

NEWS & LETTERS

THEORY / PRACTICE

"Human power is its own end" —Karl Marx

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WORKSHOPTALKS

Life-and-death questions

by Htun Lin

When the popular game show Jeopardy featured IBM's "Watson," a computer, Watson won against the best human players. For capitalists this was not just entertainment, but serious business—a way to replace masses of workers.

As Christopher Caldwell of the *Financial Times* put it: "If you get paid to answer questions in a structured context, it is reasonable to fear Watson's progeny" ("Jeopardy is just the start," Feb. 19, 2011).

Watson is already being used in the medical field, where some speculate that it will spread easy access to much medical knowledge, which they tout would "mean better medicine for most people." But the introduction of computers into medicine did not start with Watson.

What we fear from our own experience in the medical workplace is not only more unemployment, but exacerbating the mind-numbing effect computers have on work in a capitalist context. With electronic medical records, the computer's needs dominate the healthcare workplace. What this means concretely is checking boxes and filling in blanks on a computer screen. The allowable answers don't always correspond to patient's real needs and responses.

Very little of it has anything to do with real quality healthcare. A lot of it has to do with keeping up with the bottom line, which includes documenting every ex-

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EDITORIAL End Obama's wars!

Following his triumphant announcement on May 1 that Osama bin Laden had been killed in al Qaeda's secret headquarters in the garrison town of Abbottabad, Pakistan, President Obama as Commander-in-Chief had enough political cover from the warmongering right wing that he probably could have declared "Mission Accomplished" and ordered an abrupt departure from Afghanistan. His choice instead to stay and continue permanent war not only guarantees more bloodshed for Afghans and Americans, but risks his own political isolation.

After Osama bin Laden's killing, News and Letters Committees posted on our website, www.newsandletters.org, our response to the mass killings of Sept. 11, 2001, centered on the World Trade Center: "Against the Double Tragedy: Say no to terrorism and Bush's drive to war!" It took up how then-President Bush wanted "to use the attacks as an excuse to militarize America, restrict civil liberties, and prepare for what the rulers have long aspired for—permanent military intervention overseas. Bush is being given a free hand to rebuild the military, gut domestic social programs, and bury the memory of his stolen election. On a single day the terrorists succeeded in totally shifting the ideological ground and handed the far Right one of its greatest victories."

OBAMA FOLLOWS BUSH'S POLICY

The decisiveness of that shifting of the ideological ground is most clearly seen in that, ten years later, Obama has worked to preserve the militarization at home and abroad that Bush instituted. He signed an extension of Bush's Patriot Act, complete with

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ONLINE: www.newsandletters.org

Palestinian youth open new front in Arab Spring

by Gerry Emmett

When thousands of unarmed Palestinians marched upon the Occupied Territories on May 15, they were met by gunfire from the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). A dozen were killed and many more wounded. But the Arab Spring's arrival has marked a new stage in the Palestinian struggle.

Indeed, one deep root of the Arab Spring can be seen in last year's "Manifesto of Gaza Youth." In rejecting the oppression of Israel, Hamas, Fatah, the U.S. and all other powers, the Gaza youth expressed the spirit that has since sparked revolution from Tunisia to Syria when they said, "There is a revolution growing inside of us, an immense dissatisfaction and frustration that will destroy us unless we find a way of canalizing this energy into challenging the status quo and give us some kind of hope."

This spirit has pressured ruling Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah, neither of which want to be left behind by the masses' own movement, into holding unity talks.

Further, the vision of massive, non-violent protests by Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and beyond fills Israel's right-wing rulers with horror. It recalls the first *Intifada* of 1987, the most powerful challenge to Israel's unjust rule so far. It also brings to their doorstep a tremendous human power that has shaken the world. The echo of this upsurge was heard in Tel Aviv on June 4 when tens of thousands of Israelis marched in support of a Palestinian state.

Marking the start of 1967's Six Day War in which the Occupation began, that demonstration was organized by people representing "the Other Israel," in organizations such as Peace Now, Meretz, and Hadash.

That the Israeli Defense Forces killed 24 Palestinian demonstrators June 4, 2011, showed the true face of Israel's current government and its supporters.

THE UN AND PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

Another challenge to Netanyahu's regime is the expected September UN vote to establish a Palestinian

state. Although, in practice, complicated by the rivalry of Fatah and Hamas, a UN vote in favor of Palestinian statehood would simply restate the original UN resolution that also created Israel. It should be very difficult for Israeli or U.S. arguments against this to gain traction.

A Palestinian state could represent a real step forward. It would recognize in practice, at last, the Palestinian right to national self-determination. This right has never been respected by

Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan or Egypt. All have blood on their hands, and no right to decide the Palestinians' future.

Without the constant pressure of occupation, the Palestinians could be free to come to grips with their own rulers—a chance to force accountability for the corruption, elitism, and religious fanaticism that is rejected by the vast majority. That it is President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah proposing to present such a resolution shows, again, the pressure he feels from the masses.

Nevertheless, Prime Minister Netanyahu has done all in his power to assure that the U.S. would exercise its veto power over such a resolution. In doing so, he cemented the Israeli Right's alliances with the most reactionary forces in U.S. politics, the racist, misogynist, anti-working-class Tea Party-type elements that now have a place in the U.S. Congress. (Just as he has recently courted Italy's discredited Prime Minister Berlusconi.)

Such a UN veto, following the U.S.'s veto of the resolution demanding an end to Israel's illegal West Bank settlements, would disgrace the U.S., and would be a victory for the ultra-reactionary forces in both countries. But it will be difficult for the U.S., which is trying to walk a thin line with regard to the Arab Spring. U.S. imperialism doesn't want to openly announce that its greatest interest is, as always, in counter-revolution, at a moment when revolution is in the air. This is

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On March 15 hundreds of students and faculty from Hebron University marched from the campus to rally at the City Center to encourage Palestinian unity. Signs say: "No to occupation! No to division!" and "How can you want one nation when you are divided?"

On socialism and freedom in Morocco

by Richard Greeman

Morocco, where the Arab Spring has opened up a space of relative freedom to discuss and demonstrate, is an exciting place to be, where every day new groups are getting organized and putting forward their grievances. The Feb. 20th Movement, which started among students on Facebook and rode the wave of massive demonstrations sweeping the Arab world, owes its unity to an excellent ten-point program which all its adherents—including Marxists, Islamists, Human Rights fighters, etc.—must observe. So it is very broad and heterodox, but united in action. It has been able to keep up its demonstrations, and is now moving towards deepening its roots in the community and countryside.

I had the opportunity to give a talk at the Benslimane section of the Moroccan Human Rights Association and made some of the very same points as your editorial, in my own words. (French translated into Arabic!) Every time I talk at a meeting with Arab comrades, I tell them about the Wisconsin effect and how delightfully ironic it is that the Arabs are teaching the Americans about democracy! They videoed the meeting, and I hope it will be on YouTube soon.

The occasion was a book-launch for the Arabic publication of Raya Dunayevskaya's *Marxism and Freedom* (translated as *Socialism and Freedom*), sponsored by

the Victor Serge Foundation (which paid for the translation) and introduced by Maâti Monjib and myself.

THE ARABIC MARXISM AND FREEDOM

We sold 38 copies, and of the whole run of 3,000, only 400 were returned—pretty amazing in Moroccan publishing. Maâti says that in Morocco they count five readers for every book, which means more than 12,000 Moroccans may soon read this Marxist-Humanist classic. It couldn't have come at a better time. I've asked a couple of comrades to review it in Arabic, and we are hoping to have the Arabic available online soon, and to promote editions in Egypt and/or Lebanon if possible.

The subject they gave me was "Human Rights and Left Ideologies" which gave me the opportunity to dismiss all ideologies—free market, Islamist, totalitarian communist, nationalist etc.—as forms of false consciousness rationalizing the power of one or another ruling class. All ideologies are oppressive. So what is needed is a *philosophy of Freedom*. As for the "human rights" part of the topic, I took as my text Hegel's Master/Slave dialectic, where the Master knows only his privilege and arbitrary will, while the slave, revolting against her oppression, discovers a mind of her own.

This went over well with my audience, half of whom were women wearing head scarves. Especially when I

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Arab Spring & women after revolution

by Terry Moon

The time is now for the movements in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen, and other countries engaged in revolt, to make sure there's no repetition of what happened to women after the revolutions in Algeria and Iran. In the Algerian revolution, 1954-1962, hundreds of thousands of women resisted the French, and many died in the process. Algerian women were the backbone of the movement: acting as spies, helping with communications and food, caring for the wounded—every aspect of revolutionary life. Yet to this day Algerian women are treated as less than human. And when an Islamist insurgency plunged the country into a brutal civil war lasting through the 1990s, Islamists targeted women first.

In Iran, too, women were equal partners in the revolution, yet the first act of counter-revolution was Khomeini's demand for women to wear the veil. When thousands marched in the streets on International Women's Day 1979 chanting, "At the dawn of freedom we have no freedom!" most of the Left did not support them, but joined in throwing stones at them. They didn't see that the women were sounding the alarm that the Iranian revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed Shah of Iran was being transformed into its opposite.

NEED FOR REVOLUTION IN PERMANENCE

This history is why Marx's concept of Revolution in Permanence, made explicit for our age by Raya Dunayevskaya, has tremendous importance. Be it Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen or Syria, women made sure they are speakers and leaders. They transformed human relationships by creating new ones on the spot: in Egypt's Tahrir Square; in Yemen's Change Square and by coming out in the thousands when President Saleh accused women protesters of being against Islam. In Syria, despite Bashar al-Assad's willingness to murder thousands in the street, 2,000 women and children blocked roads, shouting, "We will not be humiliated."

The boldness of the women, the depth of the change they desire, can be measured in their militancy and eagerness to be part of history-changing movements. Unfortunately, it can also be measured in how the first moves of counter-revolution, as in Iran and Algeria, are a direct attack against them. In Egypt, women who came out to celebrate International Women's Day on March 8 were met by a huge crowd of men who screamed at them, grabbed and groped them, tore their clothes and made the women, literally, run for their lives.

Not satisfied with locking women out of decision-making bodies, on the next day the military arbitrarily cleared the Square of protestors, arresting 18 women. The women were beaten and given electric shocks. All but one were strip-searched, forced to submit to a "virginity test" and told they would be charged with prostitution. This will not stop the women, it only makes deeper the desire and passion for change.

With the counter-revolution lurking even now in the new uprisings, it is important that Marx's concept of revolution in permanence does not only mean that

WOMAN AS REASON

revolution can't stop with the overthrow of the established leadership. It has implications for what revolution has to mean, something Dunayevskaya spoke to profoundly by insisting that "revolution has to be total from the start." It means that you can't separate into

two different parts the dual nature of revolution, "not just the overthrow of the old, but the creation of the new; not just the reorganization of objective, material foundations but the release of subjective personal freedom, creativity, and talents." That very specific articulation of the creation of the new has to be what the revolution is demanding, now and as the goal!

THE DEMAND: NEW HUMAN RELATIONS

That is why women's participation—most especially their thoughts, ideas, desires and demands—are so crucial for a revolution to be successful. For women to be free, all human relationships must be transformed. That is what it means that revolution must be total from the start. New human relations most certainly means new production relations, where in the process of creating what we need (and often don't need as well) under capitalism, human beings are transformed into things. It is because women have experienced that dehumanization on so many different levels that their demand for full personhood cuts to the essence of the meaning of revolution, of a total change.

That self-confidence that women are expressing in militant action now, must also become a self-confidence in thought, a clarification of what revolution has to become, a refusal to stop at the important victory of overthrowing tyrants, or even the establishment of a bourgeois democracy. The independence of the movement is key, as well as the self-confidence in their own ideas and vision of the future they are establishing in the squares, in the midst of the fight. The struggle must continue.

SlutWalk in Chicago



Chicago—SlutWalk came to downtown on June 4, a gorgeous hot day. Over 1,000 participated, including many GLBTQ folks. SlutWalk originated in Canada when a Toronto police officer told students at York University in January that if women don't want to be raped, they should "avoid dressing like sluts." That ignorant statement, uttered in 2011 by a cop after over 45 years of the Women's Liberation Movement, ignited what may become a movement.

It isn't as if the issue hasn't been addressed before. Take Back the Night marches originated in the mid-1970s, and our chant then as now was "Yes means yes! No means no! Whatever we wear! Wherever we go!" The message of SlutWalk is much the same except now women want to own the term and, unlike other campaigns to end rape, SlutWalks are taking place in cities around the world. For example, Umang Sabharwal, a 19-year-old college student, has received over 4,000 responses from Facebook users planning to attend the New Delhi, India, SlutWalk she is organizing for July. Four out of five women there report sexual harassment and one fourth of rapes go unreported. Both are worsening, with rapes sometimes even committed in front of police stations.

In many U.S. cities, women and men took the opportunity to dress as slutty as possible to drive the point home that there is no excuse for rape ever.

What is exciting about SlutWalk is the same thing that is important about Walk for Choice. Both movements sprang up spontaneously, are independent of any mainstream women's organizations, are made up of young women, most of them in their 20s who are angry and radical and determined to make a difference.

—Chicago SlutWalker

Review of Unplanned

Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of a Former Planned Parenthood Leader's Eye-Opening Journey across the Life Line by Abby Johnson with Cindy Lambert (SaltRiver, 2011).

The religious Right has hailed *Unplanned* as an anti-abortion classic for a new era. It signals more cooperation between ultra-conservative Catholics and evangelicals. The book claims that newer anti-abortion protesters are non-violent and non-threatening, although this has not been the experience of clinic workers. Since the book is written by a former Planned Parenthood (PP) clinic director, it is also supposed to be an honest attempt by anti-abortionists to understand the pro-choice side, but it is laced with the usual lies.

Abby Johnson had worked for PP for eight years and was a clinic director when she quit to join Coalition for Life. She claims to have had a change of heart when she assisted with an ultrasound for a second-trimester abortion, although clinic records state that no such procedure was performed that day. She claims her conscience was disturbed when PP CEOs ordered her to do more abortions to make more money. In reality, PP is a non-profit that does not make money from abortions, which are only 3% of its practice. Co-workers state she was actually about to be fired.

ALL THE USUAL LIES

Johnson pretends to be surprised that PP requested a restraining order against her and took her to court. She scoffs at the fears of her former co-workers that she may have stolen medical records, building entrance codes, or co-workers' resumes and that she may have given them, along with doctors' names and security precautions, to her new allies, who often seek such information. She minimizes the violence of the anti-abortion movement, saying that doctors just like to be "dramatic" when they hide in their cars and take different routes to clinics. She claims that PP tries to "rally the troops" by exaggerating the threat. As clinic director, she did receive death threats but claims that these and the murder of Dr. George Tiller came from rogue anti-abortionists. She doesn't mention that Tiller's murderer had ties to an anti-abortion group.

She insults all pro-choicers by claiming that we feel guilty when we see protesters and repeats the lie that women are always harmed by having abortions. Her supposed insight is that we are naïve people who want to help women but are misled by cold CEOs who only care about money. Johnson does mention that PP saves women's lives from unsafe, illegal abortions, prevents abortion by providing contraception, and provides life-saving healthcare such as cancer screenings. But she constantly dismisses these as "PP talking points," stating that women wouldn't need birth control or abortions if we would all just get married.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD UNDER ATTACK

She keeps emphasizing that God arranged the circumstances of her "unplanned" conversion and implies that women with unwanted or dangerous pregnancies should just trust God for a good outcome. She does recognize that some Christian denominations are pro-choice but never studies the history of changing Christian attitudes towards abortion and never questions her assumption that "real" Christians should be against it. It is obvious that part of her agenda is to support the religious Right's goal to fuse church and state.

For the past several years, the religious Right has used lies to discredit abortion providers, especially PP, with help from talk show hosts on the ultra-conservative FOX network. Johnson recently appeared on several FOX shows and has also joined Lila Rose's group "Live Action," which created several ridiculous, obviously doctored videos in which their members purport to go undercover to expose supposed wrongdoing inside PP clinics. The religious Right, taking advantage of the new, ultra-conservative members of Congress and state governments, is making inroads on defunding PP.

Unplanned shows that the religious Right realizes that many women rely on PP and many people are pro-choice. It does not contain the outlandish "miracles" or claims of bizarre behavior by clinic workers found in previous propaganda. Rather, it is slicker because its lies focus on feelings and motivations. The pro-choice movement can fight these escalating attacks by continuing to encourage women to tell their true stories about abortion, contraception, sexuality, and health.

—Adele

WOMENWORLDWIDE

by Artemis

The reactionary majority of the U.S. Supreme Court gutted all future class action suits by throwing out the case against Wal-Mart, which has discriminated against over 1.5 million women workers as well as implemented extreme anti-union policies. Not surprisingly, big business was delighted with the verdict.

* * *

The International Criminal Court at the Hague, Netherlands, issued arrest warrants for Libyan leader Qaddafi, his son and intelligence chief for crimes against humanity. Rebels have taken cell phones containing videos from Qaddafi loyalists showing them committing rape and torture, and Libyan psychologist Siham Sergewa has interviewed 259 refugees who had been raped.

* * *

The Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq (OWFI) reported that pro-democracy activists demonstrating in Baghdad's Tahrir Square in June were brutally attacked by armed men in plain clothes, who arrived by the thousands on chartered buses. It was obvious that they had been sent by the Al-Maliki regime, which had broken its promise to the demonstrators to enact reforms. They targeted the women for brutal sexual assaults.

* * *

On June 17, the UN Human Rights Council passed the first ever UN resolution to focus on human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The resolution requests the High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a study on violence and discrimination and calls for a panel discussion at the Human Rights Council.

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What UAW workers must take back

Detroit—Many challenges face the rank-and-file auto workers as the stage is being set for auto contract negotiations in July. Their future is not promising, despite the rhetoric of United Auto Workers union President Bob King that emphasizes the restoration of benefits lost through contract concessions and the General Motors (GM) and Chrysler bankruptcies.

The losses began with the imposition of a two-tier wage system that pays new hires half of what existing workers get and reduces their healthcare and pension benefits. Givebacks for all workers include reductions in pensions and healthcare benefits, and increased worker contributions for both, and the loss of Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA).

Workers have suffered elimination of many seniority rights, with widespread plant closings and thousands laid off. Restraints on production speed-up or overtime work have been removed from the contract, and workers at GM and Chrysler have a no-strike provision until 2015. These concessions have resulted in billions of dollars of profit for the auto companies in 2010 (\$6.6 billion at Ford and \$4.7 billion at GM) and a reduced standard of living for auto workers.

They face increased intimidation, less safety, more production speed-up and fear due to the continuing unemployment crisis that forces workers to labor in increasingly inhuman conditions. Always present is the threat by corporations to move their plants to other locations or countries, which happens often.

The impact of these concessions has been devastating. Since 2007, just before the Great Recession hit, the number of auto workers had been slashed from 346,000 to 185,000 today—and that number will fall as automated machinery is added to the factories.

This is so because machinery is less expensive than labor, which Marx disclosed more than a century and a

half ago, and has increased in tempo and dehumanization for workers under capitalism—and especially so in this automated era.

While King is very slick in his rhetoric about restoring lost benefits, more telling are his pronouncements about cooperating with the auto companies. When King declares that he is in favor of increasing worker productivity, he is expressing the sentiment of the auto executives. He claims that more productivity means more job security and his ability to win greater bonuses for workers. Workers know that it means more speed-up at work and more layoffs. And it shows clearly what the rank-and-file auto workers have known for years: that the union bureaucrats have been transformed into their enemies.

—Andy Phillips

Stop Colombian FTA



Chicago—On June 10, several dozen activists from FSPA Justice & Peace Coordinating Committee, 8th Day Center for Justice, News and Letters Committees and others marched to Obama's campaign headquarters here to forcefully remind the President of the promise he made as a candidate in 2008 to "oppose the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA)" while trade unionists are being killed there. He is now planning to approve the FTA, although over 50 trade unionists have been murdered in Colombia just in the last year.

We carried coffins in a solemn procession and laid them at the doorway to the Prudential Center which houses Obama's campaign headquarters and sent representatives to meet with his staff. Magda Castaneda, a Mexican community activist from Campaign Against Militarization of our Youth, spoke for many when she said, "President Obama: Don't you know that by signing the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement you will only make working conditions worse because this trade agreement only serves the interests of the rich and greedy capitalists in both the U.S. and Colombia?"

"Let's remember what has happened to Mexican workers with the North American FTA. Mexico's poor working class—especially its farmers—has been displaced and greatly impoverished. So President Obama, let's not underestimate the clamoring for justice. Build fair trade, not unfair free trade!" —Anti-FTA marcher

Haymarket martyrs

Forest Park, Ill.—Over 1,000 people gathered on May Day in Waldheim (Forest Home) Cemetery at the Haymarket Martyrs Monument to witness its rededication on the 125th anniversary of Haymarket. It memorializes eight radicals that capitalist sham justice convicted for the bomb at Haymarket Square in Chicago on May 4, 1886, during a workers' protest over police shooting strikers.

On Nov. 11, 1887, August Spies, Adolph Fischer, George Engel and Albert Parsons were hanged. They, along with Louis Lingg, killed in his cell the day before the hanging, had to be carried outside of Chicago to Waldheim for burial. Since then, other anarchists and socialists have been buried near their monument, including Emma Goldman and the founder of Marxist-Humanism, Raya Dunayevskaya.

Especially noticeable at the rededication were construction workers, including laborers and painters—the national presidents of the Laborers' International Union and the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades both spoke, along with AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler. These labor bureaucrats and other speakers linked the bloody repression of workers in 1886 to the 2011 attacks on workers' rights in Wisconsin and across the country.

In 1986 far fewer attended the Centennial celebration, including socialists and anarchists. In 2011 heads of national unions came and praised Haymarket martyrs and said nothing was "too radical" in defending workers' rights. Would that they acted on those words. Even in Wisconsin, AFSCME bureaucrats accepted all of Gov. Walker's wage and pension cuts before rank-and-file workers and their supporters took over the streets and the capitol.

—Bob McGuire

Grocery workers rally

Los Angeles—On June 14, 1,000 mostly young grocery workers and their supporters gathered and marched for a fair contract at the East Hollywood Vons Supermarket. They represented 60,000 workers of the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers) at Vons, Ralph and Albertson Supermarkets who have been without a contract for over three months.

Management has demanded they be able to reduce by 50% the total amount they pay the workers, for wages, healthcare benefits and pension costs. One week earlier, 80% of the rank-and-file workers voted to strike if they do not get a fair contract. The union and management are still in negotiations.

Speakers included grocery workers, Christian clergy and rabbis, and community people who are shoppers at these markets. The president of UFCW Local 1428 said that the average grocery worker, who makes \$25,000 per year, can't afford to pay \$10,000 of that for healthcare and/or pension.

Clergy delivered a letter with demands to management. Because management would not appear, the letter was given to security to relay to management.

We then marched over a mile to an Albertson market and held another rally. The workers delivered another letter with demands to management. This one was accepted.

Marchers included supporters from United Long Term Care Workers Union, Justice for Janitors, Coalition for Economic Survival, Jewish Labor Party, and Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice. Signs included "Billions for Wall Street, Nothing for Grocery Workers" and "No 50% Pay Cut."

A 55-year-old Black woman said she has had to put up with this every four to six years. She said, "When I retire, I want whoever takes my place to have every benefit I have and that won't happen if they get their way." Another worker said that without cashiers, meat cutters, baggers, stockers, bakery and deli workers, supermarkets would make no profit.

A retired worker told me we need a general strike. The Unions should not donate money to political campaigns. Instead, they should save it for a needed strike fund.

—Basho

Stand up, Chicago!

Chicago—Thousands of people rallied on June 14 under the banner, "Give It Back!" Three separate marches downtown, each led by a 12-foot-tall "corporate welfare king" puppet, met up outside a Chicago-Land Chamber of Commerce summit. Then 24 people sat down in the street and were arrested. There were contingents of teachers, healthcare workers, janitors, anti-eviction campaigners and community activists.

We were angry that teachers, other public employees and workers in general are being made the scapegoats for the fiscal crises of federal, state and local governments. We were angry about the attacks on Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Meanwhile, big banks and corporations get bailouts and tax breaks and their executives get fat bonuses, but they keep cutting wages and benefits for workers.

The rally was organized by "Stand Up! Chicago," which was set up by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) along with other groups including the Chicago Teachers Union, Chicago Jobs with Justice, and a number of community organizations. It identifies its members as "18 different unions and community organizations that are sick of big banks and big businesses getting richer while the people get poorer."

Its origin from the labor union bureaucracy may explain the curious "Give It Back!" theme. Many pre-printed signs read "Give Back Our Schools," "Give Back Our Homes," and "Give Back Our Jobs."

Can we really get anywhere by aiming our sights so low? The structural economic crisis of capitalism is pushing the capitalist class to decimate the middle class and drive all workers down to the conditions of Chinese sweatshop workers.

The solution isn't to try to save the middle class, within a system that depends on an underclass of undocumented immigrants, prisoners, and excluded workers, as well as a "normal" level of unemployment. Unless the movement is grounded in the lower and deeper layers of the oppressed and in a vision of a classless, non-racist, non-sexist society—not just "getting back" what we've lost—the union bureaucracy will be in a position to mislead and squelch the movement, just as they pulled the plug on a general strike in Wisconsin.

—Environmental justice activist

WORKSHOPTALKS

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penditure. It also means documenting every procedure with an eye toward thwarting potential litigation. The corporate regulatory lingo for this is "compliance."

How many times have I heard a poor patient pleading with a nurse, "Can I get help getting on the toilet please? I'm about to burst." Some newly hired nurses have replied, "You'll have to wait. I have to do your charting first!" It is not that the nurse is a cold, callous person. She is transformed into an appendage to the computer by the HMO training she received.

NURSES ELBOWED ASIDE

More important is the kind of training she didn't receive. As a veteran nurse told me, "There's no substitute for critical thinking forged by years of experience with actual patient needs."

The computer programmer, the software designer, is today's high priest of HMO healthcare. Nurses complain to me that Information Technology administrators think healthcare is all about cutting and pasting at the click of the mouse, instead of talking to the patient and writing one's own commentary. The practice of the narrative in healthcare, which captures the uniqueness of each patient's ailment, is slowly disappearing with this cookie-cutter approach.

This approach compresses time to engage the patient into a narrow window. The role of empathy is stifled in today's healthcare. Spend too much time with a patient, and you're considered a rogue worker.

NO TIME FOR CARE

We don't ask all the necessary questions, because we don't have the time. The machine has taken over. Under the domination of the computer, our daily routine, naturally driven by a propensity to cooperate in providing care, has been transformed into a drudgery.

We have endless meetings about "customer service," but real customer service is not practiced. For example, competing departments often pass the buck on performing essential services for patients because of the narrow computer metrics that determine their bonus. Further, managers' main concern is avoiding legal risk, even at the cost of not providing real care.

For management today, healthcare is like a spectator sport. They watch and monitor our progress through their computer-generated "quality" measures from corporate suites. It's been years since any of us have seen, or met in person, the current administrators at our hospital. The same is true for our union reps. To us, these leaders are like the Wizard of Oz, issuing directives from behind the curtain.

Watson may have entertained many on Jeopardy with the wonders of computerization, but when viewed from the capitalist workplace, it only underscores what Marx said a long time ago (on the anniversary of the *People's Paper*, April 19, 1856): "All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force."

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FROM THE WRITINGS OF RAYADUNAYEVSKAYA

Editor's note: The letter excerpted here was a reply to a discussion article on "Iran—philosophy and form of organization" by an Iranian revolutionary activist and thinker, published in the December 1979 N&L. Written during the time of the Iranian revolution, it speaks profoundly to the Arab Spring today. The letter's full text is in the Supplement to the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, #15209-10.

November 3, 1979

Dear Raha, It's great to welcome back an Iranian revolutionary who, as quite an original thinker, does not separate theory from organization. Quite the contrary. The result is that even when some of the ideas on form of organization are what I consider quite wrong, the profundity of the theoretical ground and the concentration on form of organization make even what is "wrong" quite evocative.

Let me concretize these generalizations. You are the first who saw anything about form of organization in Marx's early writings. The opposite is true; the early writings are always quoted as if Marx was both "pre-Marxist" and very nearly dumb on the question of "the Party," so when you quote what Marx said on "communist artisans form associations" and that "their association itself creates a new need—the need for society—and what appeared to be means has become an end,"¹ it is clear that you have sensed something that does indeed reconnect with Marx on the question of freely-associated men and women, and that you have every right to conclude "that theoretical result is that we should seek a kind of organization which is, at one and the same time, in unity with philosophy of the revolution and with the aim of the proletariat as a class."

Where I disagree is that you make too quick a leap to the present with the result that, much as you want to do the opposite, you are really once again separating philosophy and organization. For example, we, of course, are not only emphasizing "new forces" but Reason, and that is absolutely indispensable. So that you cannot possibly jump to the Fedayeen² where every word you say is correct (both against hierarchic form of organization and guerrilla warfare, that unholy combination of vanguardism and voluntarism), and yet it would appear at the end as if it were only because they were separated from the masses instead of it being both that and completely lacking in philosophy.

I think you ask the right question—"how a theory can be materialized"—but then make that materialization only that which relates to objective conditions, as if that meant economics, whereas in

1. Quoted from "Needs, Production, and Division of Labor," from Karl Marx's 1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts.
2. The Fedayeen were a Maoist guerrilla group in Iran.

Arab Spring in Morocco

continued from p. 1

used "husband" and "brother" along with "Pharaoh" as examples of the Master.

HUMAN RIGHTS AS SUBJECT, AS REVOLT

So human rights became a question of Subject, of women's revolt and self-activity, rather than an object, something handed down by the UN. I tried to make the point that the best way to overcome the influence of Salafism (reactionary Islamism) is *not* to polemicise (which would be accepting our opponent's ground for debate) but to undermine Salafism by insisting on women's equality, women's rights.

As the women lined up for me to sign their copies of Raya's book in Arabic as Prefacer, I wished I could speak Arabic and had more time to talk with them individually. One thing I learned is that what a woman puts on her head doesn't necessarily tell you what's going on in her head.

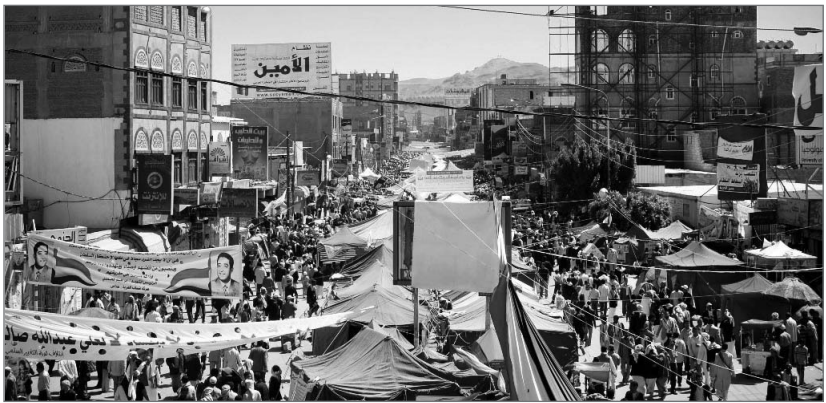
You are right to note that women's rights are central to the developing social revolution in the Arab world, and the revolutionaries of the Feb. 20th Movement I met in Rabat and Marrakesh all seemed very much aware of this. For them, it is no longer a question of solving the "women question" after the revolution, but of putting it first, at the cutting edge of the struggle.

This is also the line of the senior leaders of *La Voie Démocratique*, the historic Marxist (more or less Trotskyist) party in Morocco, with whom I spoke. This is a big step forward. So is the recognition of mass creativity from below on the part of these old Marxist fighters, many of whom endured prison and torture under the reign of the previous King, Hassan II.

Iran—philosophy and organization

fact to Marxist-Humanism, objective conditions are both economics and the masses revolting against that economics. It's very dangerous because that's exactly what has been wrong with the whole Second International and with Trotskyism, that somehow in the process of the economic analysis, the proletariat itself became object.³ To Marx, however, material did not mean just economics. It meant the whole form of life, so that the need naturally was first and foremost food and shelter, but also all that was needed, by no means limited to whether you had a spoon to eat with or you were eating with your fingers, but the need for what Marx called "quest for universality."

I disagree that the proletariat were not the first in the Iranian revolution. Of course, the so-called first, whether it's Father Gapon⁴ leading masses with icons to the Tsar's palace, or whether it's poets in Iran revealing the horrors of the Shah's prisons, or whether it's the journalist-editor in Nicaragua who was murdered by Somoza,⁵ precedes the actual proletarian outburst. But it doesn't become revolution until the proletariat,



Crowds and tents in Change Square, Sana'a, Yemen. Change Square is a place of protests, assemblies, teach-ins, art and the coming together of people of different sexes, regions, tribes, ages and occupations.

both in strikes and in demonstrations, that is to say, as masses in motion, appear. When Marx, as you quote, writes that both as a "moment of enthusiasm" and when the proletariat arouses the kind of interest that is an actual universal, that it's possible for "a particular class to claim general supremacy."⁶

3. See "The Second International, 1889 to 1914" in Dunayevskaya's book *Marxism and Freedom*.

4. Father Gapon, a Russian Orthodox priest, led a procession of workers to present a petition to the Tsar. The army's massacre of 1,000 helped spark the 1905 Russian Revolution.

5. Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, editor of the Nicaraguan opposition newspaper *La Prensa*, was murdered under Anastasio Somoza's dictatorship.

6. Quoted from Marx's "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right. Introduction."

Fukushima's 'man-made disaster'

Editor's note: Below are excerpts of a report sent to us from Narihiko Ito in Japan. Along with it, he sent an "Urgent Proposal" on assistance to the earthquake victims and reconstruction of the devastated area, issued by the Peace Constitution Committee of the 21st Century.

Tokyo—The March 11 magnitude 9 earthquake is the most severe ever measured by the Japan Meteorological Agency. It was closely followed by the massive tsunami that hit the coast of Sanriku and caused the great disaster. The large numbers of dead and missing are thought to have been mainly caused by the tsunami.

The earthquake and tsunami already caused one of the worst disasters ever. That was made worse by the accidents of the reactors of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station (NPS) of Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)....

The March 17 issue of the German weekly *Die Zeit* published a special article on the accident headlined, "No more lies shall ever be permitted." It began:

"They say as follows: 'Our NPS are safe. We control the natural disaster by our technology. Safety shall precede economic benefit. Decommissioning NPS is not recommended. Extension of life of operation is recommended.' The accidents in Fukushima and the consequent suffering of the Japanese people thrust a question mark to all these claims and ask the people in the world to have a new point of view."

...Even a magnitude 8 earthquake was never predicted in designing and construction of Fukushima Daiichi NPS....To begin with, they had no idea of safety standards. The April 10 *Mainichi Newspaper* explains what really happened right after the earthquake:

"On April 9, TEPCO submitted the report of the results of its investigation of the damage by the tsunami, which followed the great earthquake, on the Fukushima Daiichi and Daini NPS. In the Daiichi NPS, the main buildings such as the reactor building were all flooded 4-5 meters deep. The first tsunami hit Daiichi NPS at 3:27 PM on March 11, 41 minutes after the quake. The second tsunami came around 3:35 PM, eight minutes

Of course you're right, when you laugh at Khomeini for thinking that his rulership is "a gift from God," and that you show that it has "its base in the profane world," but it isn't true that somehow the fact that the merchants were together with the proletariat in these mass demonstrations made it possible for Khomeini to usurp the power that belongs to the proletariat.

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

But again, unless they, too, do not separate themselves from philosophy; unless they, too, feel as strongly the need for work on intellectual, as the intellectual feels the strong need for the workers, and unless that "intellectual sediment" (to use a Luxemburgian phrase)⁷ has philosophy and organization and revolution and Reason as well as new force, we will once again lose. And, I should add that when Marx writes "revolution is necessary also because it revolutionized the class itself,"⁸ that's exactly what he meant, the proletariat as Reason as well as force, as objective as well as subjective, as new man/woman.

Now, don't think that my critique means I want you to rewrite this. Quite the contrary. I think that precisely because it is from a youth and is from a vantage point not just of Iran and precisely because the universality of this question we are grappling with—form of organization—is characteristic by no accident of both USA and Iran, that it is extremely important that we see not just "results" but the process. Indeed, I believe that we should have very nearly a whole year of discussion on this question before we even attempt to draw conclusions....

Yours, Raya

7. See Dunayevskaya's book *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 19.

8. In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels wrote, "this revolution is necessary...also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew."

after the first tsunami. TEPCO said that before the March 11 earthquake, the design and construction allowed for a 5-7 meters height tsunami, but the tsunami was much higher in the March 11 earthquake, around 14-15 meters. Units 1-4 of the NPS are located on the ground 10 meters above sea level. Therefore, most of the area was flooded 4-5 meters deep. The tsunami reached the second floor of the reactor building, and the sea water intake pump and other equipment were damaged."

Has TEPCO made a mistake in not anticipating an earthquake and massive tsunami as powerful as what hit Tohoku? According to the March 27 issue of *Mainichi Newspaper*, the council of the Ministry of

Economy, Trade and Industry pointed out in June 2009, based on analysis of the Jogan Earthquake 1,100 years ago, that an earthquake as great would hit Japan again. The council report does not include the Jogan Earthquake.... In the later conferences, TEPCO said that the estimated quake in the Jogan Earthquake is within specifications of the quake-resistant structure of the NPS....

So the accident occurred, not because it was "an exceptional

event that could not have been readily predicted," but because TEPCO did not take the correct prediction into consideration. It's absolutely clear the accident was a "man-made disaster" that was predestined to occur. Also, we know well what made TEPCO consciously ignore the "prediction" of danger, as the column of the April 6 issue of *Asahi Newspaper* headlined: "Major construction work requires a lot of money."

Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization, which is supposed to maintain the safety of NPS, set installation guidelines that indicate "it is not necessary to take into consideration a long period power failure." With Japan Nuclear Energy Safety Organization, the watchdog for nuclear power safety, behaving so poorly, no explanation seems adequate but that Japanese nuclear policy is completely corrupt....

—Narihiko Ito



Fukushima Daiichi Reactor unit 2 after the explosion.

ESSAY

Civil War still hotly contested

by Robert Taliaferro

The history of the U.S. is a quagmire of facts and near fictions; conflicting thoughts and ideas; established truths and myths, and nowhere is this more evident than when one discusses the causes and effects of the Civil War. This is especially evident on its 150th anniversary as some try to rewrite history, claiming that "states' rights" were the issue, not slavery and the racism that underpinned it. They ignore that "states' rights" meant the "right" to own another human being and work them to death. But history reveals the truth, the war between the states was a war over slavery, about freedom and self-determination. Today's rampant racism bordering on fascism shows that the Civil War was a truly unfinished revolution.

The Civil War was such a monumental influence that Karl Marx, in the preface to *Capital* wrote, "As in the 18th century, the American war of independence sounded the tocsin for the European middle-class, so in the 19th century, the American Civil War sounded it for the European working-class."

In fact, Raya Dunayevskaya notes that under the impact of the Civil War, Marx reorganized *Capital*, developing a new structure, and collected data from the events in the U.S. for volumes II and III of this theoretical work.

Dunayevskaya states that Marx felt it is "...the mode of labor under capitalism that is the underlying cause of crises," and in the early 19th Century it was the mode of labor—chattel slavery—that was the impetus for a war that would change the cultural, political, and economic dynamics of the U.S.—and the world—for generations to come.

Though the causes of the Civil War can be blamed on many factors, depending on the particular bias of those making such evaluations, the bottom line revolves around a Southern agrarian society that was loath to relinquish its reliance on slavery as a source of capital and labor.

In 1805 the estimated value of the approximately 1 million slaves located in the country was about \$300 million. In 1860, at the dawn of the Civil War, and 52 years after the 1808 ban on the importation of slaves into the U.S., the estimated value of the approximately 4.4 million slaves in the South was valued at \$3 billion.

In the North, modernization and industrialization was the key source of wealth, replacing human labor with that of animals and machines.

According to James M. McPherson, author of *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*, the North had advantages that the South didn't which allowed it to be industrialized upon a more capital rather than labor intensive economy.

In the North labor was expensive and scarce, but resources were extensive. Add to this the higher level of mass education available in the North and the resultant higher literacy due to the proliferation of public schools and the openness to change. The U.S. in the mid-19th century—with the exception of the South—was becoming the most rapidly modernized country in the world.

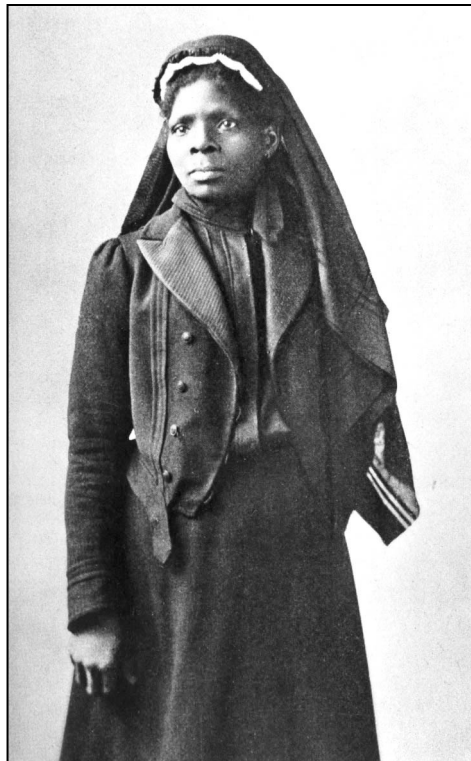
Modernization, according to McPherson, gave rise to reform movements such as temperance, education, women's rights, and anti-slavery, the latter becoming a primary instigation for the South.

Southern Democrats were the primary advocates of the institution of slavery with the inherited Jeffersonian commitment to maintain states' rights, limit government, and continue with traditional agrarian economic arrangements, which, most importantly for them, included chattel slavery.

The swift growth of Northern industrialization, changes in modes of transportation, and new inventions revolutionized manufacturing and production in the North in a manner that was truly American.

Additionally, the rapid expansion of the country due to events like the Louisiana Purchase, and the war with Mexico, instigated by Southern Democrats, supported the fact that the South was growing more paranoid over its loss of much-needed political clout, and that despite cotton profits, Southern slaveholders were clearly becoming capitalists, without industrial capital.

Since slavery was at the foundation of the South's social order, those moderates who called for even a marginal movement towards industrial development were



Susie King Taylor escaped slavery to become an army nurse during the U.S. Civil War, and later taught the Freedmen.

drowned out by those who, according to McPherson, felt that such an entrepreneurial ethic was a form of "vulgar Yankee materialism." Such "idealism" provided a powerful roadblock to industrial and economic development in the South.

Raya Dunayevskaya refers to the laborer in Marxist ideology as the "gravedigger of bourgeois society." Capitalism's brutality pervaded the antebellum South in the U.S., a particular slave-based form of bourgeois society. And slavery, Marx explained, was the pivot on which capitalism's development turned.

When the secessionist states comprising the Confederate States of America fired on Ft. Sumter on April 12, 1861, they completed the circle of the paradox that was to define the United States of America for all time.

It was not the intent of Abraham Lincoln, newly elected 16th President of the U.S. (and its first Republican President), to attack or sanction the Southern states over the issue of slavery.

In his March 4, 1861, Inaugural Address he noted, "...I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so; and I have no inclination to do so." This position was reaffirmed in an address he made on July 4, 1861.

But in the end slavery and its end was the only issue. Frederick Douglass, in a speech in Canandaigua, New York, in 1857 said, "Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want

the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters."

In his second Inaugural Address on March 4, 1865, another Lincoln emerged as he noted, "One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war."

Hegel wrote, "The history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom. We may affirm absolutely that nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion."

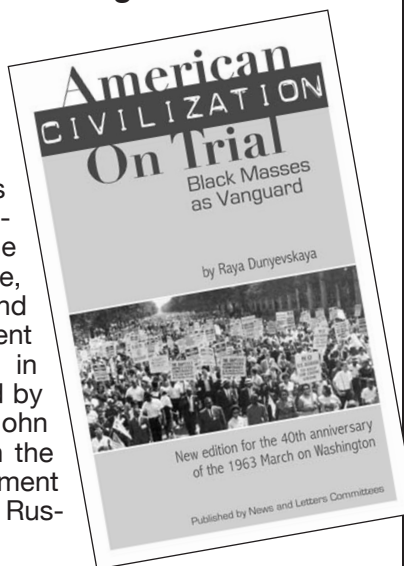
Ghosts of the past often imbue theory and practice. The Civil War produced nearly a million ghosts. It should be a constant reminder to those who might long for "the good ole days" that, as Douglass noted in 1883, "No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck."

Get the real story! From American Civilization on Trial: Black Masses as Vanguard

On Jan. 11, 1860, Marx wrote to Engels: "In my opinion, the biggest things that are happening in the world today are, on the one hand the movement of the slaves in America started by the death of John Brown, and, on the other the movement of the serf in Russia..."

...When the young Marx first broke from bourgeois society and elaborated his philosophy of Humanism in 1844, he paid little attention to the remains of chattel slavery. Now, however, Marx kept his eyes glued on the movement of Negro slaves. When the Civil War broke out, and "the Great Emancipator" did all in his power to limit it to the white man's war for Union, Marx began to popularize the speeches of the Abolitionists, especially those Wendell Phillips wrote against the Northern conduct of the war...

To order, see p. 7



Greece, democracy and the economic crisis

Since May 25, a people's assembly has been in session in Greece's Syntagma Square outside of parliament. (See "Greece: Tahrir Squared," p. 12.) Through an open mike, tens of thousands from all walks of life have been coming to express their total indignation with Europe's politics of austerity. The people's assembly of self-described "angry ones" is a new dimension to the ongoing mass strikes by workers and battles carried on against the police by anarchist youth. After a year of massive cuts to wages, pensions and benefits, as well as tax increases, Greek unemployment has grown to a record 16%. Now the IMF, European Central Bank and political leaders in Germany and France are demanding another 40 billion euros in cutbacks.

A pensioner, Apostolos Anagnostopoulos, spoke for many of the world's workers who have become collateral damage in the wake of the 2008 global financial meltdown: "Greeks aren't willing to pauperize themselves to pay off debt for which they are not to blame. We are in revolt, people may be killed, but whatever it takes we are not going to let those measures pass."

Europe has been rife with persistent revolts, mass strikes, marches against economic retrenchment for some time. When the Arab Spring emerged against political repression and economic deprivation, it resonated in Europe in a new "Take the Square" movement which began during the run-up to May 20 elections in Spain with a demand for "Real Democracy."

Saved through a no-holds-barred robbing of public treasuries in the wake of the 2008 financial meltdown, financial overlords are now dictating that workers pay for bloated public debts through drastic cuts to their conditions of life and labor. Forced deficit reduction is also shrinking the economies of Ireland, Portugal and Spain, making those countries' debt burdens even more unbearable and further crises inevitable. What spooks the global financial system is that the spiraling debt crisis, which they themselves are driving, will result in defaults on debt obligations throughout the world.

OBAMA'S POLITICAL PARALYSIS

That is why President Obama begged the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has been insisting on punishing conditions for rescue loans, to resolve the Greek crisis as he entertained her at the White House. The fear is that the whole global economy, including Germany and the U.S., will go into the abyss in a "Lehman Brothers 2," referring to the investment bank whose collapse precipitated the 2008 financial meltdown.

In the U.S. the fallout from the 2008 financial meltdown persists. Long-term unemployment included in the official U.S. unemployment rate of 9.1% announced on June 3 is the highest since the Great Depression. Last year Obama denounced any idea that this intractable, permanent level of unemployment should be accepted as "the new normal," yet now the whole political agenda has turned to deficit reduction, with Republicans threatening a self-induced debt default crisis, unless they can punish U.S. workers with more cuts.

Obama fervently believes in political solutions to the crisis, but political practice has been reduced, not just to begging the German chancellor not to push the world economy into another crash, but also to a "jobs" program of begging U.S. businesses to "get in the game" instead of sitting on their cash hoard of \$ 1.9 trillion.

The problem is that capital is on strike and won't invest in the real economy, where the financial meltdown revealed a dramatically lower rate of profit.

CAPITALISM'S FALLING RATE OF PROFIT

Profit can only come from surplus value extracted from living labor, and the rate of profit falls when there is relatively less living labor in proportion to dead labor or capital. Capital's self-contradictory motivation is to diminish as much as possible living labor—this goose that lays their golden eggs—by constantly revolutionizing production with new dead labor or machines.

With a given level of technological development and ratio of capital to living labor, the only way to boost profit is to lower the cost of labor through a class war on labor rights, wages, benefits and pensions. There are now reports that some manufacturing may return to the U.S., where there are fewer strikes and production costs keep dropping so precipitously that they will compare favorably with China by 2015. Notably, that will be true only by Mississippi standards, the lowest paid anti-union environment for sweated labor in the country.

In contrast to total economic crisis and political paralysis, the new people's assemblies that have emerged look for solutions outside the prevailing players like political parties and trade unions. In the public squares of Spain and Greece, masses are organizing their lives together, inspired by the persistent self-organization of Egyptians in Tahrir Square that got rid of the Mubarak regime. This self-organization offers a new vantage point, not just against past political and economic tyranny, but towards a totally new future of freely associated labor.

—Ron Kelch

AS REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION TAKE WORLD STAGE

Congratulations on a fine May-June issue. Thanks especially for getting Libya right—a very difficult thing in the current situation. The hopes of February were disappointed so soon—but first of all by Qaddafi, whose brutal repression of a real revolutionary impulse was followed by the NATO powers intervening, against their initial will but then as you point out in order to get what they can out of it for their own class interests. Yes, we are for the revolution, not the intervention, but to merely oppose the intervention, especially at that moment, would be to reward Qaddafi with power and allow him to massacre his people.

That said, those critics on the left who point out what has happened in Bahrain, Syria and Yemen are correct that hypocrisy will always govern the major powers' actions. But this is an opportunity to put pressure on the U.S. for its presence in Bahrain, its silence on the Saudi invasion and so forth. That Syria and Iran are often as brutal as the U.S. government says they are, should not disorient people—there is more than one force for exploitation and violence in the world, as 9/11 itself showed, and we are against them all and for the revolution, including its next steps.

Steven Colatrella
Rome, Italy

Keep up your good work. In these times of geographical, economic, political and world upheavals, revolt and the resulting chaos, confusion and corruption—we need *N&L* more than ever to help restore some sanity and hope.

Gloria I. Joseph
Virgin Islands

What struck me most in the Perspectives Thesis, "Revolution and counter-revolution take world stage," in the May-June issue was the discussion of the "leaderlessness" of the Arab popular revolts. Sadly, I am pretty certain these popular revolts will end up as halfway, or democratic, revolutions, at best. That is, that the leaders will sprout up like dandelions after a good spring rain.

"What happens after?" is where I part with your thesis. It poses a "two-fold problematic" that is fundamentally flawed, as it assumes it is necessary to conquer power. It seems to me that power should be destroyed, not conquered. The destruction of power is the birth of real revolution, while the conquest of power is the abortion of revolution and the birth of counter-revolution, as proven time and again by history.

Rand Gould
Detroit, MI

Just returned to France from Morocco and opened the latest *News & Letters*. Very much appreciated is the lead article on Arab Spring and its relation to class struggles in the U.S. (May-June 2011 *News & Letters* "Draft for Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, 2011-2012: Revolution and counter-revolution take

world stage.") I was touched that you referenced my Z-Space blog on Libya. (See (<http://zcommunications.org/libya-who-s-side-are-we-on-by-richard-greeman>.) Of course you are right: too many on the Left get distracted by the false dichotomy of "imperialism"/"anti-imperialism" and lose sight of the revolution.

Richard Greeman
France

Comparing and contrasting "leaderlessness" and "non-ideological" with the various alternatives (vanguard party, radical democracy) is important to make sense of the ongoing trajectory of the revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia, and those striving to get to first base: Syria, Yemen, Libya, Palestine. There are wonderful new and recurring ideas about freedom pouring out of individuals in these mass movements; without organization, genuine mass revolutionary organizations, they cannot be realized. Organization is what makes freedom sustainable—and what kinds and how they can be rooted both in philosophy and activity are the challenges that the times demand we work out. By "we" I do not mean just News and Letters Committees.

Marxist-Humanist
New York

When I read "Letter to the youth" published in the May-June *N&L* column "From the Writings of Raya Dunayevskaya," I felt that 1971 letter could have been written today to the young people in Benghazi, Dara'a, Tahrir Square, Sana'a and Gaza.

The concept that remains the same is that "Subject is the one that is responsible for both theory and practice," that "practice is masses practicing and their practice is not only the doing of deeds but the thinking of thoughts," that "thought, philosophy of liberation, the absolute idea [broken down] for our age is itself a force for revolution." I hope readers will write to News and Letters to discuss and further concretize Marxist-Humanist ideas of freedom.

Susan Van Gelder
New York

I salute you comrades for your efforts and yes the images of mass protests we posted on Facebook are from Kampala, Uganda. The government is trying hard to block out any leaks to media outlets of the protests in the country. To all the comrades, we stand in solidarity with them and we will continue the struggle for the total liberation of the African continent from the chains of capitalism, and struggle to usher in a period of respect, tolerance and prosperity for the working class.

Revolutionary youth
Uganda

If read objectively, even by people who have misgivings about Marxian theory, the Draft Perspectives 2011 will make it impossible to deny the historical record. History has recorded the many

READERS' VIEWS

previous attempts of human beings reaching for human emancipation only to meet it halfway—first negation—due to counter-revolution, be it external or internal, when the masses in motion were reaching for the second negation, that is, their vision of a new society based on human foundations evolving out of the spontaneous creation of human relationships in organization and social activity. Counter-revolution has so often appeared in its various forms as anathema to the masses attempting to emancipate themselves.

The Perspectives Statement in May-June *N&L* clearly explains the necessity of a philosophy of liberation as inseparable from the vision of the masses in motion as the determinant, the key. And it is precisely the need for humanity to transcend the perverse social reality of capital relations that equally demands we think hard about developing a philosophy of revolution for our day. This is abundantly clear when one sees what exactly gave rise to the reason Marx authored his *Critique of the Gotha Program*. A theory of a new society is inseparable from organizing principles to achieve that end.

Faruq
California

Labor has exploded in 2011. We have seen it everywhere—in Wisconsin and in Greece and from Tunisia and Egypt to Libya and Iran, and we can't forget the anti-sweatshop uprisings at home and abroad. What needs expression is that this is not just an explosion of activity, but that the very concepts of labor and labor organizing have been fundamentally challenged.

The challenge from the Right, such as the attack on collective bargaining rights, is well-represented in the mainstream media, but the new concepts of organizing and the question of "what kind of labor?" merit more attention and critical discussion. (Examples: teacher unions competing with charter entities to run schools; the excluded workers' concept of community-rooted workers' centers.)

Retired Teacher
New York

The crisis of capitalism is a worldwide phenomenon. And I have not heard any recent interviews with supposed top economists on TV or radio that have talked about the "recovery" without connecting that to the "inevitable" downturns and dips that will continue to come. Taking another "dip" after this will not be pleasant.

I keep thinking that Marx called "prehistory" everything that happens before we finally have a new society, and said that all history is about the struggle of humanity to be free. That is why the new book of Raya's writings on Marx is so important—to help provide a philosophic direction that gives meaning to the struggle for freedom. Where do the revolutions that "took the world stage" this year stand in that timeline of history?

Teacher
Illinois

Zack Kopplin is a high school student in Baton Rouge trying to get Louisiana's anti-evolution law repealed. His efforts are endorsed by 43 Nobel Prize-winning scientists. Now he has called out Republican Presidential candidate Michele Bachmann, exposing her lie that supposedly there are Nobel Prize winners who question evolution. He challenged her to name them. No response—even when she was asked directly.

Tired of Tea Party lies
South USA

The headlines from the Middle East and North Africa, and now Spain, have overwhelmed what's going on especially in South America. The ongoing struggles in Colombia, Venezuela, and elsewhere are important, and to many on the Left, they define what revolution is. It is why the reports and articles in *N&L* are important to discuss the nature of these movements and see what is new there.

Observer
Chicago

Raya Dunayevskaya said that 1969 was not a continuation of 1968, it was a different moment. I think part of it had to do with the importance of seizing a moment. In 1968 there was Prague Spring. Now we have seen Arab Spring, with hints at an American Spring in Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. We don't know at first where a revolution is going to go but we try to keep it going forward, not back to a retrogression. There was a revolution to overthrow the Shah in Iran in 1979 and the retrogression took the form of the Ayatollah.

We need to storm the Bastille, but that is not all that has to be done. It may seem at times that retrogression is always winning. That's what we have to struggle against.

Ready and willing
Michigan



Graffiti in Hong Kong: "Free Ai Weiwei!"

CHINESE ART PROJECT

Thank you for "China clamps down" by Bob McGuire in the May-June *N&L*. Brilliant, just brilliant.

I am actually curating a project in London for awareness of Ai Weiwei's capture and release. It is called The Chinese Art Project, <http://wp.me/p1yUbw-15>, and I am looking to do an exhibition using art as a symbol of unique interpretation and freedom of expression. Hopefully I'll have 25 pieces of art to exhibit from five unique artists.

You'd be so welcome to come! I guess it's about pulling together and standing for our rights. Especially in an age of social media power. I've put a project video plan up at <http://www.youtube.com/ChineseWhisperProj>. It would be great if you could find an outlet to let readers know.

P.S. I'm on twitter: ChineseTWhisper
Mr Taurus
London, England

HEALTHCARE IN 2011

My primary doctor and surgeon told my partner and me that the U.S.'s healthcare system is crazy. The doctor thinks it's crazy that one has to have health insurance to get quality healthcare. My surgeon thinks the record-keeping system should be centralized for the sake of the patients, especially in this computer age. That way, each doctor and hospital can see each patient's complete history, and patients wouldn't have to tote around records when changing doctors or going to see a specialist, taking the chance of losing those records. When both my primary care doctor and my surgeon are criticizing the U.S. healthcare system for not being available to all and for being disorganized and inefficient, I REALLY know that universal, single-payer healthcare is what is needed in this country!

Concerned patient
Chicago

FREEDOM RIDES, 50 YEARS AFTER

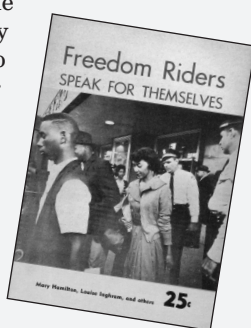
Abraham Bassford's powerful account of his 1961 Freedom Ride in the May-June *N&L* ("A Freedom Rider Looks Back...") and the recent PBS documentary "Freedom Riders" are like two mirrors which face each other and multiply their images out to infinity. They both bring to life the revolutionary impact those Freedom Rides had, not only on the segregated South, but also the leadership of the Civil Rights Movement and the hundreds of youth who stepped up and took the Freedom Rides from defeat to victory.

Both the article and documentary show the young people who kept the rides going after the buses and

the participants were murderously attacked, with both Southern politicians and the Kennedy Administration doing nothing to stop the racist mobs.

Bassford writes, "I couldn't not go," and a young Black woman speaking on the film compared the pull of the movement to being caught up in a mighty wind. The dialectics of historic events are clearly shown: the movement of the brave young people pushed their own leaders, the Kennedy Administration and eventually the broader public, to support them.

Observer
Detroit



WOMEN'S LIBERATION SPEAKS IN MANY VOICES

In May this year I suddenly thought most of us were missing the historical significance of what Mother's Day was celebrating. It was originally started after the Civil War as a protest of that war's carnage, by women who had lost their sons. The original Mother's Day proclamation in 1870 had started this way:



"Arise, then, women of this day! Arise all women who have hearts whether our baptism be that of water or of fears. Say firmly: 'We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies....' We women of one country will be too tender of those of another country to allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs. A voice goes up with our own to say 'Disarm, disarm! The sword of murder is not the balance of justice.'"

Never was it more appropriate to remember this history than this year.

Anti-war Women's Liberationist San Francisco

Anti-abortion fanatics in Congress and state legislatures are coming up with such inhuman punitive laws that more and more women are now—not in the future—being seriously harmed. The latest is an Idaho woman who is facing five years in jail and a \$5,000 fine because she bought drugs online to induce a miscarriage and is being charged with "unlawful abortion." A poor mother of two, she could not afford either a surgical abortion or the cost of the doctor's visits to get a medical abortion. How is a law like this helpful? Those who make and carry out such laws care more for a fetus than for two living children and their mother. The latest outrage is from Republican Senator Marco Rubio, who has just introduced a bill that would offer fines and jail for anyone who knowingly takes a woman under 18 across state lines to evade

invasive parental consent laws. Yes, let's throw more and more people in jail, as if forcing a woman to carry a fetus to term isn't already an outrage.

Women's Liberationist Chicago

Maureen Dowd wrote a good column in the New York Times reminding Hillary Clinton about the declarations she made in 1995 when she visited Beijing as a First Lady attending a Women's Conference. Dowd wants Clinton to act decisively now regarding women in Saudi Arabia. I don't think that is possible as her President's Secretary of State. The best she could do is resign honorably and remake her statement of the 1995 Women's Conference. Perhaps UN Ambassador Susan Rice can say something bold on Saudi Arabia. I think Obama is hopeless on this.

Observer California

BURMA AND NORTH KOREA

I was puzzled when I read recently that the U.S. had intercepted a North Korean ship it suspected of carrying missile technology to Burma and forced it to return home. About the only possible reason I could think of that Burma's generals would want these missiles from North Korea is to further fortify their "capital" in exile (Naypyidaw), against the only possible "enemy" they could be concerned about. It's not the Indians. It's not the Chinese. It's not Thailand. It's not even Japan. It's neither of the Koreas. All these countries are heavily investing in Burma's slavery-driven "enterprise zones."

NO! The only possible enemy the

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Burmese generals could possibly use these missiles against—is the Burmese citizenry itself. Using the "fine art" of "diplomacy" to get the North Korean and Burmese Generals to comply is a bit like asking the Mexican Cartels to voluntarily cease smuggling (or Qaddafi to stop murdering his own people).

One could say the whole deal is quite Orwellian. The Obama administration says they're "mystified about Myanmar's motives." Frankly, I'm mystified about Obama's diplomatic mystique.

Burmese-American California

FIGHTING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

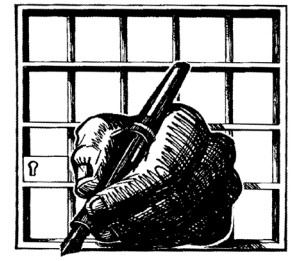
Martha Biggs and her four children, displaced like so many others from Cabrini Green, and currently homeless, moved in June into a house, two years vacant and foreclosed on by one of the top four banks responsible for home foreclosure in Chicago: Deutsche Bank. Their new neighbors, members of the Chicago Anti-Eviction Campaign and others fighting for housing as a human right helped her move in. Given the current state of housing in Chicago—numerous foreclosures and systematic evictions from public housing—Martha and members of the campaign argue that this is the only course of action that makes sense. While this is just one house and one family, the group hopes to inspire other community groups to reclaim land and housing in their own communities, and to think critically about how this crisis is part of a recurring cycle of displacement and dis-empowerment.

Anti-Eviction Campaigners Chicago

After Georgia passed an Arizona-style anti-immigrant bill, farmers there now find themselves short of labor, with crops rotting in the fields. It perfectly reflects the desperation of present capitalist politics: so dependent on insane ideology to divide the masses that they are tearing down the foundations of their own production. Who needs more proof that it's time for a new human society?

Revolutionary Illinois

VOICES FROM BEHIND THE BARS



Yours really is the only newspaper that tells the truth. I wish the TV news was more like you.

Prisoner Indiana

The Marxist-Humanist Perspective was new to me, but I have found that it brings clarity to worldwide struggles in a manner that is more practical than all the other ideological perspectives I've been exposed to.

Prisoner Jefferson City, Mo.

I always share your paper with fellow prisoners. Thank you for your generosity of ideas.

Prisoner Ontario

I noticed in the May-June issue the "Black/Red View" was missing. It is one of my favorite sections. Will you be bringing it back? Your paper is like a breath of fresh air. Thank you for finding a donor to pay for my sub.

Prisoner Michigan

Editor's note: We will send you the March-April issue, to see the In Memoriam to John Alan/Allen Willis, author of the "Black/Red View" column that appeared in every issue from 1970 to 2011. It was an outcome of the 1969 Black-Red Conference, where the participants discussed issues raised in the Black community. Participants included Marxist-Humanists, "who lend the red coloring, not only for the sake of color, but for the sake of philosophy, a philosophy of liberation." It was that quality of Black/Red that John Alan presented in his column ever since 1970. We are proud to continue listing him as having been a National Editorial Board Member Emeritus in the masthead of News & Letters.

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Latinas re-occupy La Casita

Chicago—On June 22 the police, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) security and construction crews showed up at La Casita, the field house on the grounds of Whittier Dual Language Academy in Pilsen (see "Chicago Latinas demand a library," Nov.-Dec. 2010 N&L). As the construction workers set up fencing that blocked access to La Casita from three sides, the police tried to prevent Whittier moms from entering the building. True to form, the women ignored the police and marched right past. Soon after, word was sent to the majority of Whittier Parent Committee members who were at that moment supporting the teachers at a rally at a school board meeting downtown. Suspicions are high that CPS was deliberate in their choice to show up with a demolition team on the very morning that La Casita would be least defended. But, once again, CPS underestimated the Whittier moms and their determination to defend their community center.

Things had been heating up for a couple of weeks, ever since CPS announced its intentions to build the library, not in La Casita as requested by the Parent Committee, but instead inside the school building, taking over a special needs classroom for the purpose. CPS has largely broken off communication with the Parent Committee, and refused to answer their questions about what would happen to the special needs students who were losing their classroom. The Whittier parents also question CPS' use of the funds that were originally intended for renovation of La Casita. It

Straight, No Chaser

Warner Brothers presents **Thelonious Monk: Straight, No Chaser** directed by Charlotte Zwerin. Produced by Charlotte Zwerin and Bruce Ricker. Executive Producer Clint Eastwood.

Art is the eternal particular, the unmediated, mediating term in which the human face is recognized. A familiar tune, like a familiar face, catches us unawares and we smile in recognition. We find ourselves whistling.

To approach art in the spirit of the absolute, second negative, to criticize seriously,

is dangerous but, for the revolutionary, necessary.

A classic film about a pioneering Black musician who redefined jazz performance and composition, who left us with hummable tunes like "Round Midnight," raises questions about the searing racism that burns through American life. Why did Thelonious hide behind the clown-child, wafting up from the piano, to spin like a dervish...or was he hiding? Even the spike-bearded clown, like the fool in King Lear, uttered prophecies and criticism, and was cut down in the storm.

When, in the film, Teo Macero produces a date at Columbia Records, the Black quartet and its leader are approached by the white straw boss with a recital of supercilious unfelt greetings.

"What's that?...a new hat?...only a half hour late?...let me see the glasses...you're jiving me...(looking at Monk's manuscripts): little sketches right?...put some free form things in there." Here Teo Macero accosts the piano in a dissonant way he thinks is very hip. He must sell records for Columbia. Monk and his men must lay bare their hearts, in the charging, halting, impulsive and reflecting idiom they are creating.

The tune is called "Ugly Beauty"; the musicians only want the first or second take, after that the spirit dissipates as you imitate your own performance. In the middle of an inspired first take the musicians are stopped by Macero. They are non-plussed. "Why did you stop us for?" and Monk, sadly, asks, "Why nobody do what I ask 'em to?"

Why? Because the Black commodity must be strained through the sieve of ignorant critics, eager to show how hip they are, omnivorous disc jockeys devouring the precious kernels of the Black art, and of course the market moguls.

From minstrel show to extravagant review, to dance bands crisscrossing the West and South, to small night clubs, the art of a people emerged: Monk reflected, synthesized, playing old fashioned stride with his left hand, modern arabesques with his right, questioning his heritage as he transformed a tawdry tune from the Tin Pan Alley packinghouse.

This documentary film must be seen. Charlotte Zwerin had offered up complete performances and touching vignettes from the life and death of the master artist. The fact that a poor Black man from Rocky Mount, North Carolina, challenged the world of Harlem, mainstream America and Europe in clown disguise: ("Mr. Monk, you always wear different hats. Do they have any influence on your music?" asks a West German journalist) is implicitly an attack on a world where Black Americans are not taken seriously.

In *The Philosophy of Modern Music and Dialectic of Enlightenment* Theodor Adorno syllogizes prematurely. He hasn't bathed himself in the mediating center of the syllogism; he sees only the dead commodity and not the living person. Black American music for him is part of the waste land of mass culture.

See and hear "Straight, No Chaser," but with revolutionary eyes and ears. —Paul Geist

appears that some \$18,000 of the over \$500,000 raised through the parents' activism, was used to pay an architectural firm for a walk-through at Whittier that resulted in the recommendation to use the special needs classroom for the library. The Whittier parents point out that they arranged for the *pro bono* work of an architectural firm that has put forward an impressive plan for the renovation of La Casita that the parents claim will be paid for with the funds they helped raise.

Over the course of the day, the parents uncovered a document from CPS verifying that CPS had contracted on May 31 to have a company demolish La Casita and move forward with plans to create a soccer field for use of a neighboring Catholic high school. It appears that CPS has clearly violated every aspect of the agreement reached with the Parent Committee after their 43-day occupation of La Casita last fall. With the threat of demolition once again hanging over their heads, a 24-7 occupation of La Casita has recommenced. As of 3:45 AM on June 23, as I write this, a crew of supporters is well into their first overnight shift. Outside a man in a vehicle seems to be keeping close tabs on who enters and who leaves. It is unclear whether he is with the police or with CPS security, but the message seems clear—the minute La Casita is no longer defended, the demolition team will be mobilized to move in.

I appeal to all of you who have been inspired by the bold, militant struggle of the Whittier Parent Committee over the last year, to join the fight once again. Maintaining a 24-7 occupation is no easy feat. Your time, your energy, your support is desperately needed. You can find out more at www.saveourcenter.com. More importantly, come down to La Casita at 1900 W. 23rd St. anytime, day or night, and lend your support. La Lucha Continua! —Jerry Mead-Lucero

Gil Scott-Heron's life

When Gil Scott-Heron passed on May 27, we lost one of the great artists of our time. As the "Winter In America" of which he sang stretches on, cold and brutal, his voice remains as relevant as his presence is missed.

Coming out of the Black Power movement, he had a keen understanding of where Black Americans stand historically: "I think that Black Americans have been the only real die-hard Americans because we're the ones that have carried the process through the process. We're the ones who marched, we're the ones who carried the Bible, we're the ones who carried the flag, we're the ones who had to go through the courts, and being born American didn't seem to matter. Because we were born American but we still had to fight for what we were looking for."

Gil Scott-Heron's poetry cut deep. As he said, it showed you what was happening *inside* people. In this way it also served to point out our common humanity: the shamed, desperate junkie who speaks in "Home Is Where the Hatred Is" could co-exist in the same world, in the same soul, with the masses struggling for freedom in "Johannesburg" or "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised." Revolutionaries who learn that lesson will be better revolutionaries.

His song "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised," he said, "was about the fact that the first change that takes place is in your mind. You have to change your mind before you change the way you live. So we were saying that the thing that's going to change people is something that no one will ever be able to capture on film."

In later years, Scott-Heron had his own issues with substance abuse. As tragic as that is, it doesn't undermine the truth of his art, but drives it home.

—Tim Finnigan

Racist police murder two more people of color

The continuing problem of racist, unaccountable police violence is highlighted by a recent pair of outrageous shootings in Arizona and Florida. Both illustrate the militarized, "search and destroy" mentality so prevalent among police officers, supported by the racist political climate in the U.S. today.

A Pima County Regional SWAT team killed Jose Guarena in his Tucson home May 5, at 9:30 AM. Guarena, 26, an Iraq war veteran, had finished working his graveyard shift at the Asarco Mission mine when his wife woke him to say she heard suspicious noises outside their house and saw a man at the window. He picked up his AR-15 rifle, safety on, and went to check, telling his wife to hide in the closet with their 4-year-old son.

He was shot 22 times (SWAT fired 71 shots) and left lying on his kitchen floor without medical attention while his distraught wife begged fire department dispatchers for help. The Sheriff's Department dispatchers told medical help not to respond to Vanessa Guarena's desperate call.

In the Pima County Attorney's office hearing at which they were "exonerated," SWAT team members told a half-assed story about fearing for their lives when they believed Guarena pointed his rifle in their direction (remember he was ready to defend his home and family from a break-in) and then of mistaking their own shooting for his.

Law enforcement was raiding a number of homes

Justice for Oscar Grant!



David M'Otto/News & Letters

Oakland, Calif.—On June 12 over 150 demonstrators marched to downtown Oakland from Fruitvale BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) station, dubbed "Oscar Grant Station" by community activists. We were protesting the mild charge and minimal sentence handed down to Grant's killer, former BART cop Johannes Mehserle. Mehserle was released from a Los Angeles County jail the following day after serving 11 months of a two-year term for involuntary manslaughter. Oakland lawyer John Burris called on U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to charge Mehserle with violating Grant's civil rights. —David M'Otto

Los Angeles—On June 13, about 100 demonstrators from the L.A. Justice for Oscar Grant Coalition protested at the downtown criminal court building. Oscar Grant's uncle Bobby Cephus Johnson said they were denied entry to the courtroom to speak against Mehserle's release. He said he was misled by authorities about the release hearing date. The family has a right to speak as allowed by the California Victims Bill of Rights.

The protesters then marched to the Federal Court to demand that the Justice Department file federal charges against Mehserle and other police for violating Oscar Grant's civil rights. As his family stated, the killing of Oscar Grant on Jan. 1, 2009, was murder, openly done. People of color have no rights.

Mehserle's release after serving only 11 months is just one more in a string of injustices in this murder of a Black worker youth. After the killing, the trial was moved from Oakland (where the crime took place) to Los Angeles and assigned to Judge Robert Perry, who has a history of pro-police bias. The judge ruled out first degree murder charges against Mehserle, who shot Oscar Grant in the back as he lay face down at a BART platform. The judge prohibited evidence of Mehserle's past racism but allowed the defense attorney's negative "evidence"—so-called—of Oscar Grant's character into the trial. As in the trial of the four police who brutally beat Rodney King, there were no Blacks on the jury.

There are many complaints against police misconduct, brutality or killings, but indictments are very rare. If mass public exposure results in a trial, rarely is a police officer convicted, and if found guilty, as in Mehserle's case, he gets a slap on the wrist.

In contrast, the courts throughout the country are filled with cases of young Black and Brown youths on various charges—mostly non-violent. The convictions fuel the growth of the U.S. prison system in our time of massive unemployment and extreme reactionary law-and-order policies. We need a new human society in place of capitalism, unemployment, poverty and racism. —Basho

in the Guerenas' southwest Tucson neighborhood in search of drugs. At another home, they did find a single bag of weed. Many of their shots hit other houses, but luckily no one else was killed in this insane exercise.

In Miami, Florida, at around 4:00 AM on May 30, four bystanders were shot by police in pursuit of an erratic driver, 22-year-old Haitian-American Raymond Herisse. The incident took place during Urban Beach Weekend, which draws large crowds of youth. Police fired wildly and recklessly into crowds of mostly Black and young people, shooting out Herisse's tires and firing at him. This may have contributed to his crashing into a number of parked cars.

When Herisse's car came to a stop, it was surrounded by Miami police officers who then fired numerous rounds into it, making sure Herisse was dead. A number of bystanders recorded this on cell phone cameras. Police confiscated cell phones, pointing guns at and cuffing some who had recorded the incident. One man was asked, "So you want to be a fuckin' paparazzi?"

Two days later, police announced that they had found a gun in Herisse's car. Ballistics tests would determine if it had been fired, they said, meaning they didn't know for sure—though it was part of their initial story. Meanwhile, there was no shortage of racist commentary from white Floridians denouncing the "savages" and "thugs" making up the crowds police were firing on. —G.E.

Pelican Bay SHU on hunger strike

Editor's note: Prisoners at Pelican Bay Security Housing Unit (SHUs) are going on a hunger strike July 1 to demand the prison recognize they are human beings. This follows the Georgia prison uprising and the Ohio prisoners' actions earlier this year. Prisoners at Corcoran State Prison announced they are joining the strike. Several cities, including San Francisco, Ottawa and Toronto are planning demonstrations to support the prisoners. To sign a petition to the California prison officials to recognize their demands, see <http://www.prisons.org/hungerstrike.htm>. To follow developments and join solidarity actions, visit prisonerhungerstrike-solidarity.wordpress.com.

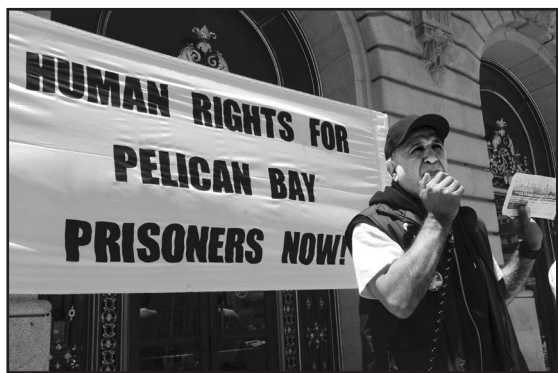
This is a call for all prisoners in SHUs, Administrative Segregation (Ad-Seg), and General Populations (GP), as well as the free oppressed and non-oppressed people to support the indefinite July 1, 2011 peaceful Hunger Strike in protest of the violation of our civil/human rights, here at Pelican Bay State Prison Security Housing Unit (PBSP-SHU).

It should be clear to everyone that none of the hunger strike participants want to die. The state of California has sentenced all of us on Indeterminate SHU program to a "civil death" merely on the word of a prison informer (snitch). Those subjected to indeterminate SHU programs are neglected and deprived of the basic human necessities while withering away in a very isolated and hostile environment.

The "code of silence" used by guards allows them the freedom to use everything at their disposal in order to break those prisoners who prison officials and correctional officers (C/O) believe cannot be broken.

A protracted attack on SHU prisoners cuts across every aspect of the prison's function: food, mail, visiting, medical, yard, hot/cold temperatures, privileges (canteen, packages, property, etc.), isolation, cell searches, family/friends, and socio-culture, economic, and political deprivation. The psychological/physical torture of SHU/Ad-Seg prisoners takes place day in and day out, without a break or rest.

The prison's gang intelligence unit was extremely



June 17 rally in San Francisco. The speaker, former Pelican Bay prisoner Bato Talamantez, called for support of the hunger strike.

angered that prisoners who had been held in SHU under inhuman conditions for anywhere from ten to 40 years had not been broken. So the gang intelligence unit created the "short corridor" and intensified the pressure of their attacks on the prisoners housed there. The object was to use blanket pressure to encourage these particular isolated prisoners to snitch in order to be released from SHU.

Continuous attacks are carried out against prisoners by all C/Os and administrative officials. They are deliberate and conscious acts against essentially defenseless prisoners. It is these ongoing attacks that have led the short corridor and overflow SHU prisoners to organize ourselves around an indefinite Hunger Strike in an effort to combat the dehumanizing treatment we prisoners of all races are subjected to on a daily basis.

Therefore, on July 1, 2011, we ask that all prisoners throughout the State of California who have been suffering injustices in General Population, Administrative Segregation and solitary confinement, etc. to join in our peaceful strike to put a stop to the blatant violations of prisoners' civil/human rights. As you know, prison gang investigators have used threats to get prisoners to engage in a protracted war against each other. If you cannot participate in the Hunger Strike then support it in principle by not eating for the first 24 hours of the strike.

I say that those of you who carry yourselves as principled human beings, no matter your housing status, must fight to right this and other egregious wrongs. Although it is "us" today (united New Afrikans, Whites, Northern and Southern Mexicans, and others) it will be you all tomorrow. It is in your interest to peacefully support us in this protest today, and to beware of agitators, provocateurs, and obstructionists, because they are the ones who put 90% of us back here because they could not remain principled even within themselves.

—Mutope Duguma (s/n James Crawford)

End Obama's wars!

continued from p. 1

warrantless searches of library and business records, which had barely passed over the objections of many Democrats and Republicans alike. Disregarding his promises, he has maintained unconstitutional detentions at Guantanamo, and military tribunals.

Obama has overseen the permanent garrisoning of Iraq, currently with "non-combat" troops, and next year with nearly 20,000 personnel quartered in the world's largest embassy, but still underpinning the Iraqi regime.

Obama's timetable of at least three more years of war in Afghanistan is a slow-speed de-escalation, even compared to Nixon's withdrawal from Vietnam. It threatens not just the Afghan people and the U.S. military, but Obama himself.

The Administration had hinted that, following the generals, the scheduled July 1 drawdown of troops from Afghanistan would be only token, no more than 4,000 troops out of 102,000. "Overruling" the generals in his June 22 speech to the nation, Obama announced a withdrawal of 10,000 by year's end and 23,000 more by September 2012. The occupying forces on the eve of the Presidential election will be double what Obama inherited—not to mention the equally large Bush-crony corporate private armies.

OPPOSITION GROWS, HYPOCRISY REMAINS

Opinion polls now show 70% opposition to the war in Afghanistan, greater than the opposition measured by any poll during the Vietnam War. Some Republicans who have seen those polls have taken up a new cudgel against Obama over Afghanistan. Mainstream Republican candidates like Mitt Romney and Jon Huntsman vow to campaign on bringing the troops home.

Not just libertarian, isolationist and Tea Party elements in the Republican Party, but also veteran Congressmen who had supported Bush's invasions, seem to expect political success from attacking Obama's war in 2012, just as repeating "jobs, jobs, jobs" was effective for them in 2010 Congressional races.

But when it comes to dollars, House Republicans did not tinker with the budget for Afghanistan, and actually increased the base defense budget to \$548 billion. Where House Speaker Boehner tried to cut off funding is over Libya. While that bill failed, it drew bipartisan support from some anti-war Democrats treating Libya as a proxy for Afghanistan.

Capitalist rulers are still slow to hear the voices of Arab Spring in Yemen and Syria, and at first preferred the voice of Mubarak to the masses of Tahrir Square. U.S. and European powers, having created a working relationship with Qaddafi, refrained from taking a position in favor of Libyan rebels. Only when Qaddafi's tanks and mercenary army drove rebels to the city of Benghazi and promised a massacre did NATO intervene.

U.S. SMOTHERS SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Arab Spring has stopped short of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, where U.S. troops and money hold sway. The effect of the U.S. presence has been to smother independent social movements, including women's rights that Bush cited as an after-the-fact justification for invasion. Bush instead supported Karzai and Northern Alliance warlords even when they count votes like Iranian mullahs, skim the nation's wealth like Mubarak and work deals with the Taliban.

Outspoken oppositionist politician Malalai Joya stated after the killing of Osama bin Laden: "One of the main excuses of the U.S. occupation is now gone. The struggle for independence, democracy, and freedom should get easier, but it won't. Not without an end to occupation."

To continue this ten-year-long war in Afghanistan, logic aligns the U.S. with Pakistani military and security elements that initially nurtured the Taliban, that sheltered al Qaeda and that assassinated the most prominent opposition politician, Benazir Bhutto.

Every drop of blood yet to be shed in Afghanistan benefits only enemies of the people. There is no excuse, end the war now.

Mumia Update

This past spring, Mumia Abu-Jamal's 1982 death sentence was, again, ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. In violation of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1988 decision in *Mills v. Maryland*, the jury was improperly led to believe that only evidence on which the jury unanimously agreed could be considered to reach a sentence other than death. Early in 2010, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the 1988 sentence, making it again possible that Mumia could be executed, and turned the case back to the Appeals Court for review. Abu-Jamal is a former member of MOVE and is on death row for allegedly killing Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner in 1981.

For more information visit www.freemumia.com.

—Elise

Rent control derailed

New York—I have been actively involved in the tenant movement since 1997, when rent laws actually expired, albeit temporarily. Many tenants woke up then and a massive demonstration took place in front of then-Governor Pataki's office. The stage was set for even bigger demonstrations, but tenant groups (closely allied with the Democrats) decided not to continue the protests. Instead, they sat down with the politicians and came up with renewing the rent laws with stronger vacancy decontrol and other anti-tenant provisions.

Since then vacancy decontrol and constant and unjustified rent increases have resulted in the loss of over 100,000 rent-regulated apartments. Under the rent laws, landlords are guaranteed hefty increases regardless of market conditions or landlord profits.

Recently, tenant organizations have been focusing on renewing the existing weak rent laws and eliminating vacancy decontrol. A simple rent increase based on the inflation rate or on landlord profits, or on the ability of tenants to pay, such as no more than 1/3 of their income, would have been real rent reform. The so-called progressive Democrats and their connected tenant groups never pushed for or even mentioned these reforms. Michael McKee of "Tenants and Neighbors" called the slight changes a "crumb."

The same scenario has played out. The rent laws expired temporarily, the Rent Stabilization Association (the landlord lobby group) and the politicians told tenants that their leases would be honored, and the rent laws were renewed. So now we have the same old rent laws with a slight break for some upper-middle-class tenants who face decontrol. Of course tenant leaders are calling foul and a few "progressive" Democrats voted against this sellout. Gov. Cuomo said that the rent deal strengthened the rent laws, and Assembly Speaker Silver called it "a significant improvement."

Fellow Democrat Assembly Housing Chair, Vito Lopez, said, "We pushed the buttons as much as we can." He should have said, "We pushed the buttons as much as the real estate industry allowed." Despite the slight change in vacancy decontrol, landlords will still be able to use loopholes to easily decontrol vacated apartments, rent increases will gallop on and working class tenants, both regulated and unregulated, will find it increasingly difficult to have affordable housing.

—Tom Siracuse
Chair of the Rent Controlled Tenants Committee

QUEER NOTES

by Elise

Students at Mona Shores High School in Muskegon, Mich., won gender-neutral proms. After Oak Reed, a Transgender boy, was nominated prom King and school administrators threw out the ballots saying Reed is technically a girl, students protested by creating a Facebook page, "Oak is my king," and passed out petitions.

The International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO) rally in Hong Kong was raided by police who threatened to arrest its organizers. Police also harassed and intimidated rally supporters by videotaping participants who are part of the Queer community as well as heterosexual supporters.

Over 4,000 protesters stood on Hawthorne Bridge, in Portland, Ore., in late May in support of Brad Forkner and Christopher Rosevear, who were attacked for holding hands in public, and all LGBT people who've experienced anti-LGBT violence. None of the witnesses to the assault tried to help Forkner and Rosevear, and police are still seeking the men who beat them.

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Palestinian youth challenge all powers

continued from p. 1

one more example of the way the Arab Spring has created consternation among the world's rulers.

ISRAEL'S MARCH TO THE RIGHT

The alliance with the Tea Party is no accident or marriage of convenience. The racist, reactionary Tea Party has a deep affinity to the increasingly powerful Israeli Right. The Tea Party's bigotry toward Muslims is akin to the attitude of some Israelis like Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who has rightly been compared to European neo-fascists like Le Pen and Haider. Certainly those neo-fascists have been welcomed to Israel's illegal West Bank settlements during Lieberman's ascension.

The Israeli Right has also been fighting its own "culture war." Netanyahu's government has been quick to make McCarthy-type charges against the Left and peace camps. There has been increasing effort to implement religious laws, to give preference to Orthodox over secular Jews in civil life. The illegal settlements have been a well-funded priority.

Netanyahu must balance his feelings of profound uneasiness with the Arab Spring against his relative success in the old, reactionary aims of Rightists like Begin, who from the 1940s worked "against the Jewish masses, whether they were fighting for a socialist republic of Arabs and Jews, or Zionists, who were anxious to establish a homeland for the Jews in a part of Palestine. Begin's reactionary, fanatic ideology for 'Eretz Israel' (Land of Israel), as biblically interpreted by him, continued to terrorize those Jews."¹

In anticipation of future wars and expulsions, Israeli settlers have marched through Arab areas like Sheikh Jarrah chanting "Muhammad is dead!" "May your village burn!" "Death to Leftists!" and "Slaughter the Arabs!" This differs in no respect from a Ku Klux Klan demonstration, if not a Kristallnacht.

In the U.S., playwright David Mamet embodies the Israeli/Tea Party connection perfectly. In his new book explaining his move to the Right, he gives thanks to Glenn Beck for his political conversion; the same Glenn Beck who has done more than anyone in decades to inject the themes of classic anti-Semitism into U.S. political life; who declares the "worst people in history" to have been mostly Jews. Beck's conspiracy ranting has inspired death threats against Jews. Apparently, virulent anti-Semitism that wears white skin and "supports Israel" is not a problem for Mamet.

This kind of hypocrisy (or stupidity) obviously does nothing to oppose the real anti-Semitism that remains widespread and deadly. It only enables a newly virulent hatred and demonization of Muslims to take a place beside anti-Semitism and racism in the annals of human bigotry.

HEROISM OF THE SYRIAN MASSES

It is no accident that June 6, the day after Israeli forces shot down Palestinians marching on the Golan Heights, there was another shooting incident in the Palestinian refugee Yarmouk Camp, near Damascus, Syria. A dozen Palestinians were killed protesting against the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. The PFLP-GC is a heavily militarized splinter group that supports and depends upon the Assad regime to the point of being an arm of it.

Protesters attacked and burned the PFLP-GC headquarters and chanted "The people want the overthrow of the factions!"

The tremendous courage shown by the Syrian people who have continued to demonstrate, week after week, in the face of Bashar al-Assad's thugs and bullets is inspirational. So far an estimated 1,100 have been killed and over 10,000 arrested. These demonstrations began when a group of youths in Dara'a were arrested for writing graffiti on a wall. They were tortured in custody, and their families insulted by officials.

Now almost every city has seen protests. The movement is the greatest challenge to the Baathist regime in the 40 years of Assad family rule, a rule from the narrow base of the Alawite minority (10% of the population) and the family's crony capitalists. Assad's cousin, billionaire Rami Makhlouf, has been forced to announce his retirement, but Assad shows no sign of compromise. Rather, he has tried to play the various religions (Sunni, Christian, Druze, Alawite) against each other—to the point of having the same secret police teams attack Sunni villages posing as Alawites, and Alawite villages posing as Sunnis.

In 1982, Assad's father crushed an uprising by the Muslim Brotherhood in Hama by killing 10,000-30,000 people. As one Hama resident says today, "To overcome that fear, I marched along with them every day even after I was injured 10 days ago and saw others dying in front of me. I want my daughter to grow up in freedom."

When conflict and refugees have spilled over into Turkey and Lebanon there has been attention paid to these events. But it seems clear that the world's rulers would be happy to see the demonstrations burn themselves out. It was Tony Blair, former friend of Qaddafi, and creator of much chaos in Iraq, who recently declared that "chaos" might follow the fall of Assad.

THE NEEDED REBIRTH OF MARXISM

One thing must be said about the Arab Spring: the masses of women, men, workers, and students, who have participated in the freedom struggles in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Palestine, Bahrain, Yemen and so on have shown matchless courage, determination, and heroism.² That will never be forgotten by all who care about humanity's life and future.

The masses are doing their part with courage and creativity. The questions they have raised about women's rights, about workers' rights, about what kind of life should be lived, speak to the heart of the modern age.

Since its beginnings, Zionism too has had an appointment with this social revolution, and with revolutionary philosophy—as do all "alternatives" to the latter, finally. Nothing could make the need for revolutionary philosophy more concrete than the struggle of Palestinians for self-determination—and nothing could release greater revolutionary energies than concretizing that philosophy for the struggle.

In fact, it was specifically in relation to the "Jewish Question" in Europe that Karl Marx first formulated the concept of "permanent revolution." This was the point at which his philosophic critique of bourgeois society came together with his recognition of the unfinished character of the bourgeois revolution: "At times of special self-confidence, political life seeks to suppress its prerequisite, civil society and the elements composing this society, and to constitute itself as the real species-life of man devoid of contradictions. But it can achieve this only by coming into violent contradiction with its own conditions of life, only by declaring the revolution to be permanent, and therefore the political drama necessarily ends with the re-establishment of religion, private property, and all elements of civil society, just as war ends with peace."³

It isn't moral lecturing or state-capitalist politics that has made the return to revolutionary philosophy necessary. It is the reality of millions in the streets, fighting to create new relations between people—freedom for women, for youth, for religious and ethnic minorities; and freedom from capital's ever-greater domination over living workers. Revolutionaries must rise to the time.

Revolution isn't a bus that comes along at fixed intervals, where if one is missed there will be another along soon. This is the moment of revolution. If not now, when?

1. Also: "When the UN was debating the right for the establishment of Israel, all the Jews in Palestine were for the accepting of the territory designated for the State of Israel. Whereupon that reactionary underground terrorist, Menachem Begin, as head of the Irgun, together with the Stern Gang, bombed the King David Hotel without any regard as to which Jews would be killed, and with but one aim, and that was to undermine this move." (Raya Dunayevskaya, Political-Philosophic Letter of Jan. 5, 1982, The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection #7392-7401.)

2. "...the restlessness of the Iraq masses and the demand of the Kurds for autonomy there is directed, not at Israel, but Iraq. The opponents in the jails in Syria oppose Baath rule; the very narrow mass base speaks loudly enough of the Baathist leaders' total isolation from the masses. And the student demonstrations in Egypt, as all over the world, are directed, not against a 'foreign' enemy, but against the native rulers." (Raya Dunayevskaya, "Anti-Semitism, Anti-Revolution, Anti-Philosophy: U.S. and Russia Enter Middle East Cockpit," Feb. 1969.)

3. Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question."



On May 7, members of the Beit Ommar National Committee against the Wall and Settlements as well as international and Israeli solidarity activists, demonstrated on the land of Ahmed Abu Hashem, which had been partly annexed by the Israeli Karmeit settlement. Signs read "Unity is Our Strength." Three protesters were injured by Israeli soldiers.

For the people of Gaza

The area of the world where the right to water is perhaps most severely abused is the Gaza Strip. Since 2003, no piped water has existed. Out of Gaza's 145 wells, only 55 are functional. The World Health Organization reported that 80% of the "drinking" water in Gaza is unsafe for consumption. Since the closure of Gaza's Public Monitoring Facility in Jan. 2009 the monitoring of water quality has stopped. This lack of one of the basic necessities for life has—as expected—created an ongoing public health disaster. Gaza has seen rises in typhoid fever and cholera—two diseases which occur when water supplies are contaminated with fecal matter. Treatment of cholera requires proper hydration.

The water situation is but one example of the many hardships that the people of Gaza are forced to endure. With a population of 1.6 million, 80% of the people are reliant on foreign aid, with roughly 50% of the population unemployed, and roughly 50% living in extreme poverty—meaning living on less than \$ 2 a day. The root of these hardships goes back to Israel's ongoing policy to displace and exclude the Palestinian people from their own land—the most recent example of which is the brutal economic siege on Gaza.

Waged after Hamas won free and fair elections in the Palestinian Authority, the blockade is a deliberate attempt by Israelis to wage "economic warfare" on Gazans. By controlling Gaza's borders, airspace, and seas—in addition to regular invasion by the Israeli Defense Forces—Israeli elites have managed to prevent all but the most essential necessities to flow into Gaza, and put its economy on life support. The UN Human Rights Council reported that before the 2007 blockade, in one year Gazans exported 1,380 truckloads of goods. After the blockade, from 2007 to 2009, only 134 truckloads of goods were exported. After the 2008-2009 invasion of Operation Cast Lead until September 2010 there was only one export of flowers out of Gaza.

While Israeli officials condemned international efforts at boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel, they have engaged in their own BDS campaign against the people of Gaza. It is a BDS campaign that is blanket, dehumanizing, and a brass violation of both the laws of war and international human rights law.

Fortunately, there are two rays of hope out of this morass of despair. The first is Egypt's announcement to no longer support Mubarak's policy of enforcing the blockade on the Egyptian border. Egypt's new interim Foreign Minister, Nabil al-Arabi, described Egypt's support for the blockade as "disgraceful," and agreed to allow the free flow of goods between the two countries. The second is the effort by international activists to break the siege on Gaza by sea. Last year, international solidarity activists sailed to Gaza with supplies and words of support. Their attempts to reach Palestinian shores were thwarted when activists on the Mavi Marmara were attacked with an "unacceptable level of brutality," killing activists in "summary execution" style, according to the UN Human Rights Council, which investigated the matter.

Despite this brutality people have not given up. In late June a U.S. boat—the Audacity of Hope—is headed towards Gaza with other internationals. This freedom flotilla plans to break the illegal and immoral Israeli blockade, sending a message to the world, that human rights will be protected and international laws followed.

The organizers of the Audacity of Hope are looking for people to write letters of solidarity to the people of Gaza. Called "To Gaza With Love," it is a reference to Alice Walker's idea that the radical power of love can create social change. It is hoped that by tapping into this "radical power of love" the people of Palestine will realize their long dream of a just peace in their own land, of being able to control their lives, and of having the power to write their own futures.

Please send letters of support to: Letters to Gaza, 119 West 72nd St. #158, New York, NY 10023.

—Marco Rosaire Rossi of the Chicago U.S. Boat To Gaza

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Big nations fiddle while climate heats up, poor starve

You don't need a weatherman to know the wind has blown in another year of disasters: record flooding of the Lower Mississippi River, a record Texas drought, a record Arizona wildfire, the worst fire season in U.S. history. This comes after 2010, the planet's hottest year in history, which brought record flooding in Pakistan and Australia, and record heat in Russia, all of which slashed the year's grain harvest. "The term '100-year event' really lost its meaning this year," declared Craig Fugate, head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, last December.

It is no coincidence that the world food crisis of three years ago is roaring back. All this year, the UN's Food Price Index has been higher than ever before. Droughts and floods are already making an impact on food production, and as temperatures rise, yields tend to fall. That is amplified by other factors (see "World food crisis stirs revolt," June-July 2008 *N&L*).

In mid-June—while fires were raging, flood and tornado survivors were trying to put their lives back together, nearly a billion people struggled with chronic hunger, and scientists issued reports on climate change's perils—the world's governments met in Bonn, Germany, for yet another UN Climate Change Conference. One and a half years after the 2009 Copenhagen climate summit's collapse revealed the hollowness of capitalist states' negotiations, they keep going through the motions, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

The negotiators' rhetoric of "common but differentiated responsibilities"—between developed (industrialized) and developing countries—cannot hide the ever-growing greenhouse gas emissions, and the disparity of costs and impacts hitting the poorest countries hardest.

Over 60% of emissions cuts by 2020 are likely to come from developing countries, according to Oxfam. At the same time, they are also more vulnerable to harmful effects of global warming, and yet what little is being spent to adapt to these effects is mostly within the richest countries.

While the negotiators in Bonn spun their wheels in preparation for another hollow summit at the end of the year in Durban, South Africa, another meeting in Lima, Peru, told the tale of the dangerous road the rulers are taking. The week after the Bonn conference, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) held a meeting on geoengineering—that is, large-scale manipulation of the planet to modify the climate. This extremely dangerous course looks more and more likely to be taken as the capitalist system fiddles with fruitless negotiations and pathetically inadequate national and local reforms, essentially giving up on achieving effective emission reductions. If trapped in

a burning house, you will take any desperate measure to save your hide, but it would have been better to put out the fire before it spread, instead of pretending that it didn't exist.

Over 100 organizations, from Via Campesina to the Dogwood Alliance, signed a letter to the IPCC protesting the meeting, pointing out, "International peasant organizations, indigenous peoples, and social movements have all expressed outright opposition to such measures as a false solution to the climate crisis." They objected to the exclusion of independent organizations, to the treatment of geoengineering as scientific and not political, and to the influential roles the meeting gave to scientists with financial interests in geoengineering.

The Bonn meeting too drew much criticism from social movements. Brazilian Indigenous, en-



Survivors of Indus River flooding in Pakistan, 2010.

vironmental, peasant and social justice groups issued a letter demanding that Brazil's government reject market mechanisms as instruments to reduce emissions, such as REDD, which allows developed countries to count as reductions certain programs that claim to reduce deforestation in developing lands—their effectiveness is questionable, but they tend to turn forests into plantations and expel the traditional inhabitants.

A gathering of African groups issued the statement,

"Stand up for Africa! Stand up for climate justice!" As against the industrialized countries embarking on the "destruction" of the Kyoto accord on climate change, they called for its extension, minus the market-oriented loopholes, along with a series of demands for "just transition" to new "systems and methods of production and consumption."

One thing the movement deeply needs is to connect its calls for a new system of production and consumption with social revolution as the only way to achieve it, both in the deepening of ongoing revolutions in the Arab lands and in the need for social revolutions worldwide. Up to this point, the word "revolution" has too often been used by environmentalists as a bogeyman to scare the capitalists into doing something serious about the food crisis and climate change.

—Franklin Dmitryev

Stop FBI Attacks!

Los Angeles—On June 16, over 100 demonstrators gathered at the Alhambra court building in support of longtime Chicano community activist Carlos Montes. He is charged with six counts, mostly possession of firearms, though his guns are all registered.

After the hearing, he spoke to his supporters outside the court building. He said his arrest is a "broadening" of the Sept. 24, 2010, FBI raids when 23 Minneapolis and Chicago anti-war activists were served with grand jury subpoenas. The pretext for the investigation is "material support of terrorism." All the activists were just exercising their First Amendment rights in a peaceful way. A week after the September raid, Carlos moderated a solidarity rally at the downtown Los Angeles Federal Building in support of the 23 anti-war activists.

The attack on Carlos started in the early morning of May 17 when the L.A. County Sheriff S.W.A.T. team and FBI agents broke down Carlos's front door and stormed into his home. They arrested him, took his computers, cell phones and paper documents, and questioned him about his political affiliations.

We demand return of all confiscated materials and an end to the repression and grand jury proceedings against anti-war activists. We ask that letters of support for Carlos be mailed to stopfbila@gmail.com. Call or write Attorney General Eric Holder, the White House and Congressional representatives. —**Activist**

A divided Canada

Following the May 2 federal elections, Canadians woke up to a very different Canada. In this "new" Canada the polarization of Canadian society has finally fully revealed itself, polarized by social class, between English-speaking and French-speaking, and between the "Right" and "Left" ends of the political spectrum. The Conservatives, a true right-wing Party under Stephen Harper, are firmly in power for the next four years, with 166 seats out of 308 in Parliament. The Liberal Party has shrunk to insignificance on the federal level, and the Bloc Québécois even more so. The social democratic New Democratic Party (NDP/NPD) is now the official opposition for the first time in history, with 103 seats. Many French-Canadians see the Conservative victory as a racist result, and working people across Canada see the situation as very dangerous for them.

Despite this surface appearance of hopelessness, a lot of movement and change is in the air. Michael Ignatieff, the Liberal leader who championed the Iraq War and vaunts his aristocratic roots, is out of the picture. It is an indication that the Canadian people may be tired of "public intellectuals" like him, super-financed by corporate, government, or other multi-millionaire "silent partners." This is one way that Canada's rulers keep their grip on power, by sending academicians-for-hire into the fray to muddy the public discourse, much like the "confusionist" philosophers of the former Soviet Union.

The other hopeful sign is that the NDP/NPD victory may open up the possibility for new cooperation between English- and French-Canadian workers.

The NDP/NPD is now thoroughly integrated; over half of its Members of Parliament are from Québec (59, to 44 in all of the other provinces). Most of Québec went for the NDP/NPD, but so also did many ridings in the Toronto area, especially inside the city itself, and there were a large number in British Columbia.

The question of the "two solitudes," French and English, of whether there will be equality across Canada or sovereignty for Québec, is more urgent than ever. The error of the Bloc Québécois, a social democratic party, may have been tail-ending the provincial Parti Québécois, and failing to address the concerns of the large numbers of French-Canadians who now work outside of Québec in bilingual provinces.

The war on the French language by Canada's rulers continues unabated, but the real reason for their use of racism against Québec may be economic, and it may really be the prelude to an all-out war on English-Canadian workers. In Canada, the destruction of the "middle class" has not been as intense as in the U. S., and especially not in Québec. In Québec, 40% of workers are unionized, one of the highest rates in the world, and the social safety net continues to be the best in the Western Hemisphere, despite its imperfections. The dimension of racism against French-Canadians and against Indigenous people remains key to Canadian history, and that pustule needs to burst soon. However the question of equality/sovereignty turns out, this new possibility of English, French, and Indigenous Canadians working together for greater equality, in what on the surface looks like a grim situation, may give us a glimpse of what a new, truly human and free society, might be like.

—D. Chêneville, Bay Area, and P. J., Québec City

Reports from Spain's Puerta del Sol Square

Defying laws against public demonstrations, tens of thousands of protestors, self-described "indignados," occupied Madrid's Puerta del Sol and gathered in 162 squares in towns and cities across Spain protesting unemployment, government austerity and a political system that serves only the banks and big business. Following are excerpts from an in-person participant-observer sent to us by the editors of the Hindi publication, Faridabad Majdoor Samachar.

A friend says, "Now it's not a matter of taking the streets, it's a matter of creating the square." She's pointing out a decisive difference we have to understand.

What do we, in the square, have in common?

Not a specific demand, more like sharing of a problem. The problem is representation. We don't want those who have the least, to pay for the crisis. But this is what is happening. People should rule, representation should be representative. That is why "They call it democracy but it's not" and "They don't represent us" are the two hit slogans here. I wander around Sol and see three posters in a row: "Self-management," "Reform the electoral laws," and "We don't want corrupt politicians, we want efficient managers."

Another friend says: "Its like everyone is in love. Look, what smiles." From the first day I was impressed with the seriousness, the high degree of maturity and organization throughout the camp. There is abundant food and coffee (much donated by neighbors). Cleaning is done with care and we are continually reminded that "this is not a party." On Thursday there were a couple of play areas for children with cardboard floors and lots of kids playing and painting. In the groups and the commissions, which are meeting all over the place, there

are astonishing levels of listening, as if it were clear to all that it is less important what each one brings with him or her than what we can create together.



Demonstrators continuing their assemblies and encampments in June against the Spanish Parliament. They marched on the Parliament discussions of austerity measures, gesturing "No nos representan" (they don't represent us).

"Here a person can live!" says someone near me. The collective effort to take care of the space builds, during a few days, a little habitable world with room for all of us. It is what I read about Tahrir Square a few months ago.

It seems that in the plaza in the center of Sol, where the working-groups operate, money is not accepted. Any collaboration or donation is welcome, but not money.

"The democracy we want is already the organization of the square itself."

Blessed be those who decided not to budge from Sol after the demonstration. I thought it was planned by those who called for the demonstration, but that was not so. It is one of those incredible gestures that make things happen against all predictions.

—**Amador Fernández Savater**

It's true that we're indignant. But not just that. If it were just indignation that brought us together in the streets and squares of our cities, the movement would have less force. Once the moment of excitement had passed we would have gone home. That is not what is happening. After the demonstrations, groups—some larger, some smaller—have camped in the squares and after being evicted, have returned again and again. This shows a will to be heard which goes far beyond mere indignation, a will which is opening up new means of doing politics on the basis of the idea that "politics" is not only nor principally a profession—the "business" of the so-called political class—but rather that politics is the only way we have to resolve problems collectively.

—**Montserrat Galcerán**

WORLD VIEW

by Gerry Emmett

The Arab Spring has galvanized resistance to European governments' aim of resolving capitalism's crisis on the backs of the working class. Revolutionary ideas communicate across greater barriers than the Mediterranean Sea. Across southern Europe, resistance to austerity has begun to express itself in terms learned from Tahrir Square.

On May 15 a mass movement of *Indignados* (angry ones) began in Spain with the occupation of the Puerta del Sol in Madrid. (See "Greece, democracy and the economic crisis," p. 5.) As in Tahrir Square the movement was marked by self-organization. One participant echoed the youth of Egypt:

"We believe the best way forward is to be active participants, rather than simply restricted to listening and not acting. This movement is led by popular means, by assemblies, through consensus. It's the people who decide where this is going; it's not one person who drags all the others with him—that's exactly what we want to avoid."

After a month in which this movement spread to over 50 cities and towns, the Spanish squares are now emptying, as the movement attempts to find its next step.

Peru elects Humala

The presidential election in Peru is more important for who was not elected, Keiko Fujimori, than for who was, Ollanta Humala. Fujimori, daughter of the former president who now sits in jail, was narrowly defeated. She had surrounded herself with her father's advisers, bent on returning Peru to a repressive, rightist regime.

The Indigenous of the mountains, the south and the Amazon, together with the poor workers of the north coast and radical intellectuals fearing a restoration of the dictatorship, united in backing Humala. The entrepreneur class, the urban middle class, racists and rightists—encouraged by the U.S. embassy—fearful of Humala as a radical, even a "revolutionary," voted for Fujimori.

But who is Humala? Never a Leftist, he is a military man, somewhat a nationalist, and a moderate on Indigenous rights.

Now, the poor and the Indigenous will surely mobilize for their just demands on the economic, social and ecological front. The question is whether Humala is willing or even able to challenge the interests of capital, particularly foreign mining capital. The signs are not encouraging.

On the international front, the U.S. will be unhappy that its right-wing grip along the Pacific Coast, Colombia to Chile, has been weakened by the election. Peru will be looking to deal with Brazil, the U.S.'s South American rival.

However, it will not be Humala who will carry out transformative social changes. Only if the Aymaras, Quechuas and other Indigenous, following the examples of their sisters and brothers in Bolivia, come together with poor workers and the urban poor, plus a more developed Left than currently exists, can the masses find the means to coalesce and push the new president. Only then, can an authentic new beginning be made.



People's occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens, Greece, May 29th.

Greece: Tahrir Squared

On May 25, inspired by the *Indignados*, the movement again sprang up (via a Facebook call) in Athens, Greece's Syntagma Square. Tens of thousands continue to occupy this square outside the Greek Parliament. Similar occupations have sprung up in cities around the country, becoming known as "the democracy of the squares."

This new movement is planning to come together with labor in a two-day general strike against austerity on June 27-28. The Greek union bureaucracy won't call for an open-ended general strike. The ruling class remains bone-terrified by the prospect.

In both Spain and Greece, workers, women, youth, LG-BTQ people have participated as part of the People's Assemblies debating how things could change, and what kind of society they want to live in.

There's a similarity here to the way the Civil Rights Movement influenced other freedom movements in the U.S. For example, the Free Speech Movement, which sprang up in Berkeley at the University of California in 1964, was directly inspired by the non-violent civil disobedience learned from the Black freedom struggle. Many Berkeley students participated in the Mississippi Freedom Summer.

Similarly, a delegation of Egyptian workers was heartily cheered in Syntagma Square.

There has also been a presence in the squares of the Right, in both Spain and Greece, attempting to capitalize on the mass disillusion with established political parties. In any genuine mass movement this will happen. The Young Republicans were also participants in the Free Speech Movement, at the very moment when the Barry Goldwater and George Wallace presidential campaigns were introducing a whole new level of retrogression into U.S. politics—what later became a reactionary onslaught that the world is still fighting today.

To wit: it isn't enough for revolutionaries to focus only on what we are against. The movement of the squares searches for a positive vision of freedom.

Challenges for independent Southern Sudan

After 50 years in which millions have died, Southern Sudan becomes an independent nation on July 9. It is a momentous occasion marked by contradictions.

In Southern Sudan: While the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement has been the primary organization in the liberation struggle, a number of splits occurred recently, and it remains to be seen how these different factions will co-exist in the new nation, not excluding armed struggle.

In Sudan: President Omar al-Bashir, the architect of genocidal wars against the South and Darfur, remains in power despite being indicted for war crimes. His latest "ethnic cleansing" operation is in Abyei, a disputed border area between Sudan and Southern

China's migrant revolt

Thousands of migrant workers exploded onto the streets in the industrial suburb of Zengcheng in Guangdong province and vented their rage for a week. Security forces had thrown to the pavement a 20-year-old pregnant migrant worker from Sichuan, while clearing the street and removing her peddler's cart.

Migrant workers walked out of factories and demonstrated, burning down government buildings. Police used violence to try to rein in the workers. The state-capitalist regime also demanded from their partners, the owners of factories, that they keep workers locked inside and prevent them from continuing the protests.

Repressing the internet, authorities tried to isolate the migrant workers. They have blocked even the city's name, Zengcheng, from searches, although they have not been able to stop all cellphone video of the uprising.

Migrant workers from interior provinces like Sichuan are China's undocumented workers because they lack residence permits for the coastal factory areas where they work. They have been indispensable to the two-decades-long transformation of China into the world's workshop, which gives them leverage within production that their legal status does not.

It cannot have escaped China's rulers that the abuse of one peddler in Tunisia, and his public suicide, was the spark for the revolt that began Arab Spring. A sociologist at Beijing's prestigious Tsinghua University calculated that there were 180,000 mass incidents within China in 2010. That doubles the already remarkable number of strikes, demonstrations and peasant protests each year five to ten years ago, but protests have sharpened in 2011.

China's rulers fear workers' revolt, but have also acted strongly against stirrings in strategic border ethnic "autonomous regions"—engineering bloody repression in Tibet and Xinjiang.

But when a Han Chinese truck driver ran down and killed a Mongolian trying to block coal trucks taking shortcuts across the grazing land of Inner Mongolia, the resulting outrage and protest marches of thousands on May 26 were far more threatening.

Inner Mongolia is the chief source of coal for the energy-starved Chinese economy. More importantly it is close to home—the regional capital of Hohhot is barely 100 miles from Beijing. Mongolian rights to life and land became the basis for protests even though Mongolians now make up only one-fifth of the population, overwhelmed by Han Chinese immigration. The numbers of Han Chinese who joined in protest should doubly concern authorities. The government locked down campuses and otherwise disrupted the day of protest of May 31, and hastily sentenced to death the coal truck driver.

—Bob McGuire

NEWS AND LETTERS COMMITTEES

Who We Are And What We Stand For

News and Letters Committees is an organization of Marxist-Humanists that since its birth has stood for the abolition of capitalism, both in its private property form as in the U.S., and its state property form, as it has historically appeared in state-capitalist regimes calling themselves Communist as in Russia and China. We stand for the development of new human relations, what Marx first called a new Humanism.

News & Letters was founded in 1955, the year of the Detroit wildcat strikes against Automation and the Montgomery Bus Boycott against segregation—activities which signaled a new movement from practice that was itself a form of theory. *News & Letters* was created so that the voices of revolt from below could be heard unseparated from the articulation of a philosophy of liberation.

Raya Dunayevskaya (1910–1987), founder of the body of ideas of Marxist-Humanism, became Chairwoman of the

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

This body of ideas challenges all those desiring freedom to transcend the limitations of post-Marx Marxism, beginning with Engels. In light of the crises of our nuclearly armed world, it becomes imperative not only to reject what is, but

to reveal and further develop the revolutionary Humanist future inherent in the present. The new visions of the future which Dunayevskaya left us in her work from the 1940s to the 1980s are rooted in her discovery of Marx's Marxism in its original form as a new Humanism and in her re-creation of that philosophy for our age as Marxist-Humanism. This is recorded in the documents on microfilm and open to all under the title *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection—Marxist-Humanism: A Half-Century of Its World Development*.

Dunayevskaya's philosophic comprehension of her creation and development of Marxist-Humanism, especially as expressed in her 1980s writings, presents the vantage point for re-creating her ideas anew. Seeking to grasp that vantage point for ourselves and make it available to all who struggle for freedom, we have published Dunayevskaya's original 1953 philosophic breakthrough

and her final 1987 Presentation on the Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy in *The Philosophic Moment of Marxist-Humanism* (1989), and donated new supplementary volumes to the *Raya Dunayevskaya Collection*. News and Letters Committees aims at developing and concretizing this body of ideas for our time.

In opposing this capitalistic, racist, sexist, heterosexist, class-ridden society, we have organized ourselves into a committee form of organization rather than any elitist party "to lead." We participate in all class and freedom struggles, nationally and internationally. As our *Constitution* states: "It is our aim...to promote the firmest unity among workers, Blacks and other minorities, women, youth and those intellectuals who have broken with the ruling bureaucracy of both capital and labor." We do not separate mass activities from the activity of thinking. Send for a copy of the *Constitution* of News and Letters Committees.