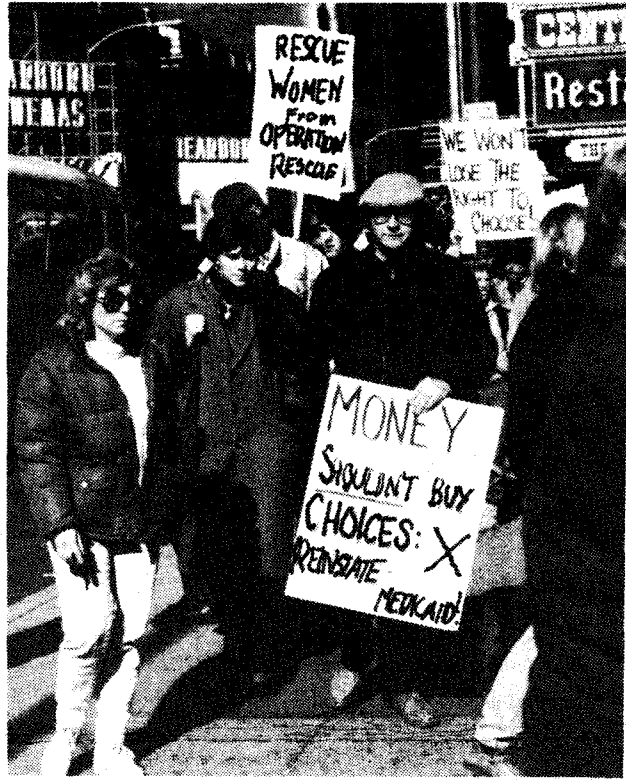
Precisely because of these horrible conditions, it is necessary to get beyond exposé and discuss how to transform the world which fosters them. But the News and Letters literature table was the only place in the conference to debate theories of change.

The theoretical underpinnings of most of the U.S. speakers including Andrea Dworkin and Mary Daly, was that patriarchy, an age-old and world-wide system of male dominance over women, causes our oppression and must be overcome. And when someone in a workshop audience asked whether prostitution exists under "socialism," several members of the panel answered that it does "because patriarchy continues." When I attempted to question their assumption that Russia or China represents socialism, I was not allowed to speak. There was in fact little discussion from the floor anywhere in the conference.

I enjoyed hearing about the tremendous activity of women in other countries and meeting U.S. women revolutionaries who want to tear up this society root and branch.

But, if we continue to push our philosophic differences under the rug for the sake of a unity which is meaningless because it never defines what we are united for, then our movement will never grow, will not be that spark to world revolution we hoped for when the Women's Liberation Movement first raised a vision of the total reorganization of all life on earth and the re-creation of human relationships.

## 'This clinic is open!'



News & Letters photo

Chicago, Ill.—Over 70 women and men held a lively demonstration in front of George Bush's downtown Chicago office, Oct. 29, as we countered anti-abortionists' national day of attack against women who choose to have abortions, who choose to make a decision about their own bodies.

For many the day started at 6:30 a.m. when we met to defend abortion clinics in other parts of Chicago. We needed to defend only one clinic on the North Side and the number of our demonstrators matched those of the anti-abortion fanatics. The police kept our two groups apart and women could walk in and out of the clinic although it was not easy for them to do.

Both pro-choice demonstrations had such good spirit! Surprisingly there were almost as many men as women—that is something new. Many demonstrators were students from the University of Chicago and Northwestern University. They joined older women who remember the time when abortion was illegal, and new slogans were created: "Racist, Sexist, Anti-Gay/Born Again Bigots, Go Away!" "Back Alleys No More/Abortion Rights for Rich and Poor!" and "You Can Shout Until You're Hoarse/But the Choice Is Ours. It Isn't Yours!"

While the rhyming may not have been perfect, the spirit was we will not go back, we will not lose the right to abortion, to control our own bodies, or, as we chanted at the clinic: "This Clinic Is Open! This Clinic Will Stay Open!"

—Participants

## Engelsian approach in book on women in Africa

*Women and Class in Africa* edited by Claire Robertson and Iris Berger (Africana Publishing Company, 1986).

In *Women and Class in Africa* a variety of essays try to discern and discuss the conditions of labor and life for women in Africa, including Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa and Zaire. There are 14 essays in three parts: I. "Access to Critical Resources," II. "Dependence versus Autonomy," and III. "Female Solidarity and Class Action." What is new and important is the editors' and contributors' attempt to analyze women in the Third World in terms of class and race taking on what they see as a Marxian approach.

In the Introduction, Claire Robertson and Iris Berger say there is a "reconceptualization of Africanist scholarship" today, and give credit to what they find as "a rebirth of Marxist analysis" in revolutionary theorists and that without this rebirth "feminist writing on Africa would be cast differently."

Yet what these writers find as the basis for their class analysis is this: "The discussion of the origins of class-based societies stemming from Engels' work, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*...argues strongly in favor of a connection between class inequality and women's subordination and thereby...relates to the declining position of African women in the twentieth century..."

In my opinion, the book only takes up Engelsianisms, not Marx's philosophy. For example, the second essay, "The Commoditization of Women in Tugen (Kenya) Social Organization," by Bonnie Kettel



## Women-Worldwide

Women prisoners of war in Ireland's Maghaberry and Britain's Durham prisons, have issued a public statement supporting women's right to choose an abortion. Opposing the tendency to shelve issues such as abortion and topics relating to the rights of women because of the war situation, the women stated: "We cannot claim to fight a war to uphold the rights of people whilst ignoring the fundamental rights of over half the population."

—Information from *Troops Out*

The Nestle's boycott could be on its way back according to Action for Corporate Accountability, who charge Nestle's with violating an agreement signed in 1984 to stop dumping their baby formula in Third World countries. The agreement came after a seven-year-long international boycott of the company because of their hard-sell promotional campaign of the formula, which had been linked to the malnutrition, disease and death of Third World infants. For information contact: Janice Mantell, Director, Action for Corporate Accountability/IBFAN, 3255 Hennepin Ave. South, Suite 255, Minneapolis, MN 55408, (612) 823-1771.

A group of women in Tel-Aviv, Israel have organized to help approximately 60 women political prisoners arrested without charge since the beginning of the Intifada. Mainly Palestinians but including two Jewish women journalists from Derech Hanitzotz, the prisoners are aided with public support, legal services, clothing and money for families in financial need. Women for Political Prisoners can be contacted at P.O.B. 6069, Tel-Aviv, Israel.

Information from *The Other Israel*

## Nightmare health care

Los Angeles, Cal.—Over the past year I became pregnant, carried and delivered my first child. But what should have been a time of personal joy was often a nightmare of dealing with an inadequate, inhumane, sexist and expensive health care system.

The health care system is not set up for the convenience of the expectant mother or any patient; it is set up for the convenience of doctors and profiteers. It is a crime.

During my eighth month I experienced severe pain and bleeding, so my doctor ordered me to the hospital. Even though I was in severe pain and something was obviously wrong, when I got there all they wanted to know was this: would they have to bother with the birth?

I was put on a gurney in an austere labor room; they strapped a belt around my belly at the very top, though they'd been told the pain was much lower. The belt had a plastic ball attachment which measures pain by the pressure against the woman's abdomen. The pain is measured on graph paper. The nurse told me I wasn't in real pain because the machine wasn't registering high enough. I kept screaming that it was because they'd put the strap in the wrong place.

There was a scared young woman lying on the next gurney. She was in great pain and the machine showed it. But her doctor wasn't ready to be bothered so they told her not to push; a nurse even slapped her for pushing. At one point they told her it would be an hour before she gave birth but after checking the doctor's schedule they told her it would be an hour and a half.

After nine months of medical confusion and 41 hours of labor my beautiful son was born. Doctors and nurses kept telling me I might need a Caesarian. I didn't. Even though we know doctors are surgery-happy, we are caught in the trap because we are not doctors and we fear for our safety and our child's.

—Ginny Adams

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quotes Engels on "the world historical defeat of the female sex." A defeat Kettel writes, "based on masculine control over productive resources."

Kettel attempts to refute Engels throughout the rest of her essay and writes: "To agree that Tugen women were primordial victims of pastoral patriarchy implies an acceptance of the neocolonialist assumption that the significance of property is universal..."

Kettel's essay is an important refutation of Engels, but she writes as if Engels' and Marx's outlook are the same. Despite the important emphasis on Marx, there is a continuous mis-reading of his work concerning the Third World that is disturbing.

This leads me to question the form of this work. Parts I and II trace how capitalist accumulation impacts the lives of women in Africa and Part III is very exciting for it takes up the history and today's African women's fight against capitalist accumulation—from South African women's organizations to Kikuyu women's fight against colonialism and their fight today.

What seems to be lacking is the dialectic methodology to trace through women's oppression in the Third World, while at the same time tracing what grows out of it—the revolt. The analysis of women's oppression in Africa is in Parts I and II, while the revolt is in Part III. The analysis and the revolt are just laying side by side without being interpenetrated. What we do not see is African women in revolution and as Reason of revolution but only as force. And the index to this book tells the story—although Marxism is prominently listed in the index, Revolution is never mentioned.

—Diane Lee



# Meatpackers struggle for health, solidarity

## Eckrich

**Chicago, Ill.**—Health care, any kind of health care, is really hard to find in the city of Chicago. The Union Medical Center, run by the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100-A Health and Welfare Fund, is part of the insurance package for Eckrich workers and the only insurance we have for family members. It should be our alternative to ending up in hospital emergency rooms, but it really isn't.

Union Medical doesn't take care of emergencies, and they make you wait for appointments when you or your children are sick. When one Eckrich worker called the clinic about her son, they said, "If he's so sick, why don't you take him to the emergency room?" Then the emergency room said, "Why don't you take him to his regular doctor?" Another worker called for a dental appointment and was told he would have to wait two months.

Once you get in there, the clinic is an assembly line. Next, next, next. In and out. The doctors don't spend any time with you. You do get a lot of tests for no money, but that doesn't substitute for having somebody that you can talk to and that you feel cares. All they give you is prescriptions, and then you've got to pay for them. Medicine is not cheap. A lot of people won't even go there. They'll spend the money for private doctors.

Union Medical is supposed to be for working people, but it's only open during the week from 9:30 to 4:30. The dental clinic is open Saturdays. Have you ever been there on a Saturday? It's like being in the unemployment office on a Monday. You can't get in there. Everybody wants to make an appointment on Saturday because they're working during the week.

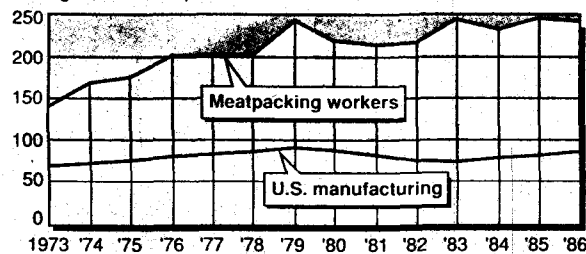
We work where it's cold and it's usually damp. Eckrich shuffles people around like a deck of cards. When you get your shifts changed around like that, there is no

way you're going to stay healthy. It screws up your whole body. You're just inviting illness. The union takes our dues, and we end up paying a private doctor. You have to be just about wealthy to get some health care here. —Eckrich workers

### Meatpacking workers

Workdays lost due to injuries/illnesses

Average annual rate per 100 full-time workers



Chicago Tribune Chart; Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The meatpacking industry is one of the most hazardous for U.S. workers. The Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) has just announced a \$4.33 million fine against John Morrell & Co. for willfully exposing workers to serious and disabling injuries. Meanwhile, the maiming of workers continues.

## UFCW local meeting

**Chicago, Ill.**—United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 100-A held a special meeting on Oct. 16. The topic for discussion was the merger of Local 100-A, which has 5,000 members and represents workers at Oscar Mayer and Eckrich, with Local 500-P, which has 1,200 members. The meeting room was more than full; people stood along the walls and jammed the doorways.

Although the Local president, Bob Waters, tried to confine the discussion to the merger, most people rose to express their dissatisfaction with the union: Why is Local 100 so weak? Why don't we have copies of our union contracts? Why don't our stewards know anything? Why haven't we had a raise? Why aren't the regular union meetings held at a time when we can attend? Will this merger mean more money for the working man and woman or more money for the union?

Waters's argument for the merger was that both local unions had lost membership and that "bigger is better." One Oscar Mayer worker directly challenged that contention when he asked whether other members of the Local would support workers at one company who go out on strike or are locked out. That support was not given during either the Oscar Mayer lock-out or the Ampac strike.

"Bigger is better" doesn't make sense from the workers' point of view if each plant is treated separately and the contracts have such different provisions. The UFCW seems to want to merge existing local unions rather than organize new workers. The bigger the local, the less control the members have over it. Which, from the leadership's point of view, is probably the point.

—Local 100-A member

## Roofers forced to accept sell-out contract

**Los Angeles, Cal.**—In the August-September N&L I wrote about a strike going on at my job, a roofing tile production plant. After more than two months on the picket line, I feel we lost the strike.

The workers had first voted 40 to 4 not to accept the proposed sell-out contract which gave the corporation more sweat and profit from labor. But there was a direct turn-around after a few months, with 40 to 7 voting to go back to work with only a 25¢ per hour increase, after a four-year wage freeze. But money as hourly wages was never the point—the main issue was the bold take-backs in insurance for the employee and family.

The insurance increased from \$100 to \$500 deductible for the individual and from \$500 to \$1,000 deductible per year for the family. This is an indication of the company's attempts to escape payment for the health problems they've created. There are many hazards for those working in this kind of industry where asphalt gases and silicon dust pollute the air during production. For example, many long-time employees at my plant now show spots on their lungs. Many of those that voted to go back to work were out on the picket line slowly being starved out by our own union, the International Paper Workers Union, which claimed it was broke. Our strike fund is tied up at a rate of four million dollars a month in a court battle against International Paper. This mismanagement of union funds has put us at the mercy of a Reaganite anti-union government, where the corporation has the greatest influence.

All the union bureaucrats need to go back and find their roots, which is with the laborer, the worker; that is where their interest should lie. Have they forgotten that this battle must take place in the streets and the shop floors where it began, not in the court room where only money talks and we cannot be heard?

It has been a well-kept secret by both the Democratic and Republican campaigns that the future of this coun-

## Transport workers strike in Arkhangelsk

**London, England**—Throughout the USSR, attempts to introduce "perestroika"—austerity measures have been met by spontaneous protests and strikes by workers. In the city of Arkhangelsk, on July 12, the transport system was ground to a halt when workers took strike action against wage cuts.

According to a report by Valery Senderov, writing in the *SMOT Information Journal*: "The administrators and representatives of the authority were presented with a package of claims, the main demand being for better work and pay conditions." Although, like most strikes in the USSR, this one was spontaneous, the workers almost immediately organized an initiative group to represent them. According to Senderov, "Having set upon the 'rubicon,' the workers held on with amazing self-control and single mindedness."

The official representatives were forced to talk to the workers' initiative group and promised that all their demands would be met.

But the attitude taken by the authorities was one of "inept" handling on the part of the bosses. None of the demands of the workers were met and the conditions were not improved.

The strike in Arkhangelsk, however, reflects the changes taking place in the consciousness of the Soviet working class. In reaction to the austerity policies of "perestroika," workers are rediscovering methods of struggle and organization they have not used for decades. As Senderov points out, "people were able to take a breath of fresh air of freedom and, therefore, it is not simple to silence us."

The example of this strike also points out the weakness of official propaganda. The population, with few exceptions, supported the action of the drivers and totally disbelieved the official version of events. The increased consciousness and self-organization of the workers is demonstrated by a leaflet which was distributed by opposition activists in Arkhangelsk, reprinted below:

*A magnificent effort, you drivers of the trolley buses! Only through friendly actions can one achieve one's goal. We are in full solidarity with you. As friends of the trolley bus depot, we honour your solidarity and just demands and we must support you. We understand this question and know who is in the wrong. The Town Committee and Oblast Committee of the trade unions did not support you. In our country, all labour is paid for. The principle of socialism from each according to his abilities, to each according to his labour is a sham. The Party leaders have forgotten this principle. If you are fulfilling the role of a kiosk minder then you have every right to demand a pay raise or refuse to work. The Party began from a series of "mayovok" [Pre-revolutionary illegal May Day meetings] and stands merely as a leading and guiding force. The strength of the workers is that this is a trade union and the more friendly it is, especially at the lower levels, the stronger its might, and therefore, can achieve anything. The members of the CPSU do not have the earlier authority of the Bolsheviks. They lost it at the moment of the re-naming of the Party.*

This strike is merely one of many, as Pravda noted on July 16: "The strike fever is too high a price for us and 'perestroika.'" The ruling class in the USSR is rightly worried, as workers oppositionist Valery Senderov concludes in his own report: "the conflict with the authorities is just beginning."

—Patrick Kane

## Workshop Talks

(continued from page 1)

ing two jobs to pay the rent. Even a substandard basement apartment anywhere in Queens goes for \$550 a month, plus gas and electric. And they can raise your rent every year.

### HARD WORK, SKILL, BUT NO RAISE

Juan is such a hard worker the manager at the kitchen offered him a permanent job at better pay. Juan had to tell him he's got no papers. So he's still doing the same job, but through the agency, at \$3.35 an hour.

My sister-in-law does have her papers, but she finally had to take a job at \$3.50 an hour. She's a skilled seamstress, but she's working on the floor, snipping the threads on the sweaters, getting bundles and so on. She cleans the toilets too. The boss won't hire a porter. She said she doesn't want to work on the machines there. For the little more money they are paid, the women are yelled at and insulted, work piled around them so they can't even move. And they have to work so, so fast. She says she'll sew, but not like that.

Half the 16 million jobs Reagan brags about creating pay under the poverty line. And the Democrat-controlled Congress could pass a new immigration law this year making it that much harder for workers like Juan to survive. It seems that is being done to help labor, to keep those good-paying jobs for us Americans.

### CONGRESS FAILS TO ACT

But Congress once again couldn't pass a bill to raise the minimum wage a lousy 40 cents next year. It seems that would be inflationary. Anyway, they said it would hurt low-wage workers. I'm sure glad someone is watching out for our interests. And the Senate, on Oct. 11, couldn't muster more than two votes in favor of tax relief for the working poor! And that in an election year! The bill to raise the maximum Earned Income Credit from \$785 to \$989 a year was defeated 85 to 2. It seems that would bust the budget.

Does Congress really believe they can tell workers who happen to be on the wrong side of something called a border that they're going to have to watch their families starve and do nothing about it? They're going to risk their lives, if need be, to sell their labor power in the labor market here, where there's a buyer. And that's what's happening. Only now it's that much harder. Capital is international, and accords itself the privilege of traveling to contract labor and exploit it wherever it wants. It recognizes no borders for itself. Why should workers recognize those borders?

When Reagan sold Congress on tax cuts for the rich in 1981, that was portrayed as a selfless act to create investment and therefore jobs for the workers. Now we have a record number of billionaires, like Donald Trump, who buy up luxury yachts, an airline shuttle that was already working fine, and speculate in real estate. Speculating in real estate supposedly isn't inflationary, though rents for vacant apartments in New York have gone up 43% in three years, but raising the minimum wage is inflationary.

They can pass all the laws they want, but don't tell Juan, and don't tell my sister-in-law, that they're doing it for them. When we start to take care of our own business, Congress will offer to raise the minimum then. It'll be too little and too late. And their laws won't stop workers from making a revolution anymore than they stop workers from crossing the border, when that becomes the concrete necessity.

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## WHAT IS CAPITALISM?

Reading Lou Turner's article about the 500,000 Jamaicans left homeless from Hurricane Gilbert gives one a glimpse of the millions left homeless by capitalism. Both are devastating to human beings, uprooting everything in their paths. In Jamaica, 45 people lost their lives, but each day capitalism causes the death of thousands of lives. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes destroy property and lives, but only on a small scale compared to the destruction of capitalism. Capitalism destroys everything human in sight.

The people can protect themselves somewhat from these natural disasters. The only protection from capitalism is its complete uprooting.

Retired worker  
Orange County, California

The Chicago Tribune is carrying its second major expose of working conditions in the meatpacking industry. The speed-up is so horrendous that even the union-busting bourgeois press openly acknowledges that this phenomenon, coupled with the complete fragmentation of all meatpacking jobs into repetitive tasks, is the reason for a massive increase in permanent injuries.

But what made me feel like screaming is the complicity of the union bureaucrats. The company wants to reserve certain "light duty" jobs for injured workers, but the union insists that these jobs should go to those with the most seniority and argues that the company is only interested in avoiding worker compensation payments. Of course that's what the company wants to do! But why is the union allowing that to be the ground for their argument? If you were in meatpacking wouldn't you want your union to lead an all-out fight against the working conditions that produce all these injuries in the first place?

Disabled auto worker's daughter  
Chicago

Felix Martin in his column last issue showed beautifully that the capitalist system is the ultimate addict, always hungry for workers' lives. I'd say it's hungry for the human spirit itself. I work as a drug counsellor, and live that contradiction of trying to "cure" a sick-

MARXIST-HUMANISM  
AT TWO CONFERENCES

The North American Labor History Conference (held in Detroit Oct. 19-22) had a panel in which auto workers joined labor historians to discuss the future for auto workers. Heather Thompson's paper on the 1972 Lordstown, Ohio, GM strike showed that its intensity was due to the workers' recognition of and response to a drastic, unilateral move by GM to change work rules. Despite this evidence, the thesis of Richard Feldman, author of *End of the Line*, was that the "new workplace culture" has taken over; that union leaders see themselves as part of the corporation, and that management's "quality of work life" programs have convinced workers they are part of the company too. An older Black worker on the panel explained how the changes in management style and language only hid the real production relations. Workers saw the deep division between the labor leadership and the rank-and-file, and did not assume all had been duped by the new culture.

It was significant to me also that the best-sellers at our Marxist-Humanist literature table this year were Raya Dunayevskaya's works—especially her "trilogy of revolution."

Participant  
Detroit

At Hegel Society of America's (HSA) bi-annual meeting at Loyola University, Chicago in October, the topic was Hegel's *Science of Logic*. A world-wide interest in Hegel was evident from the international character of the scholars participating. A paper of special interest to Marxist-Humanists was John Burbidge's, "The Place of the Understanding," because he related the three final syllogisms of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* to his perspective on the "Understanding" in the *Science*. In the discussion on Burbidge's paper, Lou Turner referred to Raya Dunayevskaya's 1974 presentation to the HSA on "Hegel's

ness caused by the system; after detox the addict walks right back into the same world.

Angry  
California

History books make like everything before capitalism was primitive, life was very difficult, and thank God that you were born in this age. These are the great days, like the American Dream. Everybody has a chance in this country. That's bull.

Capitalism is responsible for all this crime, all this drug abuse, because they make people feel like they're failures. If you can't pay your bills, it's your fault. You had every chance in the world to be a millionaire, and you messed it up. So it's your fault. But that's not true. Very few people have a chance.

Meatpacking worker  
Chicago

...AND WHAT IS FREELY  
ASSOCIATED LABOR?

After reading chapter six of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* on the Paris Commune and Marx's concept of freely associated labor, I don't think that the question is just who controls the machine. It's how and for what purpose the machine was designed from the beginning, before it even shows up on the factory floor. Who ordered it? And why is it even making that product in the first place? Out of what material?

It isn't just a question of having control over what there is now, because what there is now was, from the beginning, from the very time the idea entered somebody's head, conceived and developed under capitalism. It has to be rethought from the beginning. It's not just us taking over the plant and saying, Okay, we're going to slow it down and rotate jobs every two hours—or whatever we decide to do. It's not that. It's a whole lot more than that.

Woman production worker  
Chicago

Absolute as New Beginning." Burbidge responded: "I was one of those who spoke on that same panel. We were heavy. She was marvelous! And fully Hegelian."

Many had an opportunity to engage in a variety of discussions on Raya Dunayevskaya's unique interpretation of Hegel's "Absolute as New Beginning." The liveliness of that Idea was evident both from the creativity of new insights gained and in the new ongoing relationships that emerged from the conference.

Participant  
New York

YOUTH AS SUBJECT  
OF REVOLUTION

I received two papers at the same time that dealt with Youth but seemed like absolute opposites—the October issue of N&L and a so-called youth issue put out by the Socialist Labor Party (SLP). In N&L, Sheila Fuller's essay shows youth not just as force of revolution but Subject of revolution. The SLP calls on youth to stand with the workers as auxiliary force. They review one of my favorite albums by Tracy Chapman and critique it because it doesn't call for socialist industrial unionism. They especially critique the song "Talking 'bout revolution"—but the words in all the songs, to me, deal with what life is for youth, with racism, violence, the gap in wealth, with the need for revolution.

Sheila's essay showed the dual movement of thought and action from the 1950s through the 1980s and how youth took part. What was especially great to me was how it showed that it was not just students but working youth. In Poland 18 and 20-year-olds were leading the recent strikes and challenging not just the government but their own leaders getting snowed in by "glasnost." If

## Readers' Views

we limit our goal today we will get nowhere. That's why, as a young worker, I cannot leave thought to a so-called leader with a narrow view.

Young worker  
New Jersey

Sheila Fuller shows strongly that what is uniquely Marxist-Humanist is the category of "youth idealism as revolutionary," i.e., when youth are following through the Idea of Freedom, then that can "bring them alongside the workers as builders of the new society."

But the title of the essay—"The emergence and development of youth as a revolutionary category"—falls a bit short. Other political tendencies have singled out youth as "revolutionary category" (and in the 1960s, some say only youth). Fuller shows what is uniquely Marxist-Humanist is youth as Subject, inseparable from the Idea.

A "youth of the 1960s"  
Los Angeles

I've thought about being a youth growing up in schools, in a system where I've had no control, and I'm an underdog trying to create something for myself. Workers are underdogs too, trying to create something for themselves. But Sheila Fuller's essay also talks about how, even though there were tons of youth involved in the "turbulent 1960s," the revolution didn't happen because something was missing. Being a youth and going through Marxist-Humanist ideas is really different than just being a youth going up against society. It's not going to happen without something besides activity.

Young woman student  
New York City

## THE EUROPEAN SCENE

A general picture of the European political scene was shown in the last French elections. Many were frightened by the extremists on the right that were proposing Nazi racial solutions. The outbreak of racism is most obvious in France and England, but has become a question for political discussion in all of Europe. It is especially alarming because Europeans identify racism with fascism. Even in Italy there have been racist incidents involving African immigrants. Those who support racism use Malthus' theory that the population will increase at a faster rate than food production and thus a part of the population is destined to die of hunger. In addition they accept that the free market is essential to democracy and thus that part of the population is destined to poverty and unemployment. The fact that these questions are seriously discussed, at the moment when Russia has declared that socialism cannot work, shows how dangerous the situation is. There is really a need for a new ideological response.

Margaret Ellingham  
Italy

## THE ORGANIZATION QUESTION

I need to subscribe to your paper. My own field is sociology which seems more bent on solving its empirically defined problems than on achieving the kind of lucidity your writers achieve. I would like to think that it is possible to articulate a framework of ideas which is theoretically sophisticated enough to allow all the currently diverse manifestations of human liberation to be perceived clearly, and to provide a forum in which this problem of organization can be worked out. Keep up your good work!

Graduate student  
Syracuse, N.Y.

"I do not consider one who joins an organization one day and leaves it the next day to be serious either about organization or about philosophy." This statement from Raya's column on "Hegel's Absolute and The Organization of Thought" in the Aug.-Sept. 1988 N&L means to me that the organization Marxist-Humanists are building has to be more serious and better organized than the system we are revolting against. It's the only way we can meet the capitalist challenge of our age.

Absolutely a member  
Chicago

## THE CHURCH: CUT AND RUN?

The Catholic Church has just stunned many of its poor parishioners with the announcement that 43 of its churches in the poor neighborhoods of Detroit will be closed down. Detroit has been suffering from factory abandonment for several years, as the rust belt spread and the neighborhood went to hell. The Church put its computers to work on falling attendance and mounting church deficits and did what any capitalist institution would do—cut the overhead, cut your losses and run. If it follows past practices, it will take the tax free property on which these institutions stand and sell them for another tax-free windfall.

Some of the poor Blacks who have been re-assigned to the adjacent Grosse Pointe area (all white) fear being picked up by the police when they go to church. It happens all the time, for no Blacks can afford to live in the Grosse Pointes.

Peter Mallory  
Chicago

WOMEN'S  
STUDIES,  
WOMEN'S  
FREEDOM

I understand the feelings of Terry Moon about the National Women's Studies Conference she wrote about in your July issue, in the article: "Women's studies, women's freedom: two separate paths?" We can never forget the ultimate goal of Women's Liberation is to achieve the freedom of all human beings. It's a dangerous tendency of feminist scholars to try to shun away from the realities of women. In that case, Women's Studies loses its relationship to life.

Feminist  
Mainland China

I'm especially interested in the articles in *News & Letters* on women's liberation because when I was in Nicaragua this summer, a lot of my friends were older women who refused to get married because the situation for women was so bad. Because of the economic situation, everyone has to work in Nicaragua, so there's no discrimination in work. But women I knew who were married would come home from work and then spend hours cooking, doing the wash, taking care of children. And they don't have machines to help them like we do here.

Latin America solidarity activist  
New York City

I appreciated Terry Moon's response to Susan Easton's essay on Raya Dunayevskaya in the Oct. N&L. I have been trying to think what Easton meant, when she said that philosophy was "truncated" in Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's *Philosophy of Revolution*. Perhaps she meant that Dunayevskaya's philosophy is open-ended, and if you don't understand philosophy as living, it's probably hard to accept non-closure of an idea.

Feminist  
Los Angeles

## TWO FRIGHTFUL ELECTIONS

The polls here show the Conservatives ahead and the Liberals slipping badly. The NDP (New Democratic Party) is up but not nearly enough for any big breakthroughs. The thought of another four years of Brian "MuLooney" is quite frightening.

Reader  
Ontario, Canada

It is chilling, indeed, to imagine a Bush presidency. Dunayevskaya always pointed out that Reaganism was not just McCarthyism, but that with Reagan, McCarthyism had the power of the presidency. And now ex-CIA-head Bush aims to make not "Communist" but "liberal" the target of the full-force attack.

But then I look at something Dunayevskaya once wrote in the 1980s that I copied out and put above my desk: "Nothing gets me so furious as to see that a retrogressive step objectively gets people into subjective retrogression. For me, it is the exact opposite: I start a new stage."

Marxist-Humanist  
Los Angeles



# Raya Dunayevskaya's 1953 'Letters on Hegel's Absolutes'

## Introductory Note by the Resident Editorial Board

"The abysmal lower depths that the Reagan retrogression has sunk the world into throughout the seven years of this decade has polluted the ideological air, not only of the ruling class, but has penetrated the Left itself. Such a deep retrogression urgently demands that, along with the economic and political tasks facing us, we look for philosophic new beginnings."

—"On Political Divides and Philosophic New Beginnings,"  
 by Raya Dunayevskaya, June 5, 1987

"In Hegelian dialectics, the philosophic moment is a determinant; even if the person who was driven to articulate the Idea of that 'moment' was very nearly unconscious as to its depth and its ramifications, it remained the element that governed the concretization that follows the laborious birth that poured forth in a torrent nevertheless."

—From Dunayevskaya's June 1, 1987 presentation, published as "Raya Dunayevskaya's Final Dialogue With Us" in N&L, January-February, 1988

### I.

The following publication of Raya Dunayevskaya's 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" marks its first appearance in a widely circulated form. What compels its publication now is two-fold: the need for philosophic new beginnings in face of today's economic, political and ideological crises and the necessity to overcome the separation between an epochal philosophic breakthrough and its organizational expression.

The 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" represent the philosophic birth of Marxist-Humanism: it is the "philosophic moment" which determined Dunayevskaya's development of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism from the 1950s to the 1980s. Her return to this philosophic moment in 1986-87 became of crucial importance in the course of working on her planned book "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: the 'Party' and Forms of Organization Born from Spontaneity."<sup>1</sup> The challenge that flows from Raya's last writings, as from the development of her body of ideas as a whole, is to recreate Marxist-Humanism in face of today's crises through the philosophic return to and working out of her 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes." Since her death on June 9, 1987, meeting this challenge has become even more urgent—and more difficult—than ever before.

But while the 1953 Letters were the "ground and roof" from which Dunayevskaya developed Marxist-Humanism philosophically, organizationally, and politically, the fact remains that News and Letters Committees never published them in a widely circulated form. Over-

1. Dunayevskaya's notes for her unfinished book are contained in Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, donated to Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs as Vol. 13 of her Archives. It is available on microfilm.

coming the separation between Raya's epochal philosophic breakthrough and our organizational expression is the hardest of all our tasks. We cannot continue to skip over the philosophic moment of Marxist-Humanism from which the whole body of ideas flowed. We publish these Letters now, in the spirit of having the readers of News & Letters join us in the process of overcoming the separation between philosophy and organization, which remains an untrodden path in all post-Marx Marxism.

### II.

The 1953 Letters were written in the midst of a new objective-subjective turning point in the post-World War II era. It was a period of rich theoretic development on the part of Dunayevskaya, who had been involved in a decade-long exploration of Hegel's dialectic and its relation to Marx and Lenin.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, new stirrings for freedom by the masses were emerging. In the U.S., the introduction of Automation into industry was being met with new revolts by American workers, while in Russia it was the period following Stalin's death.

On the very day that Stalin died on March 5, 1953, Dunayevskaya wrote an analysis which argued that an incubus had been lifted from the minds of the Russian masses and that new revolts were sure to follow. When she asked Charles Denby (the Black production worker who became editor of News & Letters from 1955 to 1983) to find out the reaction of workers in his plant to Stalin's death, he reported one worker's statement—"I have just the man to take his place: my foreman."<sup>3</sup> It became a jumping-off point for a series of articles by Dunayevskaya on the world ramifications of Stalin's death, which sparked intense debates within Correspondence Committees (of which she was a co-leader, along with C.L.R. James and Grace Lee Boggs).

So deep was Dunayevskaya's search for an absolute opposite to this age of totalitarianism that, as she put it in 1983, "I was not fully satisfied with the economic and political analysis, but wanted to work out the philosophic ground. All these happenings couldn't be accidental; nothing that historic could be without reason; I felt I had to...work this out."<sup>4</sup>

Of crucial importance was Dunayevskaya's dialogue with Hegel's dialectic throughout the years 1941-53, which included studies of Lenin's 1914 commentary on Hegel's "Doctrine of the Notion" and Marx's recreation of the Hegelian dialectic in both his 1844 "Humanist

2. For Dunayevskaya's decade-long theoretic work that preceded the 1953 Letters, see Vols. I-III, as well as Vol. XII, of The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development. See also her discussion in The Coal Miners' General Strike of 1949-50 and the Birth of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. (Chicago: News and Letters, 1984).

3. See Dunayevskaya's In Memoriam to "Charles Denby, Worker-Editor," in News & Letters, November, 1983. This appears as an appendix in the forthcoming Wayne State University Press edition of Denby's Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal.

4. "Charles Denby, Worker-Editor," by Raya Dunayevskaya. For another view by Dunayevskaya of her path to the 1953 Letters, see the Prologue to her 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S. (Detroit: News and Letters, 1980).

## The Letter of May 12, 1953

Dear H:<sup>1</sup>

May 12, 1953

I am going to take the plunge and if it turns out that I have behaved like a bull in a china shop—well, I simply have to take my chances or I will never get to sleep nights at all.<sup>2</sup> There is no concrete problem that I meet daily, no matter how minor, that doesn't send me scurrying to the LOGIC and by now I'm so drunk with it all that I brazenly shout that in the dialectic of the Absolute Idea is the dialectic of the party and that I have just worked it out.

Just like that. I have taken the plunge.<sup>3</sup> But I will restrain myself from beginning with the conclusions and the differentiation of us from Lenin and even us from 1948<sup>4</sup> but I will have you bear with me as I go through the whole last chapter of the Logic. However, before I do so, let me state what I am not doing: 1) I am not touching upon the mass party; the workers will do what they will do and until they do we can have only the

1. "H" stands for "Hauser," the organizational name used by Grace Lee (Boggs) in this period; "W," the signature at the end, stands for "Weaver," the organizational name used by Raya Dunayevskaya in this period.

2. This sentence does not appear in the 1956 edition.

3. The first two sentences of this paragraph do not appear in the 1956 edition.

4. The phrase "even us from 1948" refers to a 1948 manuscript by C.L.R. James, then co-leader with Raya Dunayevskaya of the

faintest intimation of the great leap. 2) This is not 1948, but 1953; I am not concerned with spontaneity versus organization, nor with Stalinism which the workers will overcome.

I am concerned only with the dialectic of the vanguard party of that type of grouping like ours, be it large or small, and its relationship to the mass.

Let's begin with the beginning: "The Absolute Idea has now turned out to be the identity of the Theoretical and the Practical Idea..." [p.466 J&S; 824M; 548G]<sup>5</sup> At this moment this means to me that the party is the identity or unity of the activity of the leadership and the activity of the ranks. "[E]ach of these by itself is one-sided and contains the Idea itself only as a sought Beyond and an unattained goal; each consequently is a synthesis of the tendency, and both contains and does not contain the Idea..." [p.466 J&S; 824M; 548-549G] And further down on the same page we have the warn-

"Johnson-Forest Tendency" within the Socialist Workers Party. James' manuscript, first called the "Nevada Document," has since been published in book form as Notes on Dialectics (Westport: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1980).

5. Hegel's Science of Logic, Vol. II, translated by W.H. Johnston and L.G. Struthers (New York: MacMillan, 1929); all quotes in the following text are from this edition. The first parenthetical page citation refers to Vol. II of this Johnston & Struthers translation, designated hereafter as "J&S"; the second is to the translation by

Essays" and Capital. Her dialogue with Hegel reached a new philosophic stage with her May 12, 1953 Letter focusing on the "Absolute Idea" in Hegel's Science of Logic and May 20, 1953 Letter focusing on "Absolute Mind" in Hegel's Philosophy of Mind. As she said, "I turned to philosophy and saw, in the Absolute Idea, the breakdown of the division between theory and practice—the movement to total freedom."<sup>6</sup> This philosophic breakthrough preceded by six weeks the first mass upsurge from within Communist totalitarianism, the June 17, 1953 East German workers' revolt.

As Dunayevskaya wrote in 1973 in her Philosophy and Revolution: From Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao (p. 300), these 1953 Letters "proved to be a new divide within Marxism" between those who stopped at the economic analysis of Russia as state-capitalist and herself, as she proceeded to develop the Humanism of Marxism for our state-capitalist age. Following the break-up of Correspondence Committees she established News and Letters Committees in 1955. Dunayevskaya had the 1953 Letters published in mimeographed form as part of the first pamphlet of News and Letters, Philosophic Notes, in 1955; it was re-issued in 1956.

### III.

At its Labor Day 1988 Convention, News and Letters Committees voted to publish the 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" in a widely circulated form, first in the pages of News & Letters, and then in a printed pamphlet along with Dunayevskaya's June 1, 1987 presentation. The text that follows is an exact reproduction of the 1953 Letters as prepared by Dunayevskaya in the 1955 mimeographed pamphlet Philosophic Notes. No changes or insertions have been made, except for correcting some obvious typographical errors. We have taken the liberty of adding the page references to all the quotations from Hegel in brackets. All footnotes have been added in 1988 by the editors.

The pamphlet containing these 1953 Letters and June 1, 1987 presentation is due off the press in January, 1989. This pamphlet will contain a fully annotated list of all changes introduced by the author into the text of the 1953 Letters between its first publication in 1955 and its re-publication (in mimeographed form) in 1956 and 1974. For this publication, we have noted in footnotes the important textual changes in the editions of 1956 and 1974 from that of 1955.

In publishing this document now, we are inviting all readers of News & Letters, to join us in the process of recreating the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism on the basis of its philosophic moment. It is part of the crucial labor of working out new philosophic beginnings in face of today's economic, political and ideological crises.

—The Resident Editorial Board  
 October 27, 1988

6. This quotation is from Dunayevskaya's Introduction to the 1956 mimeographed publication of her 1953 Letters.

ing that the Absolute Idea "contains the highest opposition within itself."

While the staggering truth of this last phrase sinks in, I will make one more quotation from that page: "The Absolute Idea is the only object and content of philosophy. As it contains every determinateness, and its essence is to return to itself through its self-determination or particularization, it has various phases. It is the business of philosophy to recognize it in them. Nature and Spirit are different manners of presenting its existence..." [p.466 J&S; 824M; 549G]

Because the party is the only object and content of our philosophy here, I wish to make two jumps here. One is to contrast to the manner in which Other is explained on this page where "Notion...as person, is impenetrable and atomic subjectivity; while at the same time it is not exclusive individuality, but is, for itself, universality and cognition, and in its Other has its own objectivity for object." [p.466 J&S; 824M; 549G] Here then Other is the proletariat outside. What I wish to contrast to it is the description of Other when the No-

A.V. Miller (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969) and is designated as "M"; the third is to the German ed., published as Vol. 6 of Werke, edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1969), and is designated hereafter as "G."

(continued on page 6)

# Raya Dunayevskaya's 1953

(continued from page 5)

tion is further developed on p.477 where Other turns out to be, not the proletariat outside, but the party itself. Hegel says:<sup>6</sup>

"The second or negative and mediated determination is at the same time the mediating determination. At first it may be taken as simple determination, but in truth it is a reference or relation; for it is negative—the negative, however, of the positive, and includes the latter. It is not therefore the Other of a term to which it is indifferent, for thus it would be neither an Other, nor a reference or relation; it is the Other in itself, the Other of an Other. It thus includes its own Other, and so is contradiction, or the posited dialectic of itself." [pp.476-477 J&S; 834-835M; 562G]

The other jump that I referred to that I wish to make is to leave the Logic for a moment and go to the last chapter in the PHENOMENOLOGY. In that chapter on Absolute Knowledge Hegel writes: "The object as a whole is the mediated result [the syllogism—*Baillie trans.*] or the passing of universality into individuality through specification, as also the reverse process from individual to universal through cancelled individuality or specific determination." [p.790B; 480M; 550H]

Take a second look at the phrase, "the mediated result" and remember that our object is the party and that we are working out the triangular relationship not only politically but philosophically; that, syllogistically speaking, the party is the totality, the mediated result of the three layers<sup>8</sup> and at the same time it is what it is by its relationship to the proletariat outside, on the



"Women Incendiaries" of the Paris Commune

one hand, and to the universal of socialism, on the other hand, except that the two are now not "on the one hand" and "on the other hand" but interpenetrated.

Hegel goes on (p.804): "Spirit is the movement of the self which empties (externalizes) itself of self and sinks itself within its own substance, and qua subject, both has gone out of that substance into itself, making its substance an object and a content, and also supersedes this distinction of objectivity and content." [p.804B; 490M; 561H]

6. In the 1956 edition this paragraph reads as follows:

Because the party is the only object and content of our philosophy here, I wish to make two jumps here. One is to contrast the description of Other on this page to that on p. 477. On p. 466 he defines Notion "as person (which) is impenetrable and atomic subjectivity; while at the same time it is not exclusive individuality, but is, for itself, universality and cognition, and in its Other has its own objectivity for object." Here, then, Other is the proletariat outside. On p. 477, however, Other turns out to be, not the proletariat outside, but the party itself.

7. Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*, translated with an Introduction by J.B. Baillie (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931). All quotes from Hegel's *Phenomenology* in the following text are from this edition. The first parenthetical page citation refers to this Baillie translation, designated hereafter as "B"; the second refers to the translation by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) and is designated as "M"; the third refers to the German text as edited by Johannes Hoffmeister (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1952) and is designated as "H."

8. C.L.R. James developed a concept of "three layers" after the Johnson-Forest Tendency left the SWP, patterned on his interpretation of Vol. IX of Lenin's *Selected Works*. The term "first layer" referred to the "intellectual leadership"; "second layer" referred to the "experienced politicians"; "third layer" referred to the rank-and-file workers, women, Blacks and youth who were seen as representing the masses outside. With her 1953 philosophic breakthrough, Dunayevskaya worked out the totally new concept of the relationship between the "movement from theory" and the "movement from practice that is itself a form of theory."

So Socialism too as it "externalizes" itself in parties, and in this case I mean not the vanguard grouping but the Paris Commune, the Soviets, the CIO, and so is Hegel talking of history: "The other aspect, however, in which Spirit comes into being, History, is the process of becoming in terms of knowledge, a conscious self-mediating process—Spirit externalized and emptied into Time." [p.807B; 492M; 563H] But he does not leave it at history (which includes historic development for us not only of the above, but the historic development of the party 1903, 1920-3, now). He ends Absolute Knowledge with: (p.808)

"The goal, which is Absolute Knowledge or Spirit knowing itself as Spirit, finds its pathway in the recollection of spiritual forms (Geister) as they are in themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their spiritual kingdom. Their conservation, looked at from the side of their free existence appearing in the form of contingency, is History; looked at from the side of their intellectually comprehended organization, it is the Science of the ways in which knowledge appears. Both together, or History (intellectually) comprehended (begriffen), form at once the recollection and the Golgotha of Absolute Spirit, the reality, the truth, the certainty of its throne, without which it were lifeless, solitary, and alone." [p.808B; 493M; 564H]

Now the way I see this connect with the Logic [p.466 J&S; 824M; 548G], where I left off before I began jumping around, is that where the "various phases" could have meant stages of development within the party such as 1903, 1920-3, etc., the recognition of the different manners of the existence of Absolute Idea as Nature and Spirit, or the country and something like the CIO rather than a "strict party" meant you are a fool if you cannot recognize the party in that for that is socialism just as at one time it was sufficient to define it as "electricity plus soviets."<sup>9</sup> The world concepts, the American roots, and us. We will come back to that, but now I wish to return to Hegel as he develops his Absolute Idea logically. On the next page (467) he writes: "Thus the logical Idea has itself as infinite form for content....As opposed to form, content appears as Other and as given...."

"The Absolute Idea itself has only this further content, that the form-determination is its own perfected totality—the pure Notion....What remains therefore to be considered here is not a content as such, but the universal element of its form—that is, the method." [p.467 J&S; 825M; 550G]

In the party both as political organization and as the realization of the theory of knowledge, the "form-determinations" or form of relations between leaders and ranks, between the various layers, and within each layer tells the whole story. There is no content outside of that. Or, once again to stick close to Hegel, "The method therefore is both soul and substance, and nothing is either conceived or known in its truth except in so far as it is completely subject to the method..." [p.468 J&S; 826M; 551-552G]

Hegel brings this development of method to a climax by contrasting sharply what it is to inquiring cognition where it is "in the position of a tool, of a means which stands on the subjective side, whereby the method relates itself to the object" [p.469 J&S; 827M; 552G] to what it is in the dialectic: "But in true cognition the method is not merely a quantity of certain determinations: it is the fact that the Notion is determined in and for itself, and is the mean only because it equally has the significance of objective, so that, in the conclusion, it does not merely achieve an external determinateness through the method, but is posited in its identity with the subjective Notion." [p.469 J&S; 827M; 553G]

It is directly after this that Hegel discloses to me the secret of something that I have been chewing over like a dog does a bone, for many a moon—the intuition of the leader which he calls "internal intuition." First, let's watch the process of arriving at internal intuition: 1) method only has to have a beginning and so that is where we must begin 2) but this beginning (and he warns later that "neither in actuality nor in thought" is there any beginning "so simple and abstract as is commonly imagined) is not "the immediate of sensuous intuition" which "is manifold and individual." 3) no, this beginning is "internal intuition." [pp.470, 471 J&S; 827, 828, 829M; 554, 555G]

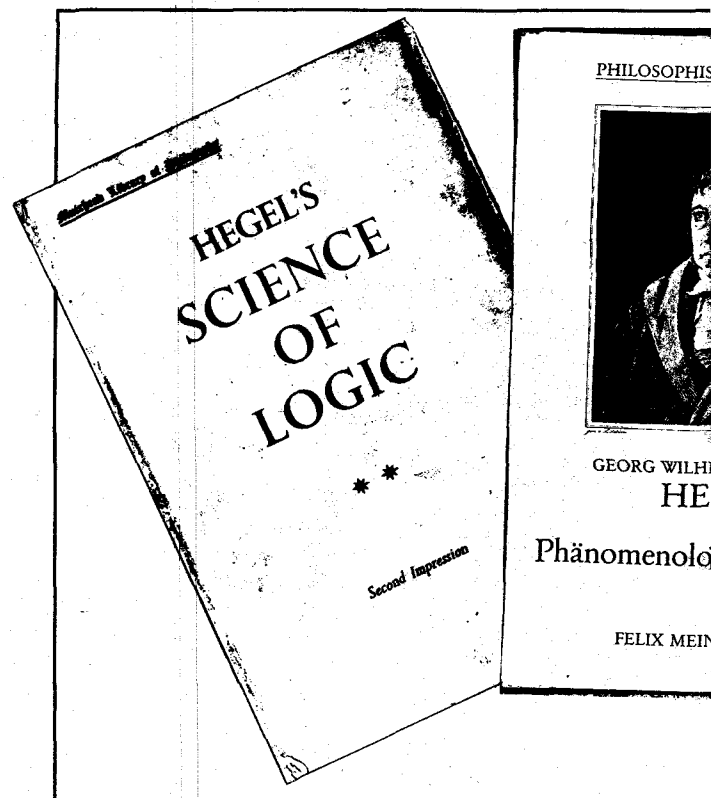
Secondly, note the contrast between "the immediate of sensuous intuition" and which comes from that which is, from the way, we would say, the third layer lives, and "the internal intuition" of the leader which comes from the way he thinks.

Jam these two opposites together, and you will first understand a sentence back on p.467: "The self-determination therefore in which alone the Idea is, is to hear itself speak..." [p.467 J&S; 825M; 550G] In a word, the self-development of socialism, objectively and subjectively,

9. This refers to Lenin's 1920-21 view that "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country." See Lenin's *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), Vol. 31, p. 419 and p. 516.

tively, gives off impulses which come one way to the leader, another way to the class as a whole, but what is important is that it is determined to appear "to hear itself speak." And the beautiful part about the "internal intuition" is that this "beginning must be inherently defective and must be endowed with the impulse of self-development." [p.471 J&S; 829M; 555G]

So that, finally, we reach Hegel's conclusion that nothing in life or in thought has a beginning so simple as is imagined but that "every beginning must be made from the Absolute, while every progress is merely the exhibition of the Absolute....The progress is therefore not a kind of overflow, which it would be if in truth that which begins were already the Absolute; rather the progress consists in this, that the universal determines itself and is the universal for itself, that is, is equally also individual and subject. It is the Absolute only in its completion." [pp.471-2 J&S; 829M; 555-556G]



Various editions of Hegel's works: English edition of *Mind* (Spirit), Spanish edition of the *Encyclopedia of Mind*.

So although we began with the universal of socialism and although we have seen socialism in the various phases of the Commune, the Soviets, the CIO, it is not yet IT for it can be it "only in its completion." The new society will not be until it is; now we see only intimations, approximations, but it is nevertheless all around us, in the lives of the workers and in the theory of the party, so until the solution of the conflict and the abolition of the division, we are back to stages of development: "cause is the highest stage in which the concrete Notion as beginning has an immediate existence in the sphere of necessity; but it is not yet a subject which, as such, preserves itself also in its actual realization." [p.472 J&S; 830M; 556G]

Here I wish you to remember that in this page and in the next is where Lenin made his own 16-point definition of the dialectic, the essence of which was threefold:<sup>10</sup> 1) the transformation of anything into its opposite (collapse of 2nd Int.); 2) the absolute in every relative which is the transition to something else (Monopoly as eve of socialist revolution); and 3) thought reflects reality (objective world connections). That we can fit Lenin in too here historically can now be seen from the fact that in the previous section on The Idea of Cognition Lenin had gone further, saying that "Man's cognition not only reflects the objective world but creates,"<sup>11</sup> but when he reached the Absolute Idea it was not the creativity that he developed but the objective world connections because to him in 1915 the Idea as "objective truth" of necessity predominated over any actual reconstruction of society, or the 1917 "socialism looking at us through all windows."<sup>12</sup>

We, however, can go further, and not only further than Lenin but further than we ourselves did in 1948 when the Nevada Dialectics so profoundly held forth on the positive in the negative. But holding fast to the positive in the negative then meant only the general development of socialism through overcoming Stalinism, whereas now we can be more concrete, at least in relation to our own organization where the mediating deter-

10. See Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976), Vol. 38, pp. 220-22. Also see Appendix B of Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom*, from 1776 until Today (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), pp. 349-50, for the first English translation of Lenin's "Abstract of Hegel's 'Science of Logic,'" as there are significant differences between Dunayevskaya's translation and that of the later editions. Hereafter, the editions are cited as "Lenin, CW, Vol. 38" and "RD, App. B," respectively.

11. Lenin, CW, Vol. 38, p. 212; RD, App. B, p. 347. Both editions quote Lenin's aphorism fully as: "Man's cognition not only reflects the objective world, but creates it."

12. See Lenin, CW, Vol. 25, p. 363.



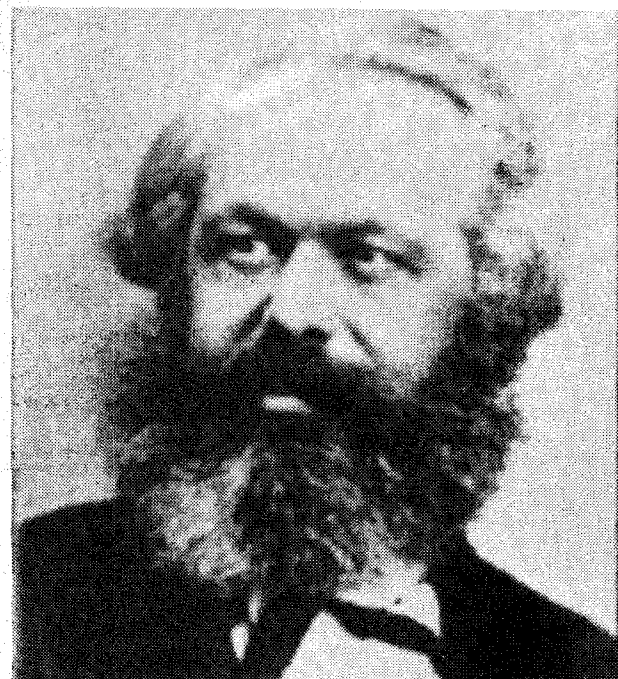


# 'Letters on Dunayevskaya's Hegel's Absolutes'

(continued from page 7)

an impulse to transcend the latter; and, as last result, pure truth becomes the beginning of another sphere and science. This transition need here only be intimated." [p.485 J&S; 843M; 572-573G] And then he goes into how the Idea posits itself and is liberation. That, he says, he cannot fully develop here; he can only intimate it.

Now you will recall that that is precisely what Marx does in the Accumulation of Capital when he reaches the laws of concentration and centralization of capital and socialization of labor. He says he cannot develop these, but he can give an intimation, and this intimation turns out to be that 1) the ultimate would be centralization of capital "in the hands of one single capitalist corporation" 2) that it would not matter if that occurs peacefully or violently, 3) but that with the centralization grows also the revolt, and it is not just any revolt but one that is "organized, united, disciplined by the



Karl Marx in 1867, the year of the publication of *Capital*

very mechanism of capitalist production."<sup>23</sup>

H, are you as excited as I? Just as Marx's development of the form of the commodity and money came from Hegel's syllogistic U P I, so the Accumulation of Capital (the General Absolute Law) is based on The Absolute Idea.<sup>24</sup>

Remember also that we kept on repeating Lenin's aphorism that Marx may not have left us "a" Logic, but he left us the logic of Capital.<sup>25</sup> This is it—the logic of Capital is the dialectic of bourgeois society: the state capitalism at one pole and the revolt at the other.

At one stage we tried to divide socialization of labor from revolt, the former being still capitalistic, and the latter the beginning of socialism. We didn't get very far because that socialization was capitalistic but revolt liberates it from its capitalistic integument. Marx, however, dealing with the dialectic of capitalist society did not make the negation of the negation any more concrete, but, on the contrary, in the last chapter returns to the origins of capitalism.

Now we are ready to return to the last few sentences of the Logic ending with "But this next resolution of the pure Idea—to determine itself as external Idea—thereby only posits for itself the mediation out of which the Notion arises as free existence that out of externality has passed into itself; arises to perfect its self-liberation in the Philosophy of Spirit, and to discover the highest Notion of itself in that logical science as the pure Notion which forms a Notion of itself." [p.486 J&S; 843-844M; 573G]

(Please, Hauser, can you get a hold of a copy of Philosophy of Spirit or is it Mind? I am brazen enough to want to swim there too. I have an instinct that we

23. Karl Marx, *Capital* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1906), Vol. I, pp. 836-37. Also see the Marx Library edition, trans. by Ben Fowkes (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), p. 929.

24. This refers to Hegel's syllogism "Universal-Particular-Individual"; see "The Notion" in Hegel's *Science of Logic*; J&S, Vol. II, pp. 234-257; M, pp. 600-622; G, pp. 273-300. See also Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I, chapter 1, "The Commodity," and chapter 25, "The General Law of Capitalist Accumulation."

25. See Lenin, CW, Vol. 38, p. 317; RD, App. B, p. 353.

## The Letter of May 20, 1953

May 20, 1953

Dear Hauser:

Please do not interpret this as any prodding of you to commit yourself on my analysis of the Absolute Idea; it is only that I cannot stand still and so rushed directly to the Philosophy of Mind. I then reread the Preface, Introduction, and Absolute Knowledge in the *Phenomenology of Mind*, the Introduction, Three Attitudes to Objectivity, and the Absolute Idea in the *Smaller Logic* and the Absolute Idea in the *Science of Logic*. After that I read from cover to cover Lenin's phenomenal Vol. IX which is the Absolute Idea in action, reread Marx's *Accumulation of Capital* and the *Fetishism of Commodities* in Vol. I of *Capital*, the final part in Vol. III, and the *Civil War in France*. All this I did on my own time, so to speak, that is to say, between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. after putting in very full days and evenings in concrete org. activity. I note these facts only in order to show how this Absolute Idea has me coming and going. Along with keeping all these in the back of my head then as I read the *Philosophy of Mind*, I made up the following outline of the development of the vanguard party and its relationship to the mass movements:

The party as a "simple" class instrument—Communist League, the First International (reflecting 1848 class struggles and the Paris Commune)

The party as divider of tendencies within Marxism—Lenin's party of 1903-17 (1905 & 1917 revolutions)

The party as divider of politics from economics—The German Social Democracy (trade union aristocracy of labor and 1914 betrayal)

The party as different social layers—1920—(in Russia Lenin to leaders and ranks; in Germany ranks to leaders)

The party as suppresser of ranks and destroyer of revolutionism—Stalinism—(Spanish Revolution, CIO, National Resistance Movements) 1923-53

Now ourselves, 41-50—clarification of ideas, elaboration of theory, eyes on mass movements. '51-'53—life in party and third layer as source of theory. Something totally new appears—100 years becomes practically no more than mere background for listening and digging—B,<sup>27</sup> Woman, Youth—all come from ranks—something like the

27. "B" refers to Charles Denby's *Indignant Heart* (see footnote 17).

Great Beginning in Russia. What is so remarkable is that it comes not as direct result of any revolution, but rather as the accumulated experiences and feelings and social thinking when placed in the proper theoretic and climatic atmosphere of live people. To this the paper is the climax not alone because it has never been but because it could never have been.<sup>28</sup> Only one who knew it could be could go through the toil of the negative, the labor and suffering, of not a single break in the cadre of the "continuators" of Leninism. And (Note the "and" rather than a "but") only when it did appear can we have perspectives that we have. This therefore is not just a general interpenetration of objective and subjective but one so concrete that it is impossible to say where theory leaves off and practice begins. This can be so only because the elements of the new society are everywhere in evidence.

First now you are where I was as I read the *Philosophy of Mind* which, to me, is the new society. That's what materialistic reading of the final chapters of Hegel means to me.<sup>29</sup> (To say the end of Hegel is highly idealistic is to deny that the dialectical laws apply in their totality. Perhaps I am very rash but that is how I feel at this moment. Unfortunately, in this field I can do no more than feel for I most certainly have no knowledge or practice and I am totally dependent on you.)<sup>30</sup>

I limit myself to the following sections of the *Philosophy*: Introduction, Free Mind, Absolute Mind.<sup>31</sup>

In the Introduction Hegel states what the three stages in the development of the Mind are:<sup>32</sup> 1) in the form of self-relation where "the ideal of totality of the

28. In the 1956 edition this sentence reads as follows:

To this our paper is the climax not alone because it has never been, but because such type of paper could not have been born before.

29. In the 1956 edition the first two sentences of this paragraph read as follows:

First now you are where I was as I read the *Philosophy of Mind*, which, to me, is the new society. That's what a materialistic reading of the final chapter of Hegel means to me.

30. In the 1956 edition the final two sentences within this parenthesis do not appear.

31. In the 1974 edition this sentence reads as follows:

I will limit myself to the following sections of the *Philosophy of Mind*—Introduction, Free Mind, Absolute Mind.

32. In the 1956 edition this sentence reads as follows:

In the Introduction Hegel states what the three stages in the development of Mind are:

couldn't get very far there when we tried it before because we equated Mind to party, but now that I believe the dialectic of the Absolute Idea is the dialectic of the party, I feel that Mind is the new society gestating in the old, and I feel sure we could get a lot of very valuable dialectical developments there, and what is so significant about that also is the building of the new within the old makes it possible to stop jumping from high point to high point but rather to follow concretely, since this new is in the daily struggle.)

Somewhere in the letters about Lenin's *Philosophy of Mind* Notebooks it is stated that Lenin was aware of the gap between his Universal ("to a man") and the concrete Russian proletariat, where we are more aware of the identity of the Universal and the concrete American proletariat. What, further, these two years of our organization showed was the high stage of social consciousness of the new layers attracted to us: they practice in the paper before they join and yet they appreciate leadership. Perhaps I'm stretching but I feel that in the Absolute General Law when Marx was developing the dialectic of bourgeois society to its limit and came up with the revolt "united, organized, and disciplined" he also set the limits to the dialectic of the party which is part of bourgeois society and will wither with its passing as will the bourgeois state. It appears to me where objective and subjective are so interpenetrated that the preoccupations of the theoreticians of the man on the street is can we be free when what has arisen is the one-party state, the assertion of freedom, "personal and free" and full liberation takes precedence over economics, politics, philosophy, or rather refuses to be run asunder into three and wants to be one, the knowledge that you can be free.

Do you remember the letter of May 20, 1949: "We are poles apart from Hegel but very close to him in another respect. As materialists we root man in his environment, but now that the real history of humanity is about to begin, the Hegelian concept of speculative reason, comes to life with us, as never before, the on our basis."<sup>25</sup>

W. [Raya Dunayevskaya]

26. This statement is from a letter of C.L.R. James to Grace Le (see *Raya Dunayevskaya* Collection, Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, #1613).



East German workers uprising—June 17, 1953

Idea" is, it is "self-contained and free."<sup>33</sup> 2) Moving from the Mind Subjective he comes to the second stage or "the form of reality" and in this objective world "freedom presents itself under the shape of necessity" 3) From Mind Objective we reach Mind Absolute "the unity of mind as objectivity and of mind as ideality and concept, which essentially and actually is and for ever produces itself, mind in its absolute truth." [para. 385]

Hegel continues (para. 386): "The two first parts of the doctrine of Mind embrace the finite mind. Mind the infinite Idea, and finitude here means the disproportion between the concept and the reality—but with the qualification that it is a shadow cast by the mind's own light—a show or illusion which the mind implicitly in poses as a barrier to itself, in order, by its removal, actually to realize and become conscious of freedom as it very being, i.e., to be fully manifested. The several steps of this activity, on each of which, with their semblance of being, it is the function of the finite mind to linger, and through which it has to pass, are steps in liberation. In the full truth of that liberation is given the identification of the three stages—finding a word presupposed before us, generating a world as our own creation, and gaining freedom from it and in it. To the infinite form of this truth the show purifies itself till it becomes a consciousness of it.

"A rigid application of the category of finitude by the abstract logician is chiefly seen in dealing with Mind and reason: it is held not a mere matter of strict logic."

33. Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, translated by William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), para. 385; all quotes from the *Philosophy of Mind* in the text are to this edition, which is translation of the 1831 edition of this work.

(continued on page 9)



# Dunayevskaya's 'Letters on Hegel's Absolutes'

(continued from page 8)

but treated also as a moral and religious concern, to adhere to the point of view of finitude, and the wish to go further is reckoned a mark of audacity, if not of insanity, of thought."

(Remember "soviets in the sky"?)<sup>34</sup>

If we go from this audacious thinking directly to the Free Mind or end of Section I of Mind Subjective, we will meet with free will in a new social order: "Actual free will is the unity of theoretical and practical mind: a free will which realizes its own freedom of will, now that the formalism, fortuitousness, and contractedness of the practical content up to this point have been superseded. By superseding the adjustments of means therein contained, the will is the immediate individuality self-instituted—an individuality, however, also purified of all that interferes with its universalism, i.e. with freedom itself." [para. 481]

In a word, not the free will of the Ego, the unhappy consciousness, but the free will of the social individual, "an individuality...purified of all that interferes...with freedom itself." [para. 481]

To get to the "will to liberty (which) is no longer an impulse which demands its satisfaction, but the permanent character—the spiritual consciousness grown into a non-impulsive nature," [para. 482] Hegel cannot avoid history, the concrete development:

"When individuals and nations have once got in their heads the abstract concept of full-blown liberty, there is nothing like it in its uncontrollable strength, just because it is the very essence of mind, and that as its very actuality. Whole continents, Africa and the East, have never had this Idea, and are without it still. The Greeks and Romans, Plato and Aristotle, even the Stoics, did not have it. On the contrary, they saw that it is only by birth (as, for example, an Athenian or Spartan citizen), or by strength of character, education, or philosophy (—the sage is free even as a slave and in chains) that the human being is actually free. It was through Christianity that this Idea came into the world." [para. 482]

(I'll be d--d if for us I will need to stop to give the materialistic explanation here. I'm not fighting Hegel's idealism but trying to absorb his dialectics. Anyone who can't think of the Industrial and French Revolutions as the beginnings of modern society, or know that when will to liberty is no longer mere impulse but "permanent character," "spiritual consciousness" it means and can mean only the proletariat that has absorbed all of science in his person, that person better not try to grapple with Hegel.)

Then a rejection of property, the "have" of possession, and directly to the is of the new society: "If to be aware of the idea—to be aware, i.e., that men are aware of freedom as their essence, aim, and object—is matter of speculation, still this very idea itself is the actuality of men—not something which they have, as men, but which they are." [para. 482]

We are ready for the Absolute Mind. I will limit myself to the concluding four paragraphs, para. 574-577.

Hegel begins his conclusions about philosophy which "is the self-thinking Idea, the truth aware of itself" by referring us to the Absolute Idea in the *Smaller Logic*, and there Hegel issued a warning, "It is certainly possible to indulge in a vast amount of senseless declamation about the idea absolute. But its true content is only the whole system of which we have been hitherto examining the development."<sup>35</sup>

Back to para. 574: "the logical system, but with the signification that it is universality approved and certified in concrete content as in its actuality."<sup>36</sup>

I'm here reminded of that total Introduction to the *Smaller Logic* (or perhaps it is time to begin calling it by its right name, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, since the SL is Part I of it and the *Philosophy of Mind* that concerns me now Part III) where he says "the Idea is not so feeble as merely to have a right or an obligation to exist without actually existing." [para. 6] And most certainly Socialism "is not so feeble as merely to have a right or obligation to exist without actually existing." Quite the contrary the new society is evident everywhere, appears within the old.



In January, *News and Letters Committees* will issue a pamphlet containing a fully annotated edition of Raya Dunayevskaya's May 12, and May 20, 1953 "Letters on Hegel's Absolutes" together with her June 1, 1987 presentation. To receive notification of publication please write *News & Letters*, 59 E. Van Buren, Room 707, Chicago, IL 60605

For Selected  
Philosophic Writings of  
Raya Dunayevskaya  
see ad page 11

Let us return to Hegel, still para. 574, "In this way the science has gone back to its beginning: its result is the logical system but as a spiritual principle: out of the presupposing judgment, in which the notion was only implicit and the beginning an immediate—and thus out of the appearance which it had there—it has risen into its pure principle and thus also into its proper medium."

This appearance "gives the motive of the further development." [para. 575] So, like all rational thinkers, we are back at the form of the syllogism: "The first appearance is formed by the syllogism, which is based on the Logical system as starting-point, with Nature for the middle term which couples the Mind with it. The Logical principle turns to Nature and Nature to Mind." [para. 575]

The movement is from the logical principle or theory to nature or practice and from practice not alone to theory but to the new society which is its essence: (Note scrupulously how this development, this practice, sunders itself).

"Nature, standing between the Mind and its essence, sunders itself,<sup>37</sup> not indeed to extremes of finite abstraction, nor itself to something away from them and independent—which, as other than they, only serves as a link between them: for the syllogism is in the Idea and Nature is essentially defined as a transition-point and negative factor, and as implicitly the Idea." [para. 575]

Thus the sundering of practice has been neither to mount the "extremes of finite abstraction" nor as mere link between practice and theory for the triangular development here means that practice itself is "implicitly the Idea."

"Still," continues Hegel, "the mediation of the notion has the external form of transition, and the science of Nature presents itself as the course of necessity, so that it is only in the one extreme that the liberty of the notion is explicit as a self-amalgamation." [para. 575]

By all means let's follow Hegel and hold back from skipping a single link. But also let us not forget that this is only the first syllogism, while "In the second syllogism this appearance is so far superseded, that that syllogism is the standpoint of the Mind itself, which—as the mediating agent in the process—presupposes Nature and couples it with the Logical principle. It is the syllogism where Mind reflects on itself in the Idea: philosophy appears as a subjective cognition, of which lib-

erty is the aim, and which is itself the way to produce it." [para. 576]

Here then Mind itself is "the mediating agent in the process." I cannot help but think of Marx concluding that the Commune is "the form at last discovered to work out the economic emancipation of the proletariat,"<sup>38</sup> and of Lenin in Vol. IX<sup>39</sup> saying that the workers and peasants "must understand that the whole thing now is practice, that the historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, is vitalised by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice," and on the same page (420): "The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms." And so I repeat Mind itself, the new society, is "the mediating agent in the process."<sup>40</sup>

This is where Hegel arrives at Absolute Mind, the third syllogism: "The third syllogism is the Idea of philosophy, which has self-knowing reason, the absolutely-universal, for its middle term: a middle, which divides itself into Mind and Nature, making the former its presupposition, as process of the Idea's subjective activity, and the latter its universal extreme, as process of the objectively and implicitly existing Idea." [para. 577]

No wonder I was so struck, when working out the layers of the party, with the Syllogism which disclosed that either the Universal or the Particular or the Individual could be the middle term. Note carefully that the "middle which divides itself" is nothing less than the absolute universal itself and that, in dividing itself into Mind and Nature it makes Mind the presupposition "as process of the Idea's subjective activity" and Nature "as process of the objectively and implicitly existing Idea."

Here, much as I try not once again to jolt you by sounding as if I were exhorting, I'm too excited not to rejoice at what this means for us. But I'll stick close to Hegel and not go off for visits with Lenin and Marx. Hegel says that the two appearances of the Idea (Socialism in the form of the Commune and the Soviets) characterizes both its manifestation and in it precisely is "A unification of the two aspects."

"The self-judging of the Idea into its two appearances (para. 575, 576) characterizes both as its (the self-knowing reason's) manifestations: and in it there is a unification of the two aspects—it is the nature of the fact, the notion, which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the action of cognition. The eternal Idea, in full fruition of its essence, eternally sets itself to work, engenders and enjoys itself as absolute Mind." [para. 577]

We have entered the new society.

W. [Raya Dunayevskaya]

38. See Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France," in *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, (New York: International Publishers, 1986), p. 334.

39. This refers to Vol. IX of Lenin's *Selected Works*.

40. In the 1974 edition this paragraph has vertical double lines drawn alongside it; this paragraph was not included by Dunayevskaya in the 1986 excerpts of the May 20, 1953 Letter.

34. Irving Howe, writing in a Workers Party discussion bulletin (Vol. 1, No. 9, March 28, 1946) attacked the Johnson-Forest Tendency for allegedly romanticizing American workers, charging them with creating "soviets in the skies."

35. Hegel's *Logic* (Part I of the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*), translated by William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), para. 237, Zusaetze.

36. In reissuing excerpts of the May 20, 1953 Letter in mimeographed form in 1986, Dunayevskaya included the first half of the first sentence of para. 574. The full sentence in Hegel reads:

This notion of philosophy is the self-thinking Idea, the truth aware of itself (para. 236)—the logical system, but with the signification that it is universality approved and certified in concrete content as in its actuality.

37. In her 1974 lecture to the Hegel Society of America, entitled "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning," Dunayevskaya noted that "A.V. Miller, the new translator of Hegel, called my attention to the fact that in the Wallace translation 'sie' (them) is mistakenly read as 'sich' (itself)." Dunayevskaya elaborated upon this in her 1986 "Letters to non-Marxist Hegel Scholars" (see *Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*, #11219): "[Miller] pointed out that Wallace had translated sie as if it were sich, whereas in fact it should have read 'sunders' not itself but them. That, however, was not my problem. The sundering was what was crucial to me; the fact that Nature turns out to be the mediation was certainly no problem to any 'materialist'; the form of the transition which was departing from the course of necessity was the exciting part."

## Black/Red View **New attack on the poor**

by John Alan

Both the Democrats and the Republicans have joined together in calling the Family Security Act of 1988 a "radical reform" of the welfare system. An editorial in the *Washington Post National Weekly Edition* has gone so far as to call the Act "...the working definition of social justice."

Such hyperbole hides the fact that the Family Security Act is a brutal intrusion of a national workfare program into the lives of 3.3 million women receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). It's an intrusion that gives little choice.

Under the new rules there is a mandatory requirement that these women must join a job training program and, upon completion of their training, they must accept any "bona fide" employment, whenever the wages are equal to or exceed their AFDC allowances. If they refuse to comply with either of these requirements they will be removed from AFDC rolls. If this happens, to prevent the suffering of the children, "protective payment" for them may be paid to a "third party." The Act does not explain how this will be accomplished.

The overwhelming majority of these women are young, Black and Hispanic, living in slum areas of large cities. Faced with the outside imposition of such limiting, compulsory rules there is bound to be confusion and suffering for both them and their children. But the purpose of the Act is not concerned with this—its sole purpose is to reduce the number of families receiving AFDC.

While this Act severely disciplines the welfare mother, it is far from a serious attempt to eliminate the conditions of poverty in which she and her children live. First of all, the Act is so inadequately funded it can't even alleviate the immediate crisis of poverty now existing in AFDC families. Thus the \$2.8 billion set aside in the Act to assist states in providing child care, while AFDC mothers are training or working, does not make up for the decline in all AFDC benefits over the last 15 years, or for cuts made by the Reagan administration.

### ECONOMIC ILLUSIONS

The Family Security Act of 1988 is a creature of capitalist party politics. It was worked out and accepted by President Reagan and both Houses of Congress within the limits of their own mutual political interests. It projects the illusion that the economy is OK and that there is a surplus of non-poverty wage jobs beyond the ghettos, and that all minorities have to do is to train for them and look for them.

The reality in no way corresponds to this illusion. According to a recent study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, there has been a steady decline in good jobs for Blacks over the last 20 years. Today, Black income is 56.1% that of white, the rate of Black poverty is 33.1% and Black unemployment is 12%.

In this kind of economic condition, the job that awaits the majority of AFDC mothers is likely to be, as one economist put it, "a poverty service job" in restaurants, hotels and personal services, offering the lowest of wages, with no security or benefits.

### MALTHUS AND MOYNIHAN

The Family Security Act is not a "reform" of the welfare system; it is a restructuring of it in such a way that the victims of poverty pay for "welfare" by being compelled to take jobs that offer poverty wages. Such "welfare reform" is not new. Historically, it began when the first welfare reform bill was introduced in 19th century England, at the time when capitalism was faced with the new phenomenon of poverty it had created. The poor were forced to enter workhouses before they would be given aid. The ideological ground for the 19th century "reformers" was the contention of Thomas Malthus that aid to the poor caused poverty by encouraging them to "breed" superfluous children, and to ameliorate their misery they should be forced to work.

The major drafter of the Family Security Act is Senator Patrick Moynihan. Senator Moynihan is well known for being the father of the theory that claims it is the "social pathology" in the Black family, especially illegitimate births, which is the cause of Black underemployment and poor education.

Malthus and Moynihan are separated by more than a century, yet they espouse the same ideology about poverty originating in the "bad habits" of the poor. Both men avoid seeing poverty as the product of the accumulation of wealth on a capitalist basis.

What remains to be seen now is how the masses of Black, Hispanic and poor whites are going to respond to this so-called Family Security Act.

## Russian state-capitalism vs. growing revolt

(continued from page 1)

At a meeting with farmers in mid-October, broadcast on TV, Gorbachev criticized those peasants who were fearful of giving up whatever "security" collective farming provided: "No fool is going to go to work on a lease contract so long as he can have a salary without earning it."

### "NEW THINKING"—BUT ONE PARTY RULE

Melding all of this into a new "ideological framework" is now the task of the new ideology chief, Vadim Medvedev, who—while calling for a so-called "new thinking" about "socialism"—has quickly made it clear that he and Gorbachev have no intention of allowing a formal political opposition to the Communist Party. But opposition both at home and throughout East Europe is growing.

The returning soldiers from Afghanistan have raised probing questions about Russian imperialism and about racism at home. Women have raised new opposition to militarism. At the same time, at least five planned nuclear power stations had to be cancelled since Chernobyl exploded in April, 1986, with some of the strongest opposition coming from the non-Russian ethnic minorities in the republics like Lithuania, Armenia and Latvia.

And while "perestroika" is still ardently supported by the technocrats, there are signs that some of the intellectuals in Russia are losing their enthusiasm for Gorbachevism. Informal left-wing groups—from independent Marxists to ecologists to avant-garde poets—have been growing over the past year. In Moscow, Leningrad, Krasnoyarsk and Taganrog, dozens of independent bulletins are being published, with a combined distribution of thousands of copies.

Yet the disorientation that "glasnost" exerts on all too many intellectuals—worldwide—must be confronted. Its danger in east Europe is best seen, at this moment, in the very land where the drive for freedom has been both unquenchable and marked by a mass working class character: Poland.

### POLAND'S UNQUENCHABLE STRUGGLE

This year has been a still newer generation of Polish workers in the forefront, many of them only children in December, 1981 when martial law crushed Solidarnosc—that elemental new form of genuinely independent trade union movement which refused to separate economic, social and political demands for freedom when it erupted in 1980.

All of the strikes this year—whether those that the steelworkers began last Spring that were quickly put down, or those spearheaded by the coalminers in August and continued for weeks—were initiated, not by the "old-line" Solidarity leadership in Gdansk and Warsaw, but by the new generation. Nor were the young workers so disarmed by "glasnost" that they were ready to settle for a so-called "pluralism," for mere "representation" in the system—Jaruzelski's "perestroika."

Indeed, Lech Walesa found himself booed when he argued for an end to the strikes, in his own shipyard in Gdansk and at the mines in Jastrebie, 500 miles away, where he was sent by the government to get the miners back to work. It was not a question of courage or militancy, of which there has always been an abundance. Rather, what the movement must face is how disastrous

## Pinochet NO!

New York, N.Y.—Chileans didn't want to miss a chance to vote NO in the September plebiscite on whether the Pinochet dictatorship should remain in power without holding elections. Ninety-seven percent of the population registered to vote, and 97% of them voted.

During my recent stay there, I was surprised to find that everyone in the poblaciones (the shantytowns of the poor) felt so strongly about voting and had such high expectations of the results. When I asked people if they really thought Pinochet would go away if he lost the vote, they said he would be too ashamed not to!

Most of the opposition groups such as the Communist and Socialist Parties held the masses back from any activity that might interfere with the election. I thought it was a good moment for mobilizations, land seizures and such, while Pinochet was trying to look good, but they were afraid to push the dictatorship. The best organized response endorsed the position of the relatives of the "disappeared," that they will not forgive and forget, that the next government must prosecute the criminals who have killed so many over the last 15 years.

While the old Left organizations had long debates over whether to participate in the plebiscite, their ideologies are not in the language of the people today. One popular organization among the poor youth is Lautaro, which engages in activities such as 50 people raiding a supermarket and giving away the food in a poblacion. Another is the Manuel Rodriguez Front, which split from the Communist Party and no longer believes that an insurrection will come from a general strike. It speaks of a "patriotic front" against imperialism and long-term work in the poblaciones.

The police mostly leave the poblaciones alone now, to avoid confrontations like the mass protests of the past few years. There are no more demonstrations downtown, except by students, and the police let the poblaciones put up barricades and dance all night.

The Constitution allows Pinochet to rule even if he loses the election he is now required to hold next year, because he can remain the head of the army. But then when nothing changes, Chile will return to reality.

—Chilean Exile

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Free Moses Mayekiso!

Free All Political Prisoners  
in South Africa!

Solidarity with the Idea of  
Freedom!

The apartheid government of South Africa is continuing its all out war against Black freedom by trying Moses Mayekiso, the General Secretary of the National Union of Metal Workers (NUMSA) and four of his comrades for treason. This phony charge is not based just on their union activities but on their militant opposition to the whole system of apartheid.

*News & Letters* was the first newspaper in this country to carry the story of Moses Mayekiso's battle with apartheid in the column *Direct From South Africa: Freedom Journal*. This column is written by South African activists who express the freedom ideas that are part of this long struggle. One such idea is Mayekiso's proposal to the South African unions to adopt a Worker's Charter instead of the abstract Freedom Charter, which is concerned more with property rights and state control over the unions than with human rights. We Marxist-Humanists in *News and Letters* Committees join in this international protest against this so-called treason trial. However, at the same time we call for solidarity with the ideas of freedom, the ideas that connect the myriad freedom struggles going on in the world, in Asia, in Eastern Europe, in Central America and in the United States, especially the struggle of Black Americans.

Inherent in all of these mass struggles are concepts of a new society—concepts which have to be discovered by letting the oppressed speak for themselves. *News & Letters* is the newspaper of *News and Letters* Committees where the voices of masses in motion opposing oppression can be heard not separated from the philosophy of revolution based on the Marxist-Humanism of Raya Dunayevskaya.

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was the concept of a "self-limiting revolution"—which Jacek Kuron had put forth at the height of Solidarnosc in 1980-81, in place of the total uprooting of the degenerate state-capitalist world that the workers had been fighting for when they created what had been called "a world apart" in those magnificent days.

### "THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES"

As we go to press, comes the news that Jaruzelski's new Prime Minister, Rakowski, plans to initiate his "economic reforms" by closing down none other than the Gdansk shipyard, itself. Nothing shows more clearly the sameness of the class character of state and private capitalism than that this announcement was made on the eve of the visit of Margaret Thatcher, Rakowski's "model" for economic reform! What the workers will do remains to be seen, but it is clear that the crisis for the Polish people can only deepen. "Legalized" or not, the workers—and the students—are bound to erupt again. Thousands in the Independent Students Association, banned along with Solidarnosc in 1981, did not wait for "legalization" to stage new rallies and protests all across Poland in October.

The turmoil that has marked all of Russia and East Europe in 1988 is a continuation of the ferment that began three-and-a-half decades ago, when the 1953 East German uprising made inseparable its demand for "Bread and Freedom!"<sup>3</sup> A month later 10,000 miners in the slave camps at Vorkuta within Russia burst into revolt. It continued in 1956 when the Polish students' discussion of Marx's humanism inspired the Hungarian Revolution that year. The struggle to find a philosophy of freedom to match the breadth and depth of the revolt has been ceaseless ever since—from Prague Spring in 1968 to Solidarnosc in this decade. The struggle continues.

3. It was this revolt, which erupted six weeks after Raya Dunayevskaya's philosophic breakthrough on Hegel's Absolutes, which she saw as a "movement from practice that is itself a form of theory." See special publication of her *Letters* of May 12 and 20, 1953, this issue, pp. 5-9.

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# Youth Revolutionary upsurge of 1968 revisited

*The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* by George Katsiaficas, South End Press, 1987 \$11.00.

*The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* is bound to have an important impact not only on how the mass revolts of the late 1960s are interpreted but also on the battle of ideas emerging in the radical youth movement of today. In fact, the ideas expressed in Katsiaficas's book played a part in a national student conference at Rutgers University earlier this year when over 200 of the participants revolted against the bureaucracy and reformism of the conference organizers by walking out and forming their own independent caucus. Leaders of the walkout passed out a positive review of the book that encouraged activists to reject both vanguardism and reformism and to study the ideas of Herbert Marcuse.

In the book, Katsiaficas graphically shows, through historical detail and attempted dialectical analysis, that the chain reaction of mass uprisings throughout 1967-1970 was a world historic movement that threatened the established order on a global scale. Like 1848 and 1905, he explains, the social and political unrest of 1968 did not result in any successful revolutionary seizure of power; it did, however, create new visions of the meaning of freedom through the direct action of millions of people that went beyond the boundaries of any one country.

## REJECTION OF PRAGMATISM

The importance of *The Imagination of the New Left* is that at the height of the Reagan retrogression, Katsiaficas rejects the pragmatism that has polluted the ideology of the Left. He refuses to separate theory from practice and goes beyond writing mere history or "objective" sociology by attempting to develop a revolutionary theory with "the goal of genuine human liberation." He calls for a "genuine revolution in the advanced capitalist societies, particularly the United States...[that] would be a working-class feminist revolution against racial domination or nothing at all." Katsiaficas quotes Marcuse throughout the book to back up his arguments, and unfortunately his critique does not go much farther than Marcuse's view of the New Left. Although he makes it clear that no revolution can succeed without the participation of the workers, he also reinforces the illusion that the Great Refusal of young intellectuals is what really drives the movement forward, and that workers can decide whether or not they want to come along for the ride.

## Editorial

(continued from page 1)

...inful one, utterly indifferent to the new-found confidence among liberals and conservatives that after 40 years the welfare system is now on the road to "reform." Against "all the fine confidence professed," Public Aid Departments in those states where "welfare reform" has been implemented still report that getting a low-wage workfare job has been no ticket out of poverty. Many have the ticket, but still can't ride under capitalism.

...American reality, this election year, doesn't stop here, however. There is the spectacle of a syncophantic mass media that remains ideologically subservient to Reagan/Bush. That subservience didn't begin this year with this campaign, but in 1980 when Ronald Reagan won his presidential campaign in Philadelphia, Miss., home of the KKK and the spot where Civil Rights workers were murdered in 1964 — and the media kept silent on Reagan's racist appeals.

## AMERICA'S "DIRTY LITTLE SECRET"

That is the meaning of the "dirty little secret" New York Times columnist Anthony Lewis singled out in his Oct. 20 column, when he wrote: "Class, it has been said, is the dirty little secret of American society. In the 1988 presidential campaign, race is the dirty little secret: a highly significant factor that no one mentions out loud." The ideological reality of Reaganism will find us exactly where we have been for the last eight years: the day after the election, no matter who wins. As the reactionary ideologue Edwin Feulner of the Heritage Foundation extolled Reagan — his most important accomplishment of all has been the thing some have denigrated: overseeing a successful ideological [counter-]revolution."

The media spotlight will have been switched off, but the deep distrust of the "other America." The unending hell that Vietnam vets still live in nearly two decades since the war will continue to re-emerge in our lives. The record of Dan Quayle's two-faced militarist-labor's militant rejection of Bush will not be quiet. Oregon roundly protested his appearance on Labor Day. And the "indignant heart" of the Black masses continue to beat against Reagan's "American bas-

...must not have any illusions, though. For the challenge remains that which Raya Dunayevskaya issued in her "Theory/Practice" column: "The abysmal lower that the Reagan retrogression has sunk the country throughout the seven years of this decade polluted the ideological air, not only of the ruling class but has penetrated the Left itself. Such deep rejection urgently demands that, along with the economic and political tasks facing us, we look for philosophical new beginnings."

## VAGUE ON REVOLUTIONARY SUBJECT

He also asserts that the "New Working Class" of technicians, and not the industrial proletariat, are the new revolutionary subject of the modern age, and he points to May 1968 in France. He praises the creative slogans of striking journalists and says that they, not the miners, longshoremen, and railroad workers, played the leading role in the May movement.


His discussion of the Black dimension in the U.S. also betrays a weakness in his argument. This cannot only be seen in his discussion of the 1960s but even more so in his brief discussion of the 1860s when he says, "The United States was conquered by new economic masters whose program of industrialization necessitated freeing the slaves." This is all he says, as if the Blacks were totally passive in the process.

His vagueness about revolutionary Subjects cannot be separated from his vagueness about the dialectic. He uses Marx and Hegel, but doesn't attempt to be either fully Marxist or Hegelian. Instead, he attributes world historic movements to the "eros effect" which is: "The massive awakening of the instinctual human need for justice and freedom." So ultimately, revolution is a product of human instinct and not human reason.

This leads to problems in his discussion of revolutionary organization. He is opposed to all forms of centralization of power, so he rejects the vanguard party. But instead, he replaces it with a de-centralized "avant garde" party to lead with the purpose of "enlightening" the masses. Here we see his intellectual elitism coming out: the masses act out of instinct, so they need rational visionary intellectuals to give them direction.

The emphasis he puts on both culture and instinct bring him dangerously close to Maoist intuitionism. Although he doesn't express any explicit affinity to Maoism, he doesn't give any serious critique of it either.

### REACHING FOR THE FUTURE



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He merely criticizes the armed violence of students against unarmed non-violent workers in the Chinese Cultural Revolution as an excessive current in the world-wide New Left, which was non-essential to the character of the movement.

I'd recommend to other young radicals, who are with me in the struggle, to come to terms with the late 1960s so we can develop a movement that is more revolutionary than the New Left, that we all read *Imagination of the New Left* side by side with *Philosophy and Revolution* by Raya Dunayevskaya. Comparing and contrasting these two works is an education in revolutionary thought in itself, in which we can see the differences in the Marcusean view and the Marxist-Humanist philosophy. Unlike Katsiaficas, Dunayevskaya does not forget that the revolutionary movement of the 1960s failed, so she can move beyond the contradictions that the movement did not resolve. And those of us who happen to be university students should especially pay attention to Raya when she tells us that a lack of confidence in the masses is the common root of a lack of confidence in the self-development, self-activity, and self-movement in the Hegelian dialectic.

—Jim Guthrie

## Sit-in at Univ. of Texas

**Austin, Texas**—On Oct. 7, a group of 50 people organized by A Luta Continua/The Struggle Continues a multi-issue, progressive student organization at the University of Texas (UT), staged a sit-in at the UT President's office. They were demanding: 1) an end to the UT's expansion into and destruction of the Blackland neighborhood of East Austin and 2) the right of the homeless to occupy the boarded-up homes of the area.

Blackland, named after its fertile soil, is a predominantly working class Afro-American community on the East Side of rigidly segregated Austin. UT has been eyeing and acquiring parts of the area by eminent domain for decades.

UT not only created a bogus front to buy the land, but broke its pledge to purchase only homes that have come on the market. In addition, UT continues to support the South African apartheid regime through its refusal to divest its almost \$800 million invested in corporations operating in South Africa.

Following two months of well attended discussion forums and showing of films documenting the struggle to save Blackland and to assist the 3,000 homeless of Austin, A Luta Continua and two other groups, the Blackland Neighborhood Association and homeless organizers of the Street People's Advisory Council, organized a demonstration to demand "UT out of Blackland! House the Homeless Now!" A huge lunch was served to the homeless and hungry with donated groceries. A petition demanded that UT: 1) rescind its powers of eminent domain in Blackland; 2) open up its houses for use by the homeless; 3) end all bulldozing of homes in Blackland.

It was out of this demonstration that 50 people marched to the UT president's office for a sit-in.

The links between the homeless, Blackland and student communities have been drawn in opposition to UT's policy of racism and support of apartheid. The struggle to end UT's policies of racial and profit-motivated destruction of Blackland still continues. For more information please contact Robert of A Luta Continua, P.O. Box 49032, Austin, TX 78765.

## Selected Philosophic Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya as found in *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*

• "Hegel's Absolute as New Beginning." Dunayevskaya's 1974 lecture to the Hegel Society of America. Reprinted from *Art and Logic in Hegel's Philosophy*, edited by Warren E. Steinkraus and Kenneth L. Schmitz. (Microfilm #11535)

• "The Year of Only 8 Months." Bulletin includes an exchange of correspondence between Raya Dunayevskaya and non-Marxist Hegel scholars, George Armstrong Kelly and Louis Dupre, on the "Idea of Cognition" and "Third Attitude to Objectivity" within Hegel's work. (Microfilm #10690)

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## Our Life and Times

by Kevin A. Barry and Mary Holmes

Hundreds of thousands of people in the Southern Sudan, mainly from the Dinka ethnic group, face imminent starvation. Nearly 10,000 have died since June. On Oct. 10, the New York Times reported: "The Government's military policy dictates that food not be delivered in the south, officials said, because with the exception of Government garrison town, the territory is controlled by the rebels."

Finally, on Oct. 12, the Sudanese government allowed U.S. emergency relief planes into the South. Up until then, "relief" had been limited to provisioning government troops but denied to the people, even in those few cities the government still controls. The government has also given heavy arms to Muslim ethnic groups in the region, who have launched raids on the Dinka population leading to murder, torture and enslavement.

Over the past few years, the leaders of the Muslim North have moved to reimpose Islamic (Sharia) law on the entire country, despite the fact that the South

## Government complicity in Sudan famine

is mainly non-Muslim. President Sadiq el-Mahdi came to power on a platform of secularizing Sudanese law and negotiating autonomy for the South with the Southern-based Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA), which is led by John Garang. Those negotiations failed because Sadiq el-Mahdi could not keep his end of the bargain, and today he has moved toward alliance with the reactionary Islamic Front.

Also, in October, new Sharia-based "law" was proposed by the cabinet, including: 100 lashes and five years in prison for homosexuality; death by stoning for adultery; crucifixion for armed robbery, and death for renouncing the Muslim faith. While the Dinka and the other Southerners are labeled "tribes" by our racist media, they are in fact the Black African part of the Sudan. Their movement, the SPLA, has a secular and socialist philosophy which is far more humanistic and modern than the clerical obscurantism of the government.

Unsurprisingly, the Reagan administration has consistently backed the government, making Sudan the second biggest recipient of U.S. aid in Africa after Egypt. The Reaganites have played down reports of denial of food by the government to the whole South, and emphasized the small number of occasions when the SPLA has blocked relief shipments including shooting down planes, because this government "relief" was going only to its own troops. All this gives the erroneous impression that "both sides" are equally to blame for the famine.

The largely Muslim population of the North is not uniformly fundamentalist, having overthrown the Nimeiry regime and its oppressive Sharia law policies in 1985, but virtually all political groups in the North, including especially the once-massive Communist Party have a condescending view toward the Black African South. This has left the door open to the fundamentalists who are gaining once again, creating oppressive laws and now actual famine on a massive scale.

## New French strikes

A wave of strikes has broken out in France challenging the newly-elected social democratic government of Francois Mitterrand and Michel Rocard. With 170,000 low-wage nurses from public hospitals demanding a 33% wage increase, the wily Mitterrand and other old-line Left politicians remarked that the nurses' demands had some justification. Not so for Mitterrand's appointee, the yuppie-like Rocard, himself once on the far Left, who responded: "I will not be the Prime Minister of a mistaken generosity who would ruin our chances of economic recovery."

In addition to the nurses, postal workers, some auto workers at the state-owned Renault company, teachers, and commuter railway workers are also on strike. On Oct. 20, 50,000 workers demonstrated in Paris.

What is disturbing to the large bureaucratic unions such as the Communist-led CGT (General Confederation of Labor) is that the new strikes are led not by them, but by independent "coordinating committees" from the grassroots, outside the traditional union structures. Among the nurses, for example, union membership is only 8%, but this has not prevented them from organizing serious strikes putting these mainly women workers in the vanguard of the new strike wave. In so doing, the workers are picking up the thread from the type of grassroots strikes they created in 1987, following the massive student demonstrations.

## Crises in El Salvador

In September, ten unarmed peasants from the village of San Francisco in El Salvador were rounded up and murdered with grenades and rifles by army troops, who accused the seven men and three women of collaboration with the left guerrillas. Later, the El Salvador Attorney General asked for the arrest of four soldiers involved in the killings. But arrest warrants, when issued, have meant nothing to the increasingly bold death squads, in and out of army uniform.

The ultra-rightist Arena party of the army and oligarchy won control of the El Salvador legislature last March, and expects to win the presidency next year. The Democratic Convergence, a left coalition, will also run a presidential candidate, marking the Left's first electoral participation in over 15 years.

The current president, Christian Democrat Jose Duarte, is now dying of cancer, but the collapse of his coalition began long before. Duarte was heavily backed by the Reagan administration in the 1984 "showcase" presidential election; he proved incapable of controlling the army, defeating the rightists, much less meeting the aspirations of the poor who

voted for him in large numbers. The largest growing segment of the electorate now are non-voters.

While the rulers are bloating on U.S. aid, Salvadorans face a daily struggle for food. The official minimum wage of \$28 a week, which few workers actually receive, is less than half of what is needed to feed a family, and malnutrition and infant deaths are rising. Beans were once a staple but are now called "rich people's food."

Conditions for Salvadorans have reeled backwards to become even worse than in the 1930s, the time of the great peasant uprising of 1932. No change of rulers, in the U.S. or El Salvador, can bring about the total transformations Salvadorans are fighting for.

## South African protests



Mass protests by Black students against the bogus, segregated October municipal elections in South Africa were met by tear-gas attacks, waves of arrests and new restrictions on the press. The Botha regime's latest crackdown demands our intensified solidarity with the Black freedom movement.

## Cambodia negotiations

After a decade of Vietnamese occupation, negotiations are underway for a Vietnamese pullout from Cambodia. Looming in the background is the possibility of the genocidal Khmer Rouge returning to power, or at least influence, once the Vietnamese troops leave. Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk, for example, wants the Khmer Rouge in a new "coalition" government, since "otherwise" they might engage in civil war. India has offered to send "peacekeeping" troops which Japan, newly active in the region, has offered to spend a huge sum to support.

All along China has openly backed and aided the Khmer Rouge, many of whose "ideas" were originally Maoist-inspired. The U.S. and the "West"—as well as

the Third World majority in the UN General Assembly—has year after year continued to allow the Khmer Rouge to hold Cambodia's UN seat. Much aid to Cambodian refugee camps from the U.S. and other countries has ended up in the hands of the Khmer Rouge as well.

Today, as Gorbachev's Russia is trying to get close to China, it is refusing to underwrite the Vietnamese occupation any longer. Vietnam itself is in deep economic and political crisis.

Rather than going on trial for crimes against humanity for their murder of over two million Cambodians, as they deserve, Pol Pot and his clique will now, at worst go into a sumptuous exile in China, and that only if they don't gain actual power inside Cambodia. All powers, great and small, from the U.S. to China to Russia from Japan to India, and from Thailand to Vietnam, deserve due "credit" for what is unfolding in Cambodia.

## U.S. bases in Philippines

A deep sentiment within the "peoples' revolution," which ousted Ferdinand Marcos and brought Corazon Aquino to power, was the desire to be rid of the U.S. influence within Philippine society. The U.S. military bases in the Philippines are the most tangible evidence of this domination. Subic Bay and Clark Air Force Base comprise the largest military installation outside the U.S. and provide the second largest income for Filipinos, outside their government.

The Aquino government raised these economics to a higher level by trading on national consciousness in the recently-concluded base negotiations. The treaty which gave the bases to the U.S. was established at the end of World War II, when the Philippines had rid themselves of Japan's occupation at the price of being "re-occupied" by the U.S. The treaty expires in 1991, and the government extracted \$962 million for its final years.

The Aquino government was also successful in gaining control over how a large portion of the payments will be spent—to help pay off the country's huge foreign debt. The anti-U.S. bases' movement became a bargaining point for the Aquino government in extracting a payment much higher than the Marcos regime ever attained; but the movement is now sure to grow.

## Uprising in Algeria

On Oct. 4, thousands of unemployed youth and students took to the streets of Algiers in an angry and spontaneous response to yet one more government call for austerity and belt tightening. For five days the city was ablaze. Symbols of wealth and luxury, cars, trucks, buses, and commercial centers were looted and destroyed. Especially targeted were the Ministry of Commerce, which oversees youth employment, and the Ministry of Sports whose job is to keep them occupied.

After martial law was declared and soldiers began firing into the crowd the outburst moved to other cities among them the western port of Oran, the second largest city, and provincial centers of Blida and Constantine. When it was over, this most ominous mass opposition since Algerian independence in 1962, had left 5 dead, 1,000 wounded, 1,000 arrested.

Frantz Fanon's warning on the eve of Algerian independence that "the single party is the modern form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, unmasked, unpaired, unscrupulous and cynical," had only become a reality for this new generation that was born after independence. They view the National Liberation Front (NLF) as no hero, for them it is an entrenched single party state which jealously guards its power at all cost.

Along with a high birth rate of 3.1% a year, severe drought and infestation of locusts, Algeria, as many other Middle Eastern and African nations, faced a steady decline in oil prices since 1983.

With a debt of 20 billion dollars, Algeria's government of Chadli Benjedid follows closely IMF's recommendations of reducing food subsidies, privatizing farms, controlling imports. But the annual five billion dollar debt service is over half the nation's export!

Meanwhile, the fundamentalist Movement for an Islamic Renaissance, headed by Ali Ben Hajd, has adopted a call for raise in minimum wages and interprets the demand for freedom of expression and press to mean a demand for proselytizing Islam and elimination of all practices contrary to Islam from the Constitution.

—Neda

## Who We Are and What We Stand For

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

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

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910-87), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the National Editorial Board and National Chairwoman of the Committees from its founding to 1987. Charles Denby (1907-83), a Black production worker, author of *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*, became editor of the paper from 1955 to 1983. Dunayevskaya's works *Marxism and Freedom...from 1776 until Today*; *Philosophy and Revolution: from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao and Rosa Luxemburg*; *Women's Liberation*, and *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* spell out the philosophic

ground of Marx's Humanism internationally, as *American Civilization on Trial* concretizes it on the American scene and shows the two-way road between the U.S. and Africa. These works challenge post-Marx Marxists to return to Marx's Marxism.

The new visions of the future that Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her rediscovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a "new Humanism" and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as "Marxist-Humanism." The development of the Marxist-Humanism of Dunayevskaya is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half Century of its World Development*, on deposit at the Wayne State University Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs in Detroit, Michigan.

News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time. In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, exploitative society, we participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our Constitution states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution of News and Letters Committees*.