

POLITICAL-PHILOSOPHIC LETTERS on--



IRAN: REVOLUTION & COUNTER-REVOLUTION

by RAYA DUNAYEVSKAYA

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The struggle continues: What kind of revolution is needed in the battle against the Khomeini-IRP counter revolution?

by Raya Dunayevskaya
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and Marxism and Freedom

Editor's Note: The following was written as a special introduction to the Farsi edition of the Political-Philosophic Letters on the Iranian Revolution, 1979-1981, by Raya Dunayevskaya. The most recent, published June 25, 1981, is entitled "What Has Happened to the Iranian Revolution? Has It Already Run Its Course into Its Opposite, Counter-Revolution? Or Can It Be Saved and Deepened?" See ad below.

The Revolution in Iran has reached so sharp a turnaround that it would appear that the counter-revolution has all but swallowed it up. But that simply isn't true. It is true that the IRP (Islamic Republic Party) has monopolized all state and military power and that its firing squads are executing genuine revolutionaries who have awakened to what has happened since the IRP gained power — totalitarian, feudal-capitalistic power, blessed by a Khomeini who has usurped all "spiritual" as well as earthly powers. It is not true that Khomeini can do what the combined might of the Shah and his prop, the U.S. nuclear Titan that kept him in power for 25 long years, could not do. They can not extinguish the new world beacon of revolutionary power that was lit by the 1979 revolution in Iran.

The very fury of those firing squads—now reaching for every facet of the nation, including its children—proves the very opposite. It reveals how deep and massive is the revolutionary opposition to the powers-that-be. The most ironic of all the aspects of the present chaos in the land is that the Communists (Tudeh), the Trotskyists, the Maoists* are all supporting the Khomeini regime. The opposition comprises those who were the spark and actual force as well as the reason of the revolution: from the oil workers, who carried out the heroic 90-day-long strikes that drove the Shah from power, to the Mujahedeen; from the Women's Liberation Movement, which began "Chapter 2" of the revolution, to the youth, whose quest for universality was heard the world around; as well as the minorities, Kurds especially, whose struggle for self-determination still continues.

IN REPRODUCING the Letters that traced the revolution in Iran as it unfolded, it becomes clear that religion is no substitute for a philosophy of liberation. Quite the contrary; its mysticism only shrouds the elemental forces and deviates from the masses in motion and their quest for universality—freedom. That is why, from the beginning, we warned against the underestimation of Khomeini's power and the price that the mullahs would exact for having allowed the mosques to be used for meetings of the Left during the reign of the Shah when it was illegal to meet elsewhere.

But, just as it was wrong to underestimate the power of Khomeini and the IRP, so it is wrong to overestimate their power now. That is exactly what they wish us to do. That is exactly what we must not let

them do. Nor can we allow delusions to float about—whether they are sown by Bani-Sadr and Massoud Rajavi, who oppose Khomeini, or by the Communists/Trotskyists/Maoists, who justify support of Khomeini by acting as if his misuse of the phrase "anti-imperialism" is "progressive" and leads to genuine workers' power.

Instead, let us trace the revolution both as it occurred and as it retrogressed, and let us see the forms in which the revoit is occurring now. The opposition to those in power is by no means limited to the Mujahedeen; though they are certainly not counter-revolutionaries, their bombs are but the opposite side of Khomeini's firing squads. What was at first little reported in the press was the near-civil war that is raging. And even now that it is being reported, it is being made to appear as if it flowed out of the bomb-throwing. The truth is that the actual mass demonstrations, the street battles, had long been ongoing. Take the battles in downtown Teheran on Sept. 9. They were preceded by three days of demonstrations at Mosaddegh (formerly Pahlavi) University. They were suppressed by the so-called "Revolutionary Guards" and somewhere between 40 to 100 were killed. Literally thousands have been executed by Khomeini.

THIS DOESN'T MEAN that the new revolutionaries are for the return to power of Bani-Sadr—or Massoud Rajavi. On the contrary, the youth are questioning: What had Bani-Sadr done when he was in power to help the workers maintain their shoras and demand the right to control production? What had he done for the students whose quest for universality was being acted out through their bookstalls, their many newspapers, their discussions of all ideas of freedom? Had he not, rather, helped Khomeini and the IRP close down Teheran University's open admissions?

What had he done when the women not only demonstrated on International Women's Day, but continued their protests, shouting: "We fought for freedom and got unfreedom"? That charge had been directed not only against Khomeini and the IRP, but against the "liberal" Ghotbzadeh, who controlled the mass media and refused to extend coverage to their Movement and their demands. The women, like the Kurds, have certainly not seen the desires of the masses being realized, whether that be the self-determination of nationalities or of ideas. Instead, had not Bani-Sadr and Rajavi—like all the rest—bowed to the Constitution and its institutionalization of theocracy in the form of the Office of Religious Guide?

As for those who are pro-Russia (like Tudeh), or those who are pro-China, as well as those (like the Trotskyists) who are tailendists of the state-capitalists who call themselves Communists—they have all not only tailended Khomeini but have accepted his fake "anti-imperialism" (especially in the Iraq-Iran war) as if that meant truly fighting for the revolution. "Anti-imperialism" has become but the phrase used to hide the exploitative, totalitarian, theocratic nature of the IRP, which is no different than that of all capitalist rulers. Of course U.S. imperialism seeks to regain power in Iran. But it is not the only one to do so; and the other nuclear Titan, Russia, has the advantage of having a party in Iran.

* The Beijing Review (Sept. 21, 1981), in printing its reporter's Sept. 11 news from Teheran, in "Iran in Agency" did little to analyze the forces of revoit. As if these forces and the rulers are one it concludes that "it is painful to see Iran embroiled in internal strife."

THE ONLY WAY to wage a genuine struggle against imperialism is to oppose the exploitative rulers in one's own country. That is what the masses did in the Revolution when they drove the Shah out of power, along with his protector, U.S. imperialism. They did not stop there. They raised the banner of freedom, total freedom, not attached to any state power—U.S. or Russia or any other exploitative power, including those in the Middle East. When the Iranian Revolution took off the pedestal it had occupied as if it represented the "culture" of the Middle East, it opened an entirely new stage of world freedom. In a word, revolution, not "oil", became the key not alone for Iran or even the Middle East, but for the world youth who had been fighting all capitalists and imperialists—especially the gory U.S. but by no means only the U.S.

In a word, we repeat, when a country like Iran showed that it could dislodge both a shah and one of the two nuclear giants from its power base in Iran, in oil, in the geo-political Gulf region, it proved how all-powerful are masses in motion who hold in their hands a banner of freedom. The outpouring of millions made it impossible to think of terrorism (whether of SAVAK or of the bomb-throwers) as all-powerful. What was all-powerful were masses in motion—labor, youth, national minorities, Womens Liberationists.

The grave contradiction in this elemental revolt was that it was without a philosophy of revolution. We need once again to stress that religion is no substitute for a philosophy of revolution. If even religion were a philosophy—and its theoreticians²² are acting as if it were—the key word is revolution, not religion, whether Islamic, or Christian, or Buddhist, or Jewish, or any other. What contributed to the failure of the revolts in post-World War II to mature to revolutions in West Europe was an admixture of religion and social revolution; the former only diluted the latter.

MARK MADE a distinction between the religion of the oppressor and that of the oppressed, whose voice he recognized as the "sigh of the oppressed, the heart of a heartless world . . . The abolition of religion as people's illusory happiness is the demand for their real happiness . . . Thus it is the immediate task of philosophy which is in the service of history to unmask human self-alienation." To gain real freedom and happiness

meant to transform the reality which compels such human self-alienation and to thus gain real freedom.

What is haunting Khomeini, who has made that substitution of religion for a philosophy of revolution, is not only a whole host of spectres, but an ongoing revolt. I do not mean the terrorists who are killing themselves a great deal more than the IRP leadership they are trying to dislodge. I mean that what confronts Khomeini is a 40 percent unemployment, a runaway inflation, the discontent of the peasants as well as the workers, the ongoing revolt from below.

[One word more must be said on the bombs. No one, not even the Mujahedeen, could have gotten that close into the inner sacrum. There is opposition within the IRP, within the "Partisans of God." They are responsible for "security" and they alone could have had that access.]

Remembering the highpoints of the Revolution does not mean forgetting that it has now reached a point of retrogression. The impasse in the Iraq-Iran war is not as pivotal as the move backward in freedoms and independence at home. The revolution had its elemental upward surge but lacked a philosophy of revolution and could not disclose the trail to total freedom as well as solidarity with all those the world over who wished to follow its lead. What is needed is the working out of a theory that would never again separate itself from the actuality, any more than the actuality can be separated from theory.

It is toward that end, of uniting a philosophy of revolution with an actual revolution, that the other, the second America—the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Tendency which expresses it—has worked. It is this which led us to follow the unfoldment of the Iranian revolution and to solidarize with it. We are one with you. We will do all in our power to help the fight for freedom.

The struggle continues.

—Sept. 25, 1981

²²See especially Alf Steinhilber's *Marxism and Other Westerns*, Foliolet.

June 25, 1981

What Has Happened to the Iranian Revolution? Has It
Already Run Its Course into its Opposite, Counter-Revolu-
tion? Or Can it be Saved and Deepened?

Dear Friends,

The removal of President Bani-Sadr, first from his post as Commander-in-Chief, and, within 12 short days, on June 22, from his post as President, accompanied in both cases by armed gangs shouting: "Death to BaniSadr! Death to the Second Shah!" has brought the counter-revolutionary elements to such dominance that one must ask: Have the contradictions in the Iranian Revolution that were present from the start reached a counter-revolutionary climax? What, indeed, has happened to the Iranian Revolution that was so massive, so courageous, so persistent in the long preparatory strikes that became a General Mass Political Strike and drove the Shah from power? Could the revolution have lasted no more than one and a half years? Is its bent to devour its own children and in so insensitive a manner also its poets as to have arrested Saeed Soltanpour as he was being wed and shortly thereafter to have executed him -- to go unimpeded? Even Stalin didn't act that rapidly and that deadly against the Russian poets. Has the revolution already run its whole course, straight into its opposite, counter-revolution?

Let's not rush to final judgment. The decisive question has not yet been answered: What about the masses who achieved that great dual revolution against their own ruler and his foreign backer, U.S. imperialism which had put him in power and kept him there for a whole quarter of a century? Had the 1917 revolutionaries written off the Russian Revolution in August, the counter-revolutionary Month of Great Slander, there would have been no November Revolution.¹ Let us first examine the objective and subjective situation more closely, not for any scholastic purposes, but to see whether there is a way to stave off the full thrust of the ongoing counter-revolution, and thus return to the 1979 revolution and its goals as well as its mass participation.

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I. The Fall of Bani-Sadr under the Whip of Khomeini and his Counter-Revolutionary Islamic Republic Party

It is, of course, no small matter that, 17 short months after Bani-Sadr was elected as the first president ever of Iran by no less than 75 percent of the population, he has been driven from office by Khomeini, whom Bani-Sadr had given shelter in Paris when the Ayatollah had been expelled from Iraq. After a very brief playing with the democratic nationalist intellectuals, by naming Bani-Sadr to be Commander-in-Chief, Khomeini raced to the most narrow theocratic, monopolistic, one-party state, with One Man Rule -- his own, as he had always planned. The goons who call themselves Hezbollahi (Partisans of God), vigilante-like carrying out all orders of the IRP, immediately surrounded the offices of the President, shouting for his death, while chanting (as they indiscriminately wielded their weapons of terror): "The only leader is Ruhollah! The only party is the Party of God!" Having thus rhymed the Ayatollah Khomeini's name with no less than God himself, they believe they can, unburdened by any responsibilities, proceed to create havoc in an already chaotic state of the economy -- 40 percent fall in production, 40 percent rise in unemployment, run-away inflation, the Kurdish insurgency, and labor and peasant unrest.

Nor is it only a small truth that the demonstration for Bani-Sadr, the opposition to his ouster, the Left's wish to deepen the revolution, was attacked by an IRP-ordered demonstration, headed by the so-called "Revolutionary Guards" who did not limit themselves to wielding knives but proceeded to shoot indiscriminately. Forty lay dead; hundreds were wounded; and just over the week-end alone 40 others were executed for supporting Bani-Sadr. Without any shame whatever, the hanging judge, Khalkhali, was shouting: "We will show them we are men of war and will dig their graves in the streets." The true martyrs, however, were the Mujahadeen, who were certainly more active and for a longer period of time in the revolutionary preparation against the Shah than was the late-comer, Beheshti, the Chief Justice, and many of his cohorts who were accusing Bani-Sadr of being "a second Shah."

Bani-Sadr isn't any "second Shah"; Khomeini is. And so is the IRP, waiting for the 81-year-old Ayatollah to die so that its leadership can take his place and complete the counter-revolution.

From the very day that Bani-Sadr had been democratically, overwhelmingly elected, the IRP began plotting to make the post of President powerless by turning to their clandestine mosque activity as well as their open work now that they already had plenty of power, to make sure that the next election -- for the parliament -- was one they would win. This was followed up by many other usurpations of power to which we'll turn directly after we examine what it is that Bani-Sadr did after he received that overwhelming vote of mass confidence. Did he follow through with the mass activities, be it for democracy, for workers' control of production, for extending the shoras? Did he elicit from them how they wished to concretize, that is, to maintain power in their own hands? Did he pay attention to the innumerable publications and Left groups -- all sorts of independent Marxists, Marxist-Humanists, the Tudeh, the Trotskyists? What, exactly, did he do for the Women's Liberation Movement that he supposedly favored? What about the intense discussions and activity of deepening the revolution -- not merely against the 52 second-level hostages in the American Embassy, but the genuine anti-imperialists and anti-native capitalists?

Therein -- and not in what both the bourgeois, Communist and Trotskyist press now talk about: failure to build "a party structure" -- lies the beginning of the end of the petty bourgeois, revolutionary intellectual, who does want more democracy, more freedom, but who has no total philosophy of liberation. Bani-Sadr couldn't have taken organizational responsibility for a philosophy of liberation he did not have. He, himself, was both bourgeois and totally committed to Ayatollah Khomeini. Thus, though he didn't think the taking of U.S. hostages (which after all was engineered by the "followers of the Imam" advised by the IRP) was the way to fight American imperialism, he bowed to what had been done behind his back, and most deliberately with a view to appear more militant, more Left, more anti-U.S.A. than he. Thus, while he did nothing to encourage the new decentralized forms of self-rule of the masses, the IRP did everything to build up its single-

party rule. Thus he even followed Khomeini and the IRP as they moved full blast against the revolutionary elements in the University, especially its bookstalls of Marxist literature.

The IRP, on the other hand, never stopped moving in a most reactionary way to what they called "pure" Islam, as witness the most barbaric, strait-jacket type of law, the "Vengeance Act".³ Allegedly it is rooted in the Koran. It most assuredly is not accepted by any Arab nation or Sunni believers or, for that matter, strictly Persian Shi'ites. The act metes out punishments for all "crimes", sexual as well as political, with but two male witnesses needed to testify. Executions follow immediately. No wonder that the hanging judge Khalkhali was so highly rated by "the Party" that he was even permitted to indulge in the goriest of all spectacles -- bringing the corpses of the U.S. soldiers from the desert where President Carter had sent them to die, for a public display.

What never stopped was the plotting about the institutionalization of what they (Khomeini and the IRP) called the Islamic Republic, supposedly modelled on the 1906 Constitution that had emerged during the Iranian Revolution which had driven out their first Shah, established a Parliament, and written a Constitution. The present Constitution, however, not only bore no resemblance to the original Constitution, but established the so-called Office of the Religious Guide; more accurately it should have been called office of the Emperor, who not only, like Louis^{XIV} in feudal times, had defined "L'etat, c'est moi", but also claims a direct line to God. Thus, witness how Khomeini vetoes everything and anything he disagrees with, even those measures his own mullahs may have voted for, or didn't want, as they didn't want Bani-Sadr named Commander-in-Chief.

Those mullahs weren't innocents -- there are no innocents among rulers, with or without Khomeini. They never gave up the intrigue to usurp all new institutions, beginning with the "Revolutionary Council" and control over the militant students who had been carefully educated in Iran with great hostility to the revolutionary students who had been educated abroad, and were "tainted by the West." What they actually meant was not "the West" but Marxism, which is not taught in

any U.S. university and which the students learned independently. The fifth institutionalization was the street gangs, as a vigilante order unto themselves. With the parliamentary majority in place, with the closing of all the newspapers from Bani-Sadr's to the Tudeh's Mardom and the Mujahadeen's Mujahid, the neo-fascistic party was ready to move against Bani-Sadr.

The 40 or more who were executed in a single weekend, were but the beginning of the blood-letting. But can we say that there it will end? The Left against whom all the blood-letting is perpetrated will not limit its revolutionary energy to showing its critical support for Bani-Sadr. Not only is illegal work every bit as critical as open opposition, but what is needed most of all, what is imperative to work out now, what has heretofore been disregarded though it is absolutely irreplaceable, is a philosophy of revolution, a philosophy of total liberation.

As I pointed out at the start of this letter, had the Russian revolutionaries given up in August 1917; had they turned away not only from the counter-revolution but had an attitude of "a plague on both your houses" to the reformists as well; had they not used the period for working out fully State and Revolution as the ground for a new revolution, there would have been no November 1917. It is true that no Lenin is visible on the Iranian horizon. But the ideas of revolution and liberation, as well as the masses who fought for them, are there. Let us see what can be done to transform the present reality.

II. A Look Back Into History and Forward from the Present Global Reality

Let's begin at the beginning, at the installation of a new power that has been so characteristic in Iran from the very first time they threw out the first Shah, at the turn of the century. It is the coalition of the clergy with genuine revolutionaries in throwing out a Shah who was tied to a foreign power -- Russia, in the case of the 1906-1911 Revolution. This certainly distinguishes the Iranian clergy

from priests who generally align with the reigning power. But, once a democratic Constitution was created, the clergy began burdening it with the type of amendments that restored most powers to the Shah once the foreign enemy was thrown out. That didn't keep the counter-revolution in Russia, which just crushed its own revolution, from returning to Iran and crushing that one.

The second chapter of that first revolution, as the second chapter of this era's 1979 Revolution, was begun by women liberationists. Indeed, in 1906 the Iranian women were the first in the world to establish a women's anjuman (soviet), and their main demand was continuing with the democracy of the Majlis. Did Bani-Sadr's call for democracy mean as much? Not quite. Though he said he was for Women's Liberation, he not only kept quiet as Khomeini moved against the movement, but set up an alternative paper, The Muslim Woman, edited mainly by men!

With Iraq's invasion of Iran, the war naturally became his main preoccupation. But did this mean, as the IRP is insinuating, that Bani-Sadr was bringing back the hated military machine, which Khomeini and the IRP had never fully dismantled? Actions speak louder than words, and the fact is that the Army didn't follow Bani-Sadr and is now speaking out against him; in a word, they showed they know how to stick to the rulers that win.

How fantastic, then, that the abysmally opportunistic Trotskyists are so anxious to be "in" that they actually fabricated a "proletarian" ground for Bani-Sadr's ouster from his Army post!

"Those workers who have returned from the war front have tended to blame Bani-Sadr for the situation in the army and for the lack of any decisive victories in the war. They are aware of Bani-Sadr's strong base of support among the hated army command." (Intercontinental Press, June 22, 1981)

So strong that not a single army commander came to Bani-Sadr's defense. The Trotskyists must know the truth, but just like the Tudeh, they are so busy trying to work out a way to remain "legal" that all else takes a subordinate position. All this appears in an article, "The Drive to Oust Bani-Sadr", which opposes the ouster, at

least insofar as it means "repression", especially since they know very well the repression will be directed also against them, and that their paper was among the six that were immediately shut down. That isn't the only thing repression means to the clergy. Along with the thrust against the Left will no doubt come an attempt to work out a compromise with Iraq. Let us not forget that, just as soon as the mullahs saw that Bani-Sadr was not involved in the release of the hostages, they moved to do exactly that and in quite capitulatory terms. And now that Bani-Sadr is not involved with the Army, they will try to work out a deal with Iraq.

As for the Fedayeen, some factions accepted "anti-imperialism" as much at face value as did the Tudeh, as if it meant only anti-U.S. and not anti-Russia -- which is equally imperialistic. Indeed, Russia is still hoping that the ideological void/opened up by the fact that revolutionaries have not been armed with Marx's own Humanist, anti-vulgar-communist, philosophy of liberation -- will create room for Russia to enter the Iranian scene.

The Mujahadeen showed themselves to be most courageous and became deeply involved in the demonstrations against Bani-Sadr's ouster, but defending Bani-Sadr against Khomeini and the IRP must not mean uncritical support. Which is why I showed not only how ambivalent was Bani-Sadr's conception of democracy, of workers' control of production, of women's liberation, but that it couldn't have been otherwise once Islam came first and "socialism" came "later".

This is not the first time, historically speaking, that some theoreticians tried to dilute Marxism by a strange admixture with religion, be it U. Nu's Buddhism or Ben Gurion's Zionism; whether it is Senghor's admixture of Christianity with Marxism which he calls African Socialism, or Polish Catholicism with a "new" socialism, or Islam's "Marxism". The truth is that the theocratic rush is for total power, single party rule, single ideology, or rather single religion which is of an even deeper false consciousness than is bourgeois ideology. This whole concept of a single Leader with veto power and a direct line to "God" is not even in the mainstream of Sunni Muslims, but the theocracy established by Mohammed's son-in-law, Ali, 14 cen-

turies ago⁵. The strange admixture of religion and Marxism has not worked before and will certainly not work now. For that matter, it didn't work when Sartre tried to dilute that new continent of thought and revolution -- Marx's Humanism -- with Existentialism.

We must under no circumstances leave out of sight the global conflict, for this is not a mere Iranian or even Middle East problem. Nor is it just a question of U.S. imperialism. There is another nuclear titan, Russia. And both of these fighting for a single world hegemony mean to have the last word. That is exactly what must not be permitted them. Thus, while Russia did not, with its invasion of Afghanistan, aim for the Gulf as the U.S. implied, Russia is certainly preparing itself to be at the ready for an opening into the region. The opening they would prefer is to gain power from within, and the Tudeh Party is not without successes as was shown when the commander of the so-called "Revolutionary Guards" showed his preference for that party by believing -- or saying he believed -- that the Tudeh is a "follower of the line of the Imam."⁶

As for U.S. imperialism, it has never given up its hunger for the oil of that region.⁷ How do you suppose it got so solid an enemy as Iraq (and at a time when Iraq certainly had not only the whole Arab world with it, but literally the whole world in its total opposition to Israel's pre-emptive, unilateral strike against its nuclear reactor) to work out with the UN-U.S. representative Kirkpatrick so mild a Resolution of condemnation of Israel that it didn't even ask for any concrete acts against Israel? I can't help but feel that the many double-crossing deals circulated in the UN now by the U.S. representative include one to arm Iraq in its war against Iran. After all, that's where U.S. imperialist sympathies lay in the first place, when it couldn't help Iraq because Iran held the U.S. hostages. More important still, and of this there is no doubt, the Iranian Revolution so shook up the U.S. empire and its perspectives for the Gulf that even now, when the mullahs have turned away from revolution, the irreversible fact established by the Revolution, far from giving the U.S. any outpost there, is non-alignment. A hawk's eye is needed to follow the global conflict and not sign off the Iranian Revolution.

* * *

By Way of Conclusion: The Iranian Revolution is Not Yet Dead

The Iranian Revolution is the one world factor that not only U.S. and Western imperialism would like to bury. So would the Arab world with Saudi Arabia in the forefront; and China, which can see only Russia as Enemy Number One ^{and is} in the process of helping U.S. imperialism. Marxist revolutionaries must never forget their absolute opposition to capitalism, imperialism, the powers-that-be; and therefore must not in any way fall into the trap of burying the Iranian Revolution prematurely. The truth is that there are plenty of forces in Iran who made the revolution. There is the Kurdish insurgency, which has by no means been put down and will not go away with the ouster of Bani-Sadr. On the contrary, the truth is that the objective crisis has never been deeper and the masses have never suffered more than now. Let's not underestimate the great experience that the Iranian masses have had in overthrowing the Shah. That will not sink into the void that is being created by the mullahs. On the contrary, as the capitalists in Iran, especially the oil monopolies, will proceed with their drive for more production and lower wages, the class struggles will become stronger. Let us not underestimate the dissatisfaction of the peasantry that, after all the promises of agricultural reform, has yet to witness any redistribution of the land. Moreover, the economic conservatism of the mullahs is as deep as their political repression, as witness the Khomeini declaration: "I must tell you that during the previous dictatorial regimes, strikes and sit-ins pleased God. But now...." Khomeini then proceeded to say that the same phenomenon of strikes is ^{now} a manifestation that "the enemy is plotting against us." ⁸ Furthermore, let us not forget that Khomeini's early opposition to the Shah was so feudalistic as even to oppose the mild so-called "White Revolution" because he wanted no disturbance of the feudal relations on the land.

Iranian revolutionaries are experienced in underground activities. Iranian revolutionaries knew how not to give up their arms when the IRP first demanded it. The Women's Liberation Movement, like labor, like the national minorities, like the youth, have begun a chapter of the revolution they still mean to finish.

BUT SUCCINCTLY, THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION IS NOT YET DEAD,
NOT BY A LONG SHOT. NEW REVOLUTIONARY FORCES -- FROM THE PROLETARIAT
TO THE PEASANTRY; FROM THE MINORITIES, ESPECIALLY THE KURDS, HUNGRY
FOR SELF-DETERMINATION, TO THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT; FROM
REVOLUTIONARY INTELLECTUALS FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS TO THE
YOUTH WHO HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE VANGUARD IN THE REVOLUTION -- ARE
BOUND TO UNFOLD NEW POWERS AGAINST THEIR OWN RULING CLASS AND NOT
ALLOW IT TO REMAIN ONLY OPPOSITION TO THE FOREIGN ENEMY. ALL THESE
FORCES CAN MERGE INTO FULL CIVIL WAR, THIS TIME ARMED WITH A PHILOSOPHY
OF REVOLUTION THAT WOULD INITIATE THE ROAD TO A CLASSLESS SOCIETY
ON TRULY NEW HUMANIST BEGINNINGS. THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION HAS NOT YET
RUN ITS COURSE. THE IRANIAN MASSES HAVE NOT HAD THEIR LAST WORD.

Let us keep our eyes open and have our international
solidarity at the ready.

-- Raya Dunayevskaya
Detroit, Michigan

P.S. June 28. In the three days between writing the letter above
and its mimeography, the news comes that the IRP headquarters has
been blown up, and included the carnage is the death of Beheshti. No
doubt the IRP will now blame Bani-Sadr, who has never indulged in any
terrorist act, but whom they dared characterize as "an agent of Ameri-
can imperialism". In truth, however, the terror that will be unleash-
ed will not be against American imperialism but against the Iranian
Left. At the same time, the terrorist acts perpetrated by the extreme
right, who consider themselves the "purest" because they insist the
mullahs should not engage in politics, have been covered over. What-
ever chaos results now, it will not in any way change the analysis
made above, and above all the need for international solidarity with
the true Iranian revolution.

FOOTNOTES

1. See my Political Philosophic Letter, Dec. 17, 1979, "What is Philosophy? What is Revolution?", which had concentrated on the April Thesis, pointing to the fact that it was the concept of State and Revolution which was the ground on which Lenin reorganized the party, preparing for social revolution. What is important here, however, is the timing, between the first draft as "Marxism and the State" which was written before April, and the final draft which was written after the Month of Slander, which forced Lenin to flee to Finland. It was that final version as State and Revolution which was circulated to an actual revolutionary group, and hewed out the path to November. See especially N.N. Sukhanov, The Russian Revolution, 1917.
2. See the Spring 1980 pamphlet, Iranian Women, The Struggle Since the Revolution, published by the Iranian Women's Liberation Group in /^{London} (Box No. 7, Sisterwrite, 190 Upper Street, London N1, England), which quotes a TV-radio interview with Bani-Sadr from which it is clear that he not only didn't disagree with their Muslim reactionary, mythical view on women now passing for "science" -- "Men's level of sexual urges and needs are much higher than women's and this is because of certain sex hormones in man's body, whereas there are no sex hormones in woman's body" -- but saw that his alternative group should set up its own paper, The Muslim Woman, that was edited and run mainly by men.
3. See "Iran's Gluttonous Revolution," by Flora Lewis, New York Times, June 15, 1981.
4. See my Weekly Political Letter of Nov. 13, 1969, "Israel, Burma, Outer Mongolia and the Cold War".
5. See Christian Science Monitor, June 18, 1981, "Iran Races Toward Total Mullah Rule."
6. See Merip Reports, March-April, 1980.
8. See V.S. Naipaul's "Among Believers: An Islamic Journey," Atlantic Monthly, July, 1981.
7. See Marxist-Humanist Perspectives for 1981-1982, News & Letters, August-September, 1981.

THE CARTER/BRZEZINSKI-ORDERED IMPERIALIST INTRUSION INTO IRAN --
AND WHAT ABOUT KHOMEINI/BANI-SADR'S "HOLY WAR" AGAINST THE LEFT?

Dear Friends:

By no accident whatever a real live mad Colonel, the Apocalypse Now type -- Green Beret Colonel Beckwith, trained in the decade-long U.S. imperialist war in Vietnam -- was chosen to command the "Blue Light" elite corps to descend upon Iran in the dark of the night of April 24. It is impossible to conceive such a totally bungled military operation on the part of the most technologically-advanced behemoth as the U.S., that had undergone a 173-day long plan, UNLESS the Planner had himself decided to abort the operation for reasons having nothing whatever to do with either the advanced military technology or American lives. Here was a gory mission that had gone through 30 rehearsals, stretched over a period of nearly six months, involving six C-130 Hercules transport planes, which had proven their technological proficiency in the decade-long bloody Vietnam War, with eight equally proficient Sikorsky RH-53 helicopters, all manned by a volunteer, gung ho military outfit; armed not only with weapons but canisters filled with disabling gas, which, after only three hours in the desert, with no enemy in sight, suddenly falls apart. First, three helicopters malfunction, then, comes the order from the Commander-in-Chief to abandon the mission. It is now 2:15 AM of April 25. The fiasco departure becomes a tragedy as the transport plane and helicopter collide and eight American bodies go up in flames. The Green Beret Colonel orders the rest of the crew into a plane without either picking up the bodies, or destroying the secret documents. Five others seriously burned are taken aboard. It is now 4 AM.

I repeat, it is impossible to conceive such a total failure unless the reasons behind the order to abort the operation had nothing whatever to do with either the technology or the lives of the American hostages that were supposed to have been rescued. Two probabilities surely make more logic than the official accounting. One is that the CIA is still cooperating with SAVAK and this actual

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Fifth Column in Iran got cold feet at the last minute and did not wish to carry through with their mercenary murderous job.

Or, even more likely, the President got cold feet through both the strong opposition he would meet from the American public and the distrust he suddenly felt for the CIA-sponsored Fifth Column. But whether these probabilities or the officially-proffered explanation of sheer technological failure motivated the abortion of the mission, this born-again-Christian President, Brzezinski-inspired or otherwise, has not for a single moment hesitated from risking the ultimate -- the possibility of a world holocaust.

Even so bourgeois a specialist on military defense as Drew Middleton* felt compelled to show how the risk of a naval blockade "would increase if Soviet tankers were sent to test the blockade." Indeed, even before a global confrontation, there certainly would be -- and there were -- protests of the U.S. presence in the Gulf region from such sturdy allies of the U.S. as Saudi Arabia. As for the West Europeans, not only do they oppose military steps at this time but they are hesitating even about serious economic sanctions. And who exactly takes the Congress seriously as any sort of calming hand just because the head of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Frank Church, talks about the President "flouting" the War Powers Resolution? Capitalism has never failed to have enough loopholes in any "limitation" to the war powers of its Commander-in-Chief to allow him a free hand.

Whether or not President Carter is so Nixon-bent on the retention of his powers in this election year that even the prospect of unleashing World War III cannot stay his hand, it is a fact that the Iranian misadventure can in no way be separated from Carter's internal drive for war that he had begun long before. The point is that Carter's proposal for reinstating draft-registration for the youth has, indeed, a global imperialist outlook.

It becomes imperative, therefore, that our struggle against Carter's drive for war is at the same time a way to express our solidarity with the Iranian masses in their anti-imperialist struggle. In doing so we must make sure that the struggle for freedom does not get separated from a philosophy of liberation. And therein, precisely, lies the deep contradiction in the Iranian revolution, signified all over again by the Khomeini/Bani-Sadr unleashing of the unholy "Holy War" against the Left that Khomeini/Bani-Sadr have just initiated.

* See Drew Middleton's "Risk for the U.S. Grows in Iran", New York Times, April 27, 1980, which includes also a section on the growing tension between Iraq and Iran.

II

Nothing was more ghoulish than the hanging judge Ayatollah Sadegh Khalkhali's display of the burned corpses of the eight American soldiers. Did he intend to put them on trial? And why, exactly, were those corpses given to Khalkhali after Bani-Sadr had announced they would be returned to the U.S. without any conditions? Did such an inhuman act as Khalkhali's require a world outcry before the Revolutionary Council double-tongued its retraction of Khalkhali's dehumanized statements? What is as disorienting a matter as that calculated display is the statement of the supposed moderate Bani-Sadr and the Imam Khomeini which maligned the Iranian Left as having a connection with Carter's imperialist venture. What Khomeini-Bani Sadr-Ghotbzadeh-Behesti-Khalkhali have unleashed is a move against the very forces that were in the forefront of the revolutionary overthrow of the Shah.

Not only is there no connection between the deep unrest in Iran and Carter's intrusion into Iran (and Bani-Sadr knows it), but the ruling clique in Iran has shown an affinity to the rulers in any capitalist country when they took advantage of the desert fiasco to hit out against the Left, against the dissatisfaction over the great mass unemployment, against the national liberation movements, Kurds especially, who have attempted to deepen the Iranian revolution from mere overthrow of the Shah to actual freedom and new human relations. Khomeini and Bani-Sadr know that the opposition to them began with their retrenchment from the goals of the revolution, whether that related to Khomeini's trying to turn the clock back on Women's Liberation, or trying to abolish the shoras of the workers. Isn't it a fact that the attempt to railroad through the Constitution coincided with the takeover of the Embassy, in the first place? And isn't it a fact that even the election of Bani-Sadr as President is now again diluted while the clergy gets back into its hierarchical rule in the Parliament? And how, exactly, do you help the "truth" when Iraq, too, is called an "accomplice of American imperialism"?

The truth is that the great unrest in the country, the masses' desire for new, non-exploitative relations, the national minorities' passion for self-determination are so inseparable from a great passion for philosophy of liberation that there isn't a single expression -- and there are no less than 150 different groups attempting to articulate that passion for freedom, in every form from pamphlets, books, papers, leaflets, ^{to} cassettes/ that does not at once get grabbed up on the university campuses. It is those bookstalls that so frighten Khomeini and the so-called Revolutionary Council that they order their goons to attack the

student youth. Worse than the riots these goons instigated -- and there were many injured and some dead -- is the state-and-clergy-sponsored edicts for the abolition of political activity. Khomeini is under the illusion that, since the Left does not command sacrosanct mosques such as they used in the struggle against the Shah, the idea of freedom will die. Bani-Sadr followed up the slanders against the Left by concocting another version, charging that the unrest on the campus is only "part" of some global imperialist plan: "Now I have some proof and I hope to give it soon to the Iranian and foreign people that they will know that the arrival of the American planes was just part of the plan." All he gives "proof" of is that most unfinished state of the Iranian revolution. What the masses will prove is that they have no intention whatever to let the revolution remain unfinished.

III

The strangest toleration of all, if not outright "love", is the one that exists between Khomeini and Tudeh. Anyone in the West is so accustomed to the 180 degree turns, hypocrisy and outright alliances of absolute opposites on the part of the Russian Communists ever since the Hitler-Stalin Pact, which gave the green light to World War II, that none in the West were surprised by the Secretary General of the Iranian Communist Party, Nurreddin Kianuri's declaration that they are "followers of Imam Khomeini's line."

When interviewed by an editor of Le Monde, Eric Rouleau*, on the question of supporting terrorism, Kianuri replied: "Of course we condemn terrorism, but no principle can be eternal. From the very beginning we supported the arrest of the so-called diplomats because they were engaged not only in espionage ... but in counter-revolutionary and subversive activity." As for continuing incarceration of the American hostages, which flew in the face of international law, and which Russia also had to condemn, Kianuri let the cat out of the bag by approving the status quo of continuing the retention of the hostages when he said that it "was a good way of preventing the normalization of Iran's relations with the U.S."

It isn't true, however, that either the clerics who were with Mossadegh in the '50s or Mossadegh's secular followers are that tolerant of the Tudeh Party. Tudeh's miserable role in that period has not been forgotten and the invasion of Afghanistan has made some worry over the new "populist" phase of the Communists who did receive 100,000 votes in Teheran alone in the first round of the elections.

*The Guardian, April 27, 1980 (Le Monde English Section)

The Tudeh, on the other hand, both in its publication, Mardom, and in the speeches that Kianuri makes, feels perfectly free to criticize Bani-Sadr and Ghotzbadeh while leaving Khomeini free from criticism, as if Khomeini wasn't anti-Communist. And yet, truth to tell, Kianuri does have a point. Khomeini's anti-Communism is so abstractly religious, that is to say out of the context of existing Communism as a world nuclear power, so single-minded in his opposition to Carter alone as being "the Great Satan" that he wasn't diverted seriously by Russia's invasion of Afghanistan; Bani-Sadr and Ghotzbadeh are more aware of realities, and know that there are two nuclear world powers, each after single world control.

(which is only anti-America)
A greater measure of the narrowness of Khomeini's "anti-imperialism" and toleration of the Tudeh Party, while being totally opposed to genuine Marxists, is seen in the commander of the Revolutionary Guards which have the full support of Khomeini. Their commander, Abu Sharif, spelled out the danger for Iran: "The danger comes from U.S. leftist organizations." He expanded it thus: "There are U.S. leftist organizations which are arming themselves such as the Fedayi Khaalq. There are other leftist organizations like the Tudeh Party, which says it recognizes the Islamic Revolution's constitution and Imam Khomeini's line. In this case, it is a legal leftist organization that acts and works on this basis. But the danger comes from the U.S. leftist organizations, which receive funds and weapons from the West and falsely speak about a Russian threat to Iran to justify military relations with the United States." (MERIP REPORTS, March/April 1980)

* * *

As against Kianuri's goal -- "the breaking off of all remaining ties with the U.S." -- and as against Sharif saying that "the danger comes from U.S. leftist organizations", what becomes imperative is the forging of relations, revolutionary relations, between the masses in the U.S. and in Iran. To prevent the real danger of a world holocaust, it is necessary to see that the enemy is not so much abroad as at home. It is here where philosophy of revolution becomes as crucial as social revolution itself. Ideas of freedom recognize no national boundaries. It is a fact that our rulers are our enemies and that the Iranian masses are our friends. The world revolution may not be on the agenda at this very moment, but it's that vision of a new world that is the ground for the actual struggle that will prevent nuclear holocaust by creating a new world on totally human foundations.

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Raya Dunayevskaya
December 17, 1979

Not So Random Thoughts On:

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY? - WHAT IS REVOLUTION?
1789-1793; 1848-1850; 1914-1919; 1979

It sounds so abstract, so easy to say, with Hegel, that philosophy is the "thinking study of things". (para. 2) It surely sounds oversimplified to say, at one and the same time, that "Nature has given everyone a faculty of thought. But thought is all that philosophy claims as the form proper to her process ..." (Para. 5) When, however, you realize that this is the Introduction to Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences; that it was written after the French Revolution, which made popular an actual "permanent revolution" -- no revolution is ever its first act alone -- you can begin, just begin to grasp the meaning of Hegel's expression, "second negativity." Furthermore, Hegel had not found articulation that easy until after Phenomenology of Mind, until after the Science of Logic, until after he tried to summarize all of his works, including the 2,500-year history of philosophy. Then, of course, you realize why, when Hegel is speaking of philosophy, it is not an abstraction, that even though he limits it to thought and not activity, he can conclude in that very same Introduction:

"This divorce between idea and reality is a favorite device of the analytic understanding in particular. Yet strangely in contrast with this separatist tendency, its own dreams, half-truths though they are, appear to the understanding something true and real; it prides itself on the imperative 'ought' which it takes especial pleasure in prescribing on the field of politics. As if the world had waited on it to learn how it ought to be, and was not!" (para. 6)

And that same paragraph further stresses that "the Idea is not so feeble as merely to have a right or an obligation to exist without actually existing."

When a new objective stage arose in 1844-1848 which was proletarian, and not just semi-proletarian as with the enragés of the French Revolution, the young, new, revolutionary philosopher and activist, Marx, practiced Hegel's Idea of freedom by realizing it in an outright revolution. He had told his young Hegelian friends who were becoming materialists: You cannot become a true new Human-

ist by turning your back on Hegel because he was both bourgeois and idealist and because he limited the revolution to a revolution in thought. The truth is that Hegel's dialectic was not just any idea, but the Idea of freedom, and must, therefore, first be realized in an actual material way. We must be specific and shout out loud who the forces of revolution are. What the Reason of revolution is. And how we can achieve freedom. I, said Marx, say it is the proletariat, because they are at the point of production where all things are created. I say that in issuing the challenge that will cause the whole capitalist world to tremble, we need to unfurl a totally new banner of philosophy as well as of revolution. And the philosophy of revolution now -- that is, after the bourgeoisie has betrayed us in this 1848-9 Revolution, and it is necessary to depend only on our own forces, must be "REVOLUTION IN PERMANENCE." (Address to the Communist League, 1850).

This revolution in permanence, he continued, is not the generality it was in 1789-93. This revolution in permanence is on the basis of these new forces of revolution, and this new philosophy of revolution I unfurled in the Communist Manifesto dealt with a total uprooting of the old, a total creation of the new, showing not only what we are against, but what we are for. In a word, even though we have now challenged not only the mode of production but also the form of the family and dug into the fundamental relationship of man/woman, we must go further into the dialectics of revolution, i.e. into "the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle" of Hegelian philosophy. (Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic, 1844)

Internationalism is not telling other nations what to do. It is solidarizing and fraternizing with those sent to shoot you -- and having them turn their guns on their own officers. Finally, in very nearly the last work of Marx -- the 1881 Preface to the Russian edition of the Communist Manifesto -- that permanent revolution gets spelled out on a still higher level -- that is, internationally as well as nationally. It is there that it is concretized as the relationship between technologically advanced and technologically backward countries -- i.e. that backward Russia could have its revolu-

tion ahead of "West Europe" -- provided : 1) the revolution is accomplished within the context of European revolutions; and 2) the new forces, in this case the peasant communes, are never out of context of both internationalism and dialectics of liberation. The Idea is the power because it is concrete; it is total; it is multi-dimensional; and at no time is the Individual made just to tail-end the State or "committee." Rather, let us never forget the principle: "the Individual is the social entity" and society must never again be counter-posed to the Individual.

II

Marx had spent something like 45 volumes in expressing his thoughts, in participating in revolutions, in leaving a legacy that was the very opposite of an heirloom. Instead, the new continent of thought became the ground for all future revolutions that would be filled out anew with ever-richer concrete and with ever-greater forces -- men, women, children of all colors, races, nations -- until we finally have achieved that type of total revolution and that type of total uprooting. Surely no one was more prepared, was more serious, was more experienced to help create such a total revolution than those who had "made" the 1905 Revolution -- Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky. And yet, and yet, and yet....

Comes World War I, and the shock of the simultaneity of imperialist war and socialist betrayal is so overwhelming that one and only one -- Lenin -- says, if I could have been so misled and considered that betrayer, Kautsky, my teacher, something is altogether wrong with my way of thinking. -- And while I will not stop shouting "down with the war -- turn the imperialist war into civil war," I will never again be satisfied with the "correct analysis" of a political situation without first digging into Hegelian dialectics. -- It could not have possibly been an accident that Marx, Marx's Marxism, was rooted in Hegel -- and after having broken with that, he returned to develop Hegelian dialectics into the Marxian dialectic. And so this great revolutionary, Lenin, spent his days in the library studying Hegel's Science of Logic, and his evenings preparing for revolution.

What did Luxemburg and Trotsky do? They surely were as revolutionary as Lenin. They surely opposed the imperialist war. They surely were trying to prepare for revolution. But without that rudder of philosophy, what came out of it? And in this case, because Luxemburg has no party on the scene today, but Trotsky does, it is on Trotskyism that I will now concentrate.

Trotsky counterposed his slogan "peace without annexations" and "mobilizing the proletariat for a struggle for peace" to Lenin's slogan "turn the imperialist war into civil war" which Trotsky rejected. What was even worse was Trotsky's rejection of Lenin's statement that the defeat of your own country is the lesser evil.

[I confess that having had a very warm spot for Trotsky -- and he did mean a great deal not only for my reorganization but for the generation that had to confront Stalin -- there were certain expressions in those years 1914-1917 that I just couldn't get myself to quote. This opposition to wanting the defeat of one's own country was such an expression.]

Listen to Trotsky on the Russian Internationalists trying to achieve a unity, first under his peace slogan which Lenin rejected, and then on Lenin's slogan which Trotsky rejected. Here is what he said:

"Under no condition can I agree with your opinion, which is emphasized by a resolution, that Russia's defeat would be a 'lesser evil'. This opinion represents a fundamental connivance with the political methodology of social patriotism, a connivance for which there is no reason or justification and which substitutes an orientation (extremely arbitrary under present conditions) along the line of a 'lesser evil' for the revolutionary struggle against war and the conditions which generated this war."

[I am quoting this from The Bolsheviks and the World War by Gankin and Fisher. (Stanford University Press, 1940, p.170). I first read it in Russian in Trotsky's own work, War and Revolution, The Fall of the Second International and the Preparation of the Third, first published in Moscow in 1923. We must remember, however, that the period covered is 1914-1917; that Trotsky's specific article from which I quote above was dated Paris, Oct. 14, 1915. That article was part of what those Marxists who had not betrayed and who

tried to reconstitute themselves internationally/ not on the basis of Lenin's revolutionary struggle of "turn the imperialist war into civil war", but on Trotsky's "struggle for peace"-- wrote. Indeed, Trotsky was speaking in such general terms that he opposed the naming of Liebknecht specifically, saying: "Such a personification of tactical evaluations, conforming to German conditions alone, was inappropriate in the given document. Upon the insistence of the whole commission, it was withdrawn." This is why such pseudo-universalism is the way to skip over concrete realizations of freedom. Yet, in his 1919 Introduction, Trotsky stressed the internationalism and repeated that: "The March revolution liquidated these differences." 7

BUT THAT IS NOT TRUE. THEORETICAL DIFFERENCES ARE NOT "LIQUIDATED" JUST BECAUSE, IN FACT, YOU ARE A REVOLUTIONARY. Quite the contrary. Once the heat of the battle dies, the deviations from Marxism first come to plague you.

The truth is that the theoretical difference reappears in a most horrible form exactly when the next new, objective situation arises. You must then dig for new philosophic depth on the basis of the highest theoretic as well as practical point last reached. If, instead, you remain without a philosophic rudder, the supposedly "correct" political analysis becomes, if not outright counter-revolution, definitely no more than tail-endism. That was true of Trotsky in 1905. It wasn't true in 1917 only because the one he then tailended was Lenin. But it became dangerously true in our era as all the opposition and great fights against Stalinism led only to tailending Stalin once World War II broke out.

III

Perhaps, I shouldn't have asked only what is philosophy?, what is revolution?, but also what is anti-imperialism? Does the taking of low-level personnel from the U.S. Embassy in Teheran and designating them as CIA agents shake up the American empire? The truth is that neither Khomeini nor those students could have helped Carter more in achieving higher popularity than that allegedly anti-imperialist act, thereby dulling the mass struggle against U.S.

Calling oneself a "follower of the Imam" does not constitute a revolutionary act, no matter how many times one repeats that this is anti-imperialism. Nor does self-flagellation constitute a revolutionary act, no matter how many times those who commit it call upon the revolutionary youth of the U.S., who had previously participated actively in the anti-Shah movement. That kind of pseudo anti-imperialism, such as the taking of hostages, opens no new stage of revolution. Rather, it initiates a retreat from the original revolutionary perspective. It may give Khomeini a "red" coloration, and it surely helps him divert from the grave new contradictions in Iran itself, but it does nothing to solve the increasing crises since he came to power. The hardships on the masses intensify. The unemployment is greater. And so is inflation. As the Sheng Wu-lien found out, during Mao's Cultural Revolution, which they at first heartily endorsed because they thought it meant the displacement of the bureaucracy: "The more things change, the more they remain the same."

Concrete, in the Hegelian sense of the synthesis of diverse elements into a concrete totality, would show that, by no means coincidentally, the occupation of the Embassy paralleled the completion of the counter-revolutionary Constitution. Yes, the masses are anti-imperialist, but Marx didn't say that just because the masses were anti-feudal and the bourgeoisie was leading a revolution against feudalism, that therefore the masses should follow the bourgeoisie. Quite the contrary. He said: We were with the bourgeoisie in that first act of overthrowing feudalism, but now count us out. Not only that. It is high time to deepen and develop the strictly proletarian tasks.

Luxemburg understood that very well, and applied it not only in Russia in an actual revolution, but tried to bring that concept of pure class struggle to Germany. And yet, when a new objective stage arose -- imperialism -- and despite all her prescience of that exploitative stage, she did not work out a new unity of force and reason with new revolutionary forces, that is, the revolutionary nationalists fighting for self-determination. Lenin had to

begin separating himself, not just from betrayers of the workers, but from revolutionaries who would not see the new concrete, whether that was a new revolutionary force in another country or his own. What he had learned from the Hegelian dialectic that made him so sharp against his own Bolshevik colleagues was that overthrow, first negativity, was not enough; that you must now see that counter-revolution can arise from within the revolution itself. This and this alone made it possible not to stay at overthrow of Tsarism and bourgeois democracy calling itself "socialist", though headed by a so-called socialist, Kerensky, and even supported by genuine revolutionaries. Just as now, the Trotskyists think that they are the true revolutionaries in Iran because they hyphenate the name Khomeini with Bazargan and thus talk against capitalist government, as well as shout anyone else in anti-imperialist slogans, so did the Bolsheviks before Lenin returned to Russia think that they were pushing the revolution forward by their critical support of Kerensky. It becomes imperative, therefore, to take a second look at these stages: February to April; April to June; July-August full counter-revolution; October. As soon as the overthrow of the Tsar occurs, and while this great, historic, spontaneous outburst achieved what no Party -- Bolshevik or otherwise -- could achieve, and though it was unanticipated by Lenin, he by no means let euphoria overrun him. Quite the contrary. He had already grappled with the Hegelian dialectic; he had already analyzed the new stage of imperialism, not just economically but seeing new forces of revolution; and he already began to work out what became State and Revolution, that is to say, have the perspective of not only overthrow but the total uprooting, so that only when production and the state would be in the hands of the whole population "to a man, woman, and child" would it be a new society.

Clearly, when he arrived in Russia in April, 1917, it was not 1905 slogans -- either his or Trotsky's -- that he was repeating. Rather, it was reorganizing his whole Party on the conception of State and Revolution. Once that became the basis for all the activities of the Party, there was no separating the revolution from the

philosophy of revolution. But the masses wanted to go still further, directly to the conquest of power; they underestimated the forces still in power, and it was the beginning of all the counter-revolutionary moves that still passed themselves off as revolution, accusing Lenin of being a German spy and saying that is why he called for the end of the war. The relevant point for us today is that when outright counter-revolution was initiated by Kornilov so that one still had to defend Kerensky, the manner in which it was done has all the answers against tailendism. It was at that point that whether it was the creation of a revolutionary military committee, which permitted no transfer of guns to the front unless they approved it, or whether it was such slogans as "All power to the Soviets," or whether it was "Land, Bread and Peace", there was no way whatever to confuse that Party with any other. Contrast this to what everyone from Trotskyist to Qaddafi is saying to blur those new grave contradictions within Iran, the diversion from what threatens civilization as we have known it -- preparation for atomic war. Qaddafi and Khomeini and General Zia may think the Middle East as they define it will be the graveyard of U.S. imperialism. Nothing could be further from the truth. Just read, please, Orianna Falacci's interview with Khomeini in a recent issue of the New York Times, and the one with Qaddafi in the current issue (12/16/79). Just listen to that demagogue, Qaddafi, try to take advantage of the fact that supposedly there is no government because there is no Parliament, and supposedly it's a collectivist society because it calls itself Jamahiriyah, which means "a command of ^{the} people." Is it they who decide everything? No, even the word, committee, unless it's revolutionary -- and the word revolutionary means "total uprooting" -- is not the equivalent of destiny being in the hands of the people; that is to say, with control of production in the hands of the workers. And so must the state be in their hands. To claim that there is no "government" because there is no Parliament; to claim that Khomeini and Qaddafi are "just one" is fantastic. When you come to that retrogressive a stage, even if you are a Maoist who was once a revolutionary and did lead a national revolution, you have done nothing but spell out the new

stage of state-capitalism.

What new retrogressive stage are we in now, when religion usurps also political power? First it was the Little Red Book of Mao. And now it's the Little Green Book of Qaddafi. And what part of the Koran will Khomeini embody in some brief sayings that all must repeat?

It is not a question that a leader must write fifty books, like Marx or Lenin -- and I'm sure that Trotsky and Luxemburg wrote as many. It is a question of being serious about revolution and therefore the philosophy of revolution, and being responsible to history, which means men and women shaping history. No, you cannot throw out philosophy, and indulge in sloganeering. Even a good bourgeois philosopher, at least in the stage when the bourgeoisie achieved its revolution, a good Lutheran like Hegel, who insisted all his life that he believed, had to submit to the dialectic drive of philosophy and subordinate religion to it. All his protestations notwithstanding -- and "revealed religion" is pretty high in the sphere of the Absolute, nothing can change the fact that it isn't the highest; that philosophy is. Needless to say, that revolution in thought initiated by Hegelian dialectics was transformed by Marx's new continent of thought into reality. Ever since then no revolution was successful that wasn't grounded in a philosophy of revolution.

Every generation of Marxists must work this out concretely for its own age. The fact that our age is in such a total crisis makes it all the more imperative that we wield no state power.

-- Raya Dunayevskaya
December 17, 1979

GRAVE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

November 27, 1979

Dear Friends:

Were it not for the Iranian Revolution that was -- and may still resume -- and deepen, as it is by no means over, despite the counter-revolutionary stage now being carried out by the Imam demagogue, Khomeini, whose insanities are being matched by Carter's saber-rattling -- this would be the time for saying one thing and one thing only: "A plague on both your houses."

Because, however, of the remembrance of the Iranian Revolution as it overthrew the Shah's barbarous regime backed by U.S. imperialism; because of the remembrance of Women's Liberation's refusal to wear the chador, challenging Khomeini's attempt to turn the clock backward and reduce women to a feudalistic state; and because of the continuing rebellion of the Kurds as well as the Arab oil workers in Koozestan against Khomeini, along with the other minorities' struggles for self-determination (1) -- it is necessary to take a second look at the new form of the occult which is coming out of Khomeini's Iran and calling all others, and not only U.S. imperialism, "mussed fi al-Ard" ("the corrupt of the earth"). It is imperative to practice dialectics, rather than to act on first reaction, as if tailending Khomeini's opposition to the U.S. is genuine opposition to American imperialism.

Of course the hatred of the Iranian people for that butcher, the Shah, and their opposition to U.S. imperialism, which had put him into power and kept him there, is not only real and justifiable for Iranians, but was real and justifiable for the many Americans who both exposed the truth of the Shah's tortures of the Iranian people and expressed their solidarity with Iranian revolutionaries. Of course the Carter Administration was well aware of the opposition not only in Iran but in this country to granting any asylum to the Shah, and for a while -- a very short while -- Carter was forced to resist the pressures of Nixon, Kissinger and David Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank to bring the Shah to the U.S. But following the tune of that now Pied Piper, Khomeini, against "infidels" and "satanic domination" is anything but struggling either against U.S. imperialism or showing solidarity with the Iranian Revolution.

All one has to do to see the degeneration of the so-called Revolutionary Council in Iran is to see the now "left-covering" given by the current acting foreign secretary, Bani-Sadr, who is trying to institute an Iranian version of Pol

Potism. Listen to the interview Bani-Sadr granted to Eric Rouleau in Le Monde (11/10/79): "Tehran is a monstrous parasitic city, which absorbs by itself one-half of the national consumption ... we will empty it of some of its people by creating in the countryside industrial and agricultural production units."

Unfortunately, even the more recognizable Left -- Trotskyism, far from practicing any revolutionary dialectics, is busy tailending Khomeini's Iran. (2) The Intercontinental Press (IP) of 11/19/79 and 11/26/79 keeps talking of a "New Upsurge in the Iranian Revolution." It even sees anti-U.S. imperialism in Khomeini's phrase "satanic domination" in the arrogant message Khomeini sent to the equally arrogant Pope, telling the latter that the way the "Christian world (can) redeem itself" is by following Islamic Iran's fight against "infidels." It is impossible not to ask whether there isn't a coincidence between this and the one democratic gesture by Khomeini which allowed some of the banned papers to reappear, including Kadar (Worker), the paper of the Iranian Socialist Workers Party (HKS). In any case, the very first issue, 11/17/79, of Kadar to reappear cited Khomeini's statement to the Pope as proof of "how anti-imperialist" Khomeini was. (3) Furthermore, continued IP, the holding of American hostages by the Iranian students (who, not so incidentally, call themselves "Followers of the Imam") "re-emphasizes the people's historic demand for political and economic independence from world imperialism."

In what proletarian revolution, exactly, was the taking of hostages -- and not the rulers, but some fairly low Embassy personnel -- held to be a revolutionary tactic? Since when has war and revolution been made synonymous? Isn't it about time that Marxist-revolutionaries labelled Khomeini's endless repetition of "we are men of war" "looking forward to martyrdom" for what it is, by citing Marx who wrote that Napoleon, the ultimate counter-revolutionary, "substituted permanent war for permanent revolution"?

In Iran today we have a demagogue, openly lying that "U.S. imperialism and its corrupt colony, Israel" were involved in the occupation of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, where no infidel -- and all except Muslims are infidels -- is even permitted to enter. He kept repeating this brazen lie even after his fellow Muslims, the Saudi Arabian authorities, not only denied any U.S. and/or Israeli involvement, but showed that the sacrilegious act was perpetrated by a fanatical sect of the Muslims whose leader claimed, himself, to be the Messiah. Even then Khomeini proceeded to stress the Big Lie's impact expressing "great joy" at the

fact that the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan had been put to the torch and two Americans killed.

But the Trotskyists continue with their fairy tale Leftism, since they do support the Kurds' struggle for self-determination. However, what they play up is that some Kurds supposedly supported Khomeini, and what they cover up is that none less than the two most important Ayatollahs after Khomeini -- Montazeri and Behesti -- called the Kurd leaders "agents of Savak, Zionists and corrupt sources." Since it was just at the period when Khomeini was trying to claim that the whole of Iran was for him, he took to the air and said that this statement by the Ayatollahs was a "personal view." But these "persons" are not just any persons. They hold the positions of President and Vice President of the Assembly of the Experts that has just completed the draft Constitution to be shoved down the throats of the Iranian people on Dec. 2 and 3. Indeed, many believe they undoubtedly were the two who instigated the occupation of the Embassy by the students. (4)

II

What the media has not shown is that during the demonstrations in front of the U.S. Embassy, there was also a storming of the Ministry of Labor (5), in which the mass of unemployed -- and there are no less than two million unemployed in Iran now -- were demanding jobs. Nor are they reporting the continuing struggles of the Kurds, much less the fact that some Marxists have gone underground to continue a truly revolutionary struggle against Khomeini's usurpation of the fruits of their revolutionary overthrow of the Shah.

Another of the many events unreported in the mass media at the time it happened (and still kept from the regional TV) are the bloody riots Khomeini instigated against the present rulers of the island of Bahrain in August, demanding the establishment of a "pure" Islamic government, the abolition of all "Western ways," especially TV, and the re-establishment of the separation of men and women in all public places. The riots were put down by the current rulers, but so worried are they about Khomeini's influence, his ability to foment rebellions against other Muslims who do not wish to unite "as one" against "the West" -- and the East -- and whom Khomeini then accuses of "crimes against God," that they have hushed up the August riots.

This is only part of Khomeini's own type of imperialism. Besides the claim to Bahrain, he has retained -- despite a challenge by Iraq -- the Shah's

1971 occupation of the three islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb. These islands are situated near the Straits of Hormuz, through which passes nearly half of the West's oil imports.

Furthermore, Khomeini has lashed out against any Iranian who dares to say that he is for Iran first and for Islam second. He calls that "blasphemy." At the same time, when the PLO suggested that the Persian Gulf be renamed as either the Islamic or the Arabian Gulf, Khomeini rejected the suggestion at once. His insistence that Islam -- his interpretation of Islam -- must always come first, does not in any way mitigate his disdain for Arabs. Not only was he adamant that the Persian Gulf retain its name, but his opposition to the Arab oil-workers and any claim for self-determination, is total. Arafat was quickly brought down to size when he tried to intercede for the American hostages. That doesn't mean that either Arafat or all the Arab state rulers meeting in Tunisia had anything to say for Khomeini -- with the exception of Libya, and even their pro-Khomeini stance did not take priority over selling Oil to the West.

And in Iran, itself, the so-called Revolutionary Council is itself faction-ridden with pro-Libyan, pro-Syrian, pan Islamic factions; and though they each bow to Khomeini now, it doesn't mean that would hold if other Muslim countries act out their dissent. At the same time, Hussein of Iraq has no intention whatever of bowing to Khomeini. Indeed, he has already once threatened an invasion and is, at the moment, arming some Kurds to start a revolt within Iran.

III

And what, exactly, is being prepared for the Iranian people once this month of mourning, the Muharran, is over? Well, they are to engage in a referendum to approve the Draft Constitution which the Ayatollahs Montazori and Behesti have drawn up. Anyone who has any illusions that this Constitution bears any resemblance whatsoever to the one that was inspired by the First Russian Revolution of 1905-1907, when the first Shah was overthrown, or even as the Mullahs amended that Constitution when they brought the Shah back, should take a look at the new institution of the Office of Religious Guardian which has the right to veto ever everything and anything passed by the state rulers and is also the supreme commandor over the armed forces.

The point is that the Constitution does nothing but try to legitimize Khomeini's usurpation of the victory of the workers who achieved the actual over-

throw of the Shah. It cannot solve the crisis in Iran, anymore than staged demonstrations before the U.S. Embassy and the sacrificial use of hostages can stay the hand of U.S. imperialism.

The greatest danger now lies in the momentum gained by Khomeini's demagoguery, which might trigger Apocalypse Now! That is the brink at which the world now stands. Khomeini and Carter may not flinch as they prepare for such a confrontation. But the world must do everything to stay the hands of both rulers.

In the imperative struggle against the savage racism in this country against Iranian students, we must never forget that the underlying racism that has always been shown against the Blacks has actually been directed also against revolutionaries and minorities, though in depth it has been differently expressed racially. What I am saying is that not only must we remember the horror of U.S. concentration camps against Japanese-Americans during World War II, at the very time when no such atrocities were committed against Nazis in this country. The case against each white fascist was treated as an individual case. We must remember/that the fact that American revolutionaries have long fought this, have long fought U.S. capitalism-imperialism and its wars, does not mean that we accept, as a revolutionary gesture, the opposition to American capitalism by another capitalist or religious fanatic, any more than we accepted Nazism or Japanese military opposition to American capitalism as anything but an inter-imperialist fight.

Of course the mailed fist of Carter must be stopped, and his is also the hand that can release a nuclear holocaust, which would put an end to civilization as we have known it. Revolutionary opposition against American imperialism can be carried through only if we raise a banner of what we are for. And what we are for is not turning the clock back to some form of occultism.

Anyone who tries to gild a neo-fascist occultism, forgetting that the "masses" that Hitler mobilized were mobilized for counter-revolutionary purposes; anyone who tries to say that Khomeini's constant references to the "disinherited masses" is akin to Mao's "Cultural Revolution", should be made to remember that -- though Mao was once a revolutionary, and though Mao did labor under the illusion that making Russia "Enemy No. One" (like Khomeini's making the U.S. "Satan") was the way to fight for world socialism -- Mao ended by rolling out the Red Carpet for Nixon. (6) As we said then, the "revolutionary" Maoist apologists who

were willing to forgive Mao every crime on earth and leave a few blanks for those he might create later, were revealing that one and only one organic trait characterizes them all: tailendism to a state power. This is the exact opposite to what Marx's Marxism is -- the struggle for a totally new, classless, social order, based on totally new human relations. Anything short of that spells out betrayal.

Yours,

RAYA

FOOTNOTES

(1) See my Political-Philosophic Letter, "Iran: Unfoldment of, and Contradictions in, Revolution", March 25, 1979, published by News & Letters.

(2) And if a Trotskyist should dare to say that following Khomeini is like "following" Father Gapon in 1905, they should at least have learned from Trotsky that, far from any Bolshovik or Menshevik or Social Revolutionary or even Liberal following Father Gapon, the truth was that Fr. Gapon himself turned against the Tsar and for the movement after the army fired on their demonstration.

(3) Remembrance, historic remembrance, has a way of repeating itself as if it were an ongoing element in every crisis. Nothing seems more relevant now than Trotsky's analysis of the Big Lie Stalin perpetrated by staging the infamous Moscow Frame-up Trials, 1936-38, against the "General Staff of the Revolution", including Tukhachevsky, whom Stalin accused of nothing short of dealing with Nazi Germany. The needed revolutionary attitude when such a lie is perpetrated, Trotsky told me, is that it is not enough just not to believe the Big Lie. The fact is, he continued, that the reason the Big Lie is so much more monstrous than the ordinary lie is because its premeditation hides the sinister motivation that would have put everyone on the alert, had they known the truth. What Stalin was accusing Tukhachevsky of, he explained, might very well be what Stalin himself was doing or planning to do. The trial balloon towards that end, which directs hatred towards the accused, calls for a great deal more than just a defense of the wrongly accused. He must be prepared to fight some new "peppery dish" that Stalin is readying -- perhaps a deal with Hitler. That was precisely what happened the following year, the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939.

(4) See Christian Science Monitor 11/16/79: "Constitution Gives Clergy Control in Iran" by Geoffrey Godsell.

(5) Christian Science Monitor, 11/21/79

(6) See both the chapter on "The Thought of Mao Tse-tung" in my Philosophy and Revolution (Dell, 1973) and "Mao's Last Hurrah", Political-Philosophic Letter, Feb. 27, 1976, published by News & Letters. Since the designation of Russia as "Enemy Number One" is the one-lie legacy the post-Mao leadership is scrupulously following out, see also "Post-Mao China: What Now?" in New Essays (News & Letters, 1977).

Iran

UNFOLDMENT OF, AND CONTRADICTIONS IN, REVOLUTION

A POLITICAL-PHILOSOPHIC LETTER

by **Raya Dunayevskaya**

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I. A Whole Host of Specters Haunting Khomeini's "Islamic Revolution"

Dear Friends,

A whole host of specters are haunting Khomeini's "Islamic Republic" before ever it is officially established. There is the specter of a full social revolution in the very unfolding of the Iranian Revolution which, after all, witnessed a series of the greatest, most powerful and sustained mass mobilizations for months on end before the three days of insurrection. Clearly, February 9-12 had not only driven the Shah and his stooge, Bakhtiar, from the throne, but the manner in which the workers ended their general strike to return to work without returning their guns, as the Ayatollah had commanded, showed that only Chapter 1 of the Revolution had ended. It put a special emphasis to the complaints of his appointed Prime Minister, Bazargan, about lack of production. As the Deputy Prime Minister, Entez'ari, put it: "Despite the Ayatollah's commands, none of the major industries in the country are functioning because the workers spend all their time holding political meetings."

As if Workers' Councils, Neighborhood Committees, anjumeni, many new forms of spontaneous organization, and youth dominant in all, did not take on the apparition of a dual government, there came, with the celebration of International Women's Day, a mass outpouring of women, bearing the banner, "We made the revolution for freedom, and not unfreedom," which may very well have opened Chapter 2 of the Iranian Revolution. It is true there had been other outbursts of criticism of Khomeini from the fedayeen. But whereas Khomeini's friend, Arafat, of the PLO, persuaded them to call off the march to Khomeini's headquarters¹ and, instead, hold a rally at Teheran University, the Women's Liberationists took to the streets.

No doubt Khomeini was ignorant of the fact that March 8 was International Women's Day and the Iranian women intended to make their celebration of the past a claim on the present and future when he issued the March 7 order for the women to wear the chador. But his mild retreat—the claim that it was a "duty, not an order"—hardly succeeded in exorcising the new specter. Quite the contrary. Though the Ayatollah criticized the goons who attacked the march, tried to stone the women, and shot three, the women felt that those goons were in fact practicing what the Ayatollah preached as "Islamic law."

For five straight days the women continued their marches, and not only against Khomeini, but against Prime Minister Bazargan, and on March 10 held a 3-hour

sit-in at the Ministry of Justice. Nor did they tolerate the mass media's autocratic choice of what they would photograph, who they would give voice to, whom they would focus on. Instead of letting their protests go unrecorded, the women marched upon the mass media, thus exposing the fact that the censorship there is now almost as total as it was during the Shah's dictatorship. Think how quickly those bourgeois and petty-bourgeois opportunists changed sides. They waited two days after the insurrection started before they came to the radio to announce that they will not oppose the people but be "the voice of the revolution." That was February 11. The very next day they snuck in an adjective: they now called themselves the "voice of the Islamic revolution."

Nor was the Ayatollah calmed by the fact that the Women's Liberationists produced a schism in the Fedayeen (and to a lesser extent also in the Moujahideen). For, while a good part condemned the actions of the women², others formed a human chain on both sides of the march to protect them from further harassment. That certainly was a great advance over the beginnings of the Portuguese Revolution in 1975 where the Left males attacked women's demonstrations with impunity. 1979 in Iran showed, at one and the same time, that male revolutionaries would not permit attacks on women revolutionaries, and women were striking out on their own as a way of deepening the content of revolution.

Finally, the Women's Liberationists focused on their internationalism, not limited to the invitations to Kate Millet from the U.S. and Claudine Moulard from France (who had come to express their solidarity with the Iranian women revolutionaries.) The more crucial point is that the Iranian women felt that literally millions throughout the world were with them.

It is this that so frightened the Ayatollah that he dared call the Women's Liberationists "agents of imperialism" (to which we'll return later). The expulsion of Kate Millet is but symbol of how he intends to roll the clock backward in his attempt to exorcise all these specters as he must first try to stop them, fighting for self-determination with guns in hand — the Kurdish rebels.

Under these circumstances of ever new forces of revolution, for male revolutionaries to disregard how total the revolution must be if it is to uproot the exploitative, racist, sexist society, and once again try to subordinate women's struggles as a "mere part of the

¹ That this is not the first time Arafat helped stifle an ongoing revolution was seen clearest in Lebanon. See Political-Philosophic Letter No. 6, August 1976, "Lebanon: The Text Not Only of the PLO but the Whole Left."

² Le Monde (3-14-79) prints an article, "Left Groups Advise Women Against Continuing Street Demonstration," by its correspondent in Teheran, Jean Guirard, that quotes a leader of the fedayeen condemning the women demonstrators for weakening the Bazargan government, thus letting "the country sink into a civil war which will profit nobody." Evidently that part of the fedayeen, who are engaged and otherwise, is ready to settle for "becoming part of the state."

³ See "Under the Whip of the Counter-Revolution: Will the Revolution in Portugal Advance?", News & Letters, Jan. Feb. 1976.

whole" (as if the whole can be without its parts), is to play into the hands of the reactionaries, be that the "secular" Bazargan government, or the Ayatollah Khomeini who is trying to "institutionalize" his Islamic "revolution," that is to say, confine it to where he can steal the fruit of the revolution—freedom—and leave the masses who made it at the bottom as in any and all class societies.

The schisms within the ruling class are not as irreconcilable as between labor and capital. Nor are they only a question of secular vs. theocratic rule. The fact that Khomeini nevertheless tried to keep some distance away from the planned March 5 celebration of the 12th anniversary of Mossadegh, who was the first to nationalize the oil industry and shake up the Shah's throne, throws a glaring light on what he intends to do with his so-called Islamic Revolution. Bazargan, who did sit on the platform, was not recognized as any voice of the 1951-53 revolt and thus was in no position to serve as any bridge between the dissident bourgeois liberal factions. Instead, the person who spoke first was Mossadegh's grandson, Hedayet Matine-Daftari, who criticized Bazargan's attack on the extension of democratic rights.

More significant was the voice of the Ayatollah Teleghani who had broken with the Islamic Revolutionary Committee in late February, approved, instead, elected, not appointed, workers' committees, thus making sure that the revolution does not stop at its very first step, the overthrow of the Shah.

There is no point in underestimating the power of the Ayatollah Khomeini, who many are now treating as an Imam even if he has not exercised those specters haunting his revolution. That counter-revolution is right within the Revolution. He knew how to hit at the women, mobilizing a few thousand to march with their chadors against the women who were protesting a great deal more than dress.⁴ What the Women's Liberationists learned here was that not all women are sisters. It is, after all, a slander to make it appear as if it were a mere question of women against men. "Sexual politics" is anything but that; the male chauvinism exposed, and that included of the Ayatollah Khomeini, was the limitations of the freedom of humanity, the abrogation of the civil rights—political, social, economic, intellectual, class.

In the latter case—the most worrisome for the Ayatollah—it was the way the workers, in this case the printers, united with the Youth on what seemed most abstract—works on philosophy of revolution, on politics, strategy, on internationalism, to satisfy their thirst for knowledge of all to do with revolution. Thus, in the very midst of revolution when the general strike was at its height, the printers decided to work double shifts so that they could satisfy that thirst. As one eyewitness report describes it: "Books are flowing at the people as fast as soldiers bullets . . . they read everything about revolution. All Marxist books that have been translated into Persian are being reprinted and spread hand to hand and house to house: Capital, Paris Commune, Communist Manifesto, What Is To Be Done?, State and Revolution, Imperialism, Wretched of the Earth, Black Skin, White Masks, Dying Colonialism."⁵ A further account reported a new translation of Marx's

4 See the New York Times (2-11-79) which lists eight of the demands.

5 See "Eyewitness report: Iran's ongoing revolution" (News & Letters, March 1979) which further describes "the self-activity, self-organizing and creativity of the masses of the people. It has amazed both revolutionaries and reactionaries in every city and village you can find all kinds of self-created committees, councils, associations and other forms of organizations, such as Kishan (which means focus) or Anonymous (Anonim), writers, teachers, book clubs, student organizations, students, writers, lawyers, teachers, busier merchants, bank and government staffs, and workers. Workers Committees have discharged all the government made unions and called for formation of a "Confederation of Iranian Workers". See also the eyewitness account in Intercontinental Press (2-26-79).

1644 Essay on Alienated Labor and innumerable leaflets. How idiotic indeed is the bourgeois press that keeps repeating old official (SAVAK?) figures that Marxists number but 2 percent of the population!⁶

II. The Main Enemy Is Always At Home

The workers in revolution need no "vanguard parties" to tell them that the main enemy is at home, that the conflict between labor and capital is irreconcilable, and that native capital has such overwhelming ties with imperialism that, if its life is threatened, the capitalists will certainly ask for imperialism to come to their aid in bringing on the full counter-revolution. But under no circumstances does that mean any slackening of the workers' own self-activity, self-organization, self-development, thus deepening the revolution. Thus, no sooner had Bazargan tried to reassert his full authority by a takeover of the oil industry than some of the workers' leaders at once resigned from the workers' committees in protest. Listen to Mohammad Javad Khatemi's appeal? "To All Oil Workers and Those Who Fight for Freedom":

After 90 days of our heroic strike, during which we have cut off all supplies of oil — the livelihood of the reactionary regime and of its imperialist backers — and by the bloody struggle of the people we have succeeded in overthrowing the Shah . . .

As a representative of the oil workers — the heart of our industry — and as one of the initiators of the strikes in the oil fields . . . I am resigning because I can see that reactionary elements working under the banner of Islam are consciously suppressing the people's freedom and rights . . .

It was you workers who fought and suffered from sackings, imprisonment and the burnings of our homes and still we did not give up because we all felt a responsibility to the whole of the people of Iran. Myself and other representatives who were responsible for leading your struggle know better than anybody that it was you yourselves that made the victory — not anybody else . . .

We do not accept any dictatorship and will always support those who fight for freedom . . . We must remember and understand the nature of imperialism which still has everything in its hands. We must remember what happened in Portugal, Argentina and especially Chile. Until imperialism is completely smashed such things can happen again.

This type of worker opposition, if it will once again develop a mass base, is the way to stop the attempted counter-revolution, provided that we, as revolutionaries, in turn, do not forget that to speak only of anti-imperialism as if imperialism alone was responsible for the counter-revolution in Chile, in Argentina, or anywhere else for that matter, is a deviation. It is a deviation very welcome to and indeed calculated by the indigenous capitalists. That is to say, native rulers will say anything, anything at all, so long as thereby the class struggle at home can be subordinated to fighting everything "foreign" as Enemy No. 1. What World War II showed us was that, outside of Hitler himself, none were more adept at playing the nationalist game than Peron, and,

6 Peculiarly enough, this appears in one of the most serious articles in the Sunday Magazine of the New York Times (2-11-79), "Iran: Heart of the Matter" by K. W. Austin Jr., read at the NYT's London Bureau. It illustrates how very "logical" the downfall of the Shah appears now, though a few months back (as one among these spots would have seen) "How could the Shah, a monarch who commanded more tanks than the British Army, move helplessly out of power?" Very obviously the bourgeois journalists still have to learn bits of the power of the masses and the power of the idea of freedom of those "2 percent" of Marxists. We are also the translation that appeared in Socialist Review (March 1979).

contrary to Hitler⁸, he succeeded in so fooling the Left with his "anti-imperialism" that many hailed him as a "revolutionary." To this day, Peronism has so brainwashed the trade union movement that it followed him to the end.

Or look at the Trotskyists this very moment in Iran who, while correctly fighting U.S. imperialism, are so blinded by their position that Russia is still a "workers' state" rather than the other nuclear-armed power reaching for single world domination, that they only lay the ground for "The Vanguard Party"—Tudeh—who are even louder in their declamation against U.S. imperialism, as if it weren't Stalin's Russia that had occupied Iran at the end of World War II as U.S. imperialism and Great Britain helped keep Iran in tow during World War II.

Or look at how Khomeini is using the slogan of anti-imperialism to usher in his bourgeois Islamic republic, to keep Kurdistan within Iran rather than granting the Kurds, and the many other minorities hungering for self-determination, their freedom.

The first thing Khomeini declared on February 19, when the Kurds took up arms to fight for the autonomy they had been promised when they participated in the revolution against the Shah, was: "I will not tolerate this uncultured behavior. I shall regard this as an uprising against the Islamic revolution." Now that he has anointed himself as the "revolutionary" and all those who died for freedom and now live for it as "counter-revolutionaries," he had his words given an old military voice. The Shah's General Gharibayeh, now speaking as the Ayatollah's General, tried yelling above the din of the Kurdish arms: "The military will never allow any part of the country to secede." But the Kurds continued the struggle, claiming, however, that it was not secession but only autonomy they were demanding. For the time being there is a truce.

As for the Iranian masses, they surely have no need of statistics⁹ to attest to their miserable conditions of labor and life. It is the urban poor, 70 percent of whose miserable wages — where they have them — go for rent, who were after all the ones to explode in mass protest in Tabriz. What I am pointing to is that the Iranian Revolution started before the days of insurrection. The poor and the workers were also the very ones who were pivotal when the Army, too, folded and many rank and file soldiers joined the masses and gave them arms, while Bazargan and Khomeini had the assurance of some Generals that they indeed would change sides if they had assurance they would once again command! The Revolution started long before the Ayatollah Khomeini emerged to lead and mislead.

Unfortunately, all those powerful mass mobilizations, and deaths of thousands, which culminated in ending the Shah's and SAVAK's (CIA-trained in torture) despotism and terrorism and exploitation, are the merest beginnings of anything new, that is to say, worker-controlled. Unfortunately, Khomeini still remains very nearly unchallenged, that is seriously unchallenged, as if his intransigence in demanding "Death to the Shah," which had acted as a unifying force when the weak National Front was still bargaining with the Shah, was, in fact, what had begun and deepened the revolution. And, unfortunately, the Left, too, had unfurled no new

banner of freedom, and some are willing to settle for much, much less, being part of State Administration, that is, part of the new ruling bureaucracy while shouting "anti-imperialism."

Of course U.S. imperialism is the most gigantic, militaristic, nuclear-armed Titan in the world. Of course we, as American revolutionaries, must work to see that it never reestablishes itself in Iran or anywhere else. And, of course, we must point to the fact that the rush to the present Middle East treaty was induced precisely by the fear of the consequences of the Iranian Revolution.¹⁰ Nevertheless, we must not permit the indigenous Iranian counter-revolution to hide under the slogan of anti-imperialism, as some in the Left are trying to do by branding not only U.S. imperialism but Kate Millet and, indeed, the whole women's revolutionary movement as if they are "agents of imperialism."¹¹ Nothing could assure the victory of the counter-revolution more than that kind of "anti-imperialism."

Let us, instead, turn to the genuine indigenous roots of a most unique revolution, the very one that is now being so bandied about as if the only point involved in it, great though that was for that year, was the Constitution of 1906. The Revolution lasted from 1906 to 1911. We turn to this period not only for nationalism but internationalism, and not only for the past but the present.

III. Two Iranian Revolutions, 1906-11, and Today's

One look at the 1906 Revolution¹² will reveal its two greatest features that today's Islamic celebrants keep quiet about. One is its inspiration in the Russian Revolution of 1905. Indeed, it was at the height, November-December 1905, that the first general strike broke out in Teheran. While today Iran means oil, in 1895 it was Baku, Russia, that meant oil, and because thousands of Iranian oil workers were in Russia and were inspired by the Russian workers fighting Tsarism, they learned also about a very new form of organization — Soviets. This, then, was what became the form of spontaneous organizations in Iran as well.

The uniqueness in Iran was that what had started out, indigenously enough, as a secret organization, became Anjuman, a very nearly dual government — local units organized independently of the Shah and the Majlis by popular elections, defending their independence on the ground that there was too much bureaucratic corruption in the government. By 1907, these

⁸ Some in the Arab world were so desperate about ever ridding themselves of Western imperialism that they couldn't trust even Hitler's handaments. See U.S. and Russia Enter the Middle-East Cocktail by Raya Dunayevskaya (New Left Review, Detroit), Lucien Rey, in "Persia in Perspective" (New Left Review, Summer 1961) rightly calls attention to the fact that there is a "counter-revolutionary anti-imperialism."

⁹ The Washington Post-News Service (reprinted in the Detroit News, 3-25-79) ran a quite informative article by Jonathan C. Randall about those conditions of labor and problems of minorities, as well as testifying to the fact that inflation ran at a 50 percent clip, while the unemployed numbered 3.5 million.

¹⁰ See the editorial "Egypt-Israel: U.S. Imperialism's Middle-East Outpost" (News & Letters, April 1979).

¹¹ Beside the *La Monda* article cited above, which reported the wonders of the Fedayeen against Kate Millet, the Women's Liberationists demonstrating in Detroit in solidarity with the Iranian women had their own experience of being heckled by Iranian students, mostly Agassis, chanting their slogans against U.S. imperialism with "Long Live Khomeini." The following week, they held a press conference in which, once again, they slandered Kate Millet and had the gall to claim that, though the Iranian women had invited her, she did not represent the Iranian women. Proof? No one stopped her expulsion. Did they ever try to stop a state power and its gannet? See the Detroit Free Press (3-21-79).

¹² The most relevant book is *The First Russian Revolution: Its Impact on Asia* by Ivan Spector (NY: Praeger-Pull, 1962), far from being, as the other books listed, out of context of the Russian Revolution, it is directly related to it, and though the author is a bourgeois academic, he is objective. The book that is on my personal account is *The Strangling of Persia (A Persian Narrative)* by W. Mirjan Shuster (NY: Greenwood Press, 1968, copyright 1912). Two other works on this period are *The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909* by Edward S. Browne (London: Cambridge University Press, 1910) and *The Shuster Mission and the Persian Constitutional Revolution* by Robert A. McDermott (Montreal: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1974). The most current books from the Left in English cannot compare with either done reports or actual revolution. Still they should be consulted for background. See the following works by Fred Halliday: *Arabia Without Sultans* (London, 1974) and *Iran: Dictatorship and Development* (London, 1979).

anjumeni were by no means limited to Teheran but functioned also in Tabriz, Enzeli, and not only in the towns, but spread to rural areas. What is ironic is that one—Shuster—who was very far removed from any anjumeni, much less that of women, revealed the historic role of the women by the mere description of what happened: "The Persian women since 1907 had become almost at a bound the most progressive, not to say radical, in the world. That this statement upsets the ideas of centuries makes no differences. It is the fact." (p.191)

Shuster describes how "out from their walled courtyards and harems marched 300 of that weak sex; with the flush of undying determination in their cheeks, they were clad in their plain black robes with the white nets of their veils dropped over their faces. Many held pistols under their skirts or in the folds of their sleeves." (p.198)

Shuster concludes: "During the five years following the successful but bloodless revolution in 1906 against the oppressions and cruelty of the Shah, a feverish and at times fierce light shone in the veiled eyes of Persia's women, and in their struggles for liberty and its modern expressions, they broke through some of the most sacred customs which for centuries past had bound their sex in the land of Iran." (p.192)

It is true—and this uniqueness exists unto today and must under no circumstances be disregarded in coping with the ulemas, mullahs and ayatollahs—that the religious leaders sided with the revolution, or at least its first stages. As against Russia where, though Father Gapon had triggered the opening of the Revolution when his march to the Tsar's Palace was transformed into Bloody Sunday in January, 1905, by the Cossacks firing into the march, the Greek Orthodox Church sided with the Tsar, the religious leaders in Iran went with the Iranian masses both in opposing Russian domination and demanding the Shah grant a Constitution and allow them to establish a Majli (Parliament).

But even here we must see the negative features. For the first chapter, the one so celebrated now, the December 1906 Constitution, limited the Shah's power and produced a Majli. There then followed many spontaneous organizations that worked independently of it. Once the Majli convened, the religious leaders began moving away from any class struggle. By October 1907, the Amendments the Majli passed restored many powers to the Shah, especially the supreme command of the armed forces so that one could hardly call him just a figurehead. In any case, Tsarism, which had been too busy putting down the Russian Revolution to be overly involved in Iran, decided to move against it, and by 1908 the Cossack Regiment bombarded the Majli and put down the revolution. But here still another unique feature emerges. Whereas the Russian Revolution was totally crushed in 1908, in Iran it reemerged, and the Shah was driven from his throne. It took more Cossack brigades and British imperialism as well as the Shah, after three more years, finally to destroy entirely that Revolution.

Now, it is the difference between the December 1906 Constitution and the October 1907 Amendments which point not just to the duality in the Shiite leadership in various periods within an ongoing revolution. It points as well to today: the March 30 plebiscite staring us in the face. Khomeini-Bazargan must not succeed just because they will have won so fake an "election." Yet we cannot entertain any illusions. It will be much, much harder for revolutionaries to function. The imminent counter-revolution is being institutionalized.

For that very reason we must stop another moment at the 1905-06 Russian Revolution, this time not either as it actually occurred or how it inspired the

Iranian Revolution, but as it was discussed at the 1907 London Congress of the Russian Marxists—Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, Trotsky who was in neither tendency then, and Rosa Luxemburg-Les Jogiches, that is, the Polish Marxists who had in that Revolution joined the Russian party. This cannot be discussed here in any detail; that I will do elsewhere.¹³ Here it is sufficient to single out from Rosa Luxemburg's speech what is relevant for today. I am not referring to her famous theory of the General Strike, which is certainly applicable, and indeed we just saw it in Iran developing into the outright insurrection.

No, what we have to hold in mind for further development is her attack on the Mensheviks who, on the ground that Russia was a technologically backward land, wanted to confine the Revolution in the context of the very start of the 1848 Germany Revolution, rather than at the end of that revolution when Marx, in his 1850 Address to the Communist League, called for the permanent revolution. Rosa insisted, instead, that not only was it right for the ground of the Russian Revolution to be the end, not the beginning of 1848, as Marx analyzed, but, above all, we had to start with what was new in the 1905 Revolution:

The Russian Revolution was not so much the last act in the series of bourgeois revolutions of the Nineteenth Century as the forerunner of a new series of future proletarian revolutions, in which the conscious proletariat and its vanguard, Social Democracy, are destined historically to play the leading role.¹⁴

IV. Where To Now?

Each revolution discloses something new and unique and challenging. The new in the Iranian Revolution reveals both new strength and new weakness. Surely the sustained mass mobilizations in so despotic land, armed to the teeth and primed by Nixon since 1972 to take over the U.S. policeman's beat for the whole Middle East, was nothing short of a miracle, especially when you consider that the Shah extended that Great Illusion to believe he would be pivotal to the final confrontation between the two nuclear Titans: the U.S. and Russia. Moreover, they were so spontaneous that even the Left that always likes to take credit for vanguardism had to admit that not only were they not organized by any party, but they seemed to be organized by "nobody".

Yet it would be wrong to think either that it was only spontaneity that was at work, or that "nobody" organized it. Were it so, Khomeini, for whom one million poured out to welcome back, could not proceed so brazenly and so rapidly to try to saddle the Revolution with what he calls "Islamic Republic" and "Islamic moral code," which we already saw at work not only against the women but against the life style of a whole new generation of revolutionary youth who are the very heart of this revolution.

Nor should we entertain any illusion about the "superiority" of the secular middle-class intellectuals who think that because they see Khomeini as "symbol, not philosopher of revolution", that some "greater intellectual" than he will win in the end. There is but one grain of truth in that pretention, and it concerns not intellectuals, but theory. There is no doubt that the great weakness of the movement now, and not only in Iran, is the lack of theory, a theory stemming from a philosophy of total liberation such as was and is Marx's Humanism, his whole new content of thought from the

¹³ I will develop this in my book-in-progress, *Rosa Luxemburg, Today's Women's Liberation Movement, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, which will include the translation of the speeches by Rosa Luxemburg from the Congress.

¹⁴ Minutes of the Fifth Kropotkin Congress which includes the speech are unavailable in English.

moment he broke from bourgeois society in 1843 until his death, 1883, that is to say, from his Humanist Essays through Capital and the Paris Commune to his Ethnological Notebooks.

It took nothing short of the First World War and the collapse of the established Marxist (Second) International before Lenin recognized that, without philosophy, without the dialectics of liberation in thought as well as in fact, a Marxism reduced to economics was inadequate. In any case, what is most relevant for today, and not only for Iran, is to do away with elitism and such quick slogans as the need for an "April Thesis" to "rearm the party," as if that meant Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution with its built-in underestimation of the revolutionary role of the peasantry.¹⁵

Trotsky's illusion that the April Thesis meant Lenin's "acceptance" of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution notwithstanding, the real relevance of an "April Thesis" for the transition period now in Iran is not the forced identity with that theory that Trotsky built up. Rather, the plain facts of how it came to be is what we hope will help the Iranian comrades work out on the basis of the indigenous and the new, the revolutionary national and international forces of revolution, their path to social revolution, their move from "February" not only to April but to "October."

It was the shock of the simultaneity of the outbreak of World War I and the collapse of the Second International that compelled Lenin to return to Marx's origins in the Hegelian dialectic and see that, without it, Marxism was reduced to vulgar materialism. He refused to stop with mere exposure of the betrayal. Rather, with Capital in hand as well as the political thesis of the need to "Turn the Imperialist War into Civil War," Lenin delved into Hegel's Science of Logic. Of all the revolutionary Marxists—Luxemburg, Trotsky, and many, many others—Lenin alone decided that first of all he must reorganize his own method of thinking and doing.

In a word, before the April Thesis was and could have been written, there came, first, Lenin's Philosophic Notebooks (precisely, his Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic). Then he worked out his theory of Imperialism¹⁶—his confrontation with the new state of econ-

omy—monopoly capitalism on the way to state-monopoly-capitalism, not outside of its relationship to the proletariat but as related to the transformation into opposite of a section of the proletariat that did gain from capitalism's extension into imperialism. Thirdly, and above all, came a real live revolution—the Irish Easter Rebellion, 1916—which gave a new dimension to the "National Question" as self-determination, as "the bacillus" of proletarian revolution.

Finally the determinant emerges for that proletarian revolution—State and Revolution (originally called "Marxism and the State")—and only after that could Lenin "rearm" the Party. Far from that producing any sort of debate about dictatorship of the proletariat, or dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, what resulted—and where we should begin—is "All Power to the Soviets," that is to say, all power in the hands of the masses, their forms of organization, their control of production and the state, their smashing of the bourgeois state, and by working out a new relationship of theory to practice, and the movement from practice to theory, the establishment of new human relations. We have, after all, 62 additional years of experience, have seen Russia and China also become transformed into their opposite, with both vying for U.S. imperialism's alliance! Surely we cannot behave as if nothing had happened in all those decades of maturation, aborted revolutions as well as revolutions transformed into opposite.

There is no way to extend and deepen the revolution if Bazargan is allowed to reduce to a consultative role the function of the committees organized by the workers to run the plants and offices. The fact that the Prime Minister feels impelled to take to the air waves to declaim against what he calls "the dangerous logic of soviets" further exposes his capitalistic fear of the elemental passion for freedom released by the ongoing revolution. Ayatollah Khomeini's stopping the revolutionary tribunals against the Shah's most powerful and vicious henchmen in the SAVAK and in the government has focused on just how rapidly he is turning the clock back, and by no means only at the expense of the women's freedom. Those acts of retrogression are not only dangerous logic. They are acts of outright counter-revolution. Let us extend our solidarity to the embattled revolutionaries—the new generation of revolutionary students as well as workers; Women's Liberationists as well as national minorities fighting for self-determination. Let us extend the activities here to stop the interfering hand of U.S. imperialism hungering for oil and the strategic location for its nuclear global aim.

The struggle continues.

Raya Duvayevskaya
Detroit, Michigan
March 25, 1979

15 That Trotsky's own writings are more telling than any Stalinist slobber about "underestimation of the peasantry" can be seen in "Leon Trotsky as Theoretician", Ch. 4 (pp.128-150) in my Philosophy and Revolution (Dell, 1972).

16 More relevant than the book Imperialism itself are the hefty Notebooks on Imperialism (Collected Works, Vol. 39, Moscow, 1968), pp. 719-28, which show that Lenin referred to both Shuster's and Browne's books (cited above.)

SPECIAL INTRODUCTION FOR IRANIAN EDITION OF MARX'S HUMANIST ESSAYS

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Because there is nothing more exciting than addressing revolutionaries in an ongoing revolution, I feel very honored to have this opportunity, in 1980, to introduce Marx's 1844 Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts, which opened an entirely new continent of thought and revolution that Marx named "a new Humanism." The year that I was first able to publish these Humanist Essays as an Appendix to my work, Marxism and Freedom, a quarter of a century ago, coincided with the Hungarian Revolution against Russian totalitarianism calling itself Communism. Thus, both from below, from an actual proletarian revolution, and from theory, a today-ness was shed upon these Essays that had lain on the dusty shelves of archives and had never been practiced. Because what the contemporary world needs most today is a unity of Marx's philosophy of liberation with an outright revolution, we must re-examine what it is that Marx had meant when, in his greatest theoretical work, Capital, he had declared "human power is its own end"; and what, in his very first historical materialist analyses in 1844, he had meant by saying "communism, as such, is not the goal of human development, the form of human society"--what the goal is, is the creation of totally new, class-less, human relations.

When you turn to the Essays on "Private Property and Communism" and the "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic," you will note three things at once. First and foremost is that the analysis of labor--and that is what distinguishes Marx from all other Socialists and Communists of his day and ours--goes much further than the economic structure of society. His analysis goes to the actual human relations. Secondly, it was not only Hegel who Marx stood on his feet by uniting, instead of separating, thinking from being. It was also the "quite vulgar and unthinking communism that completely negates the personality of man." Thirdly, and above all, is Marx's concept of labor--that it is the creativity of the laborer as the gravedigger of capitalism which uproots all of the old. Whether capitalism achieves the domination of labor through ownership of or through control over the means of production, what Marx focuses on is this: any "domination over the labor of others" proves not only capitalism's exploitative but perverse nature. To further stress the perverse nature, Marx says that the whole of capitalism could be summed up in a single sentence: "Dead labor dominates living labor." This class relationship transforms the living laborer into "an appendage to the machine." Here is how Marx expresses it in the Humanist Essays:

"Private property has made us so stupid and one-sided that...in place of all the physical and spiritual senses there is the sense of possession which is the simple alienation of all these senses... The transcendence of private property is, therefore, the total freeing of all human senses and attributes."

It is here, to make sure that one thereby does not jump to the conclusion that the abolition of private property creates a new society, that Marx rejected the substitution of one form of property--state--for private as any solution to the problems of exploitation. It is why he rejected "vulgar and unthinking communism," focusing instead on two other problems: 1) truly new human relations, the "new Humanism" in place of communism; and 2) the totality of the uprooting of all old relations so that the dual rhythm of social revolution--the abolition of the old and the creation of the new--would run their full course.

In order to fully grasp Marx's Historical Materialism, the foundation for which was laid by these Humanist Essays, let us turn to the history of

Marx's day as well as of today. What we see, first and foremost, is that Marx, in laying the foundation of Historical Materialism, was also creating the theory of proletarian revolution, the dialectic of liberation. Marx's greatest discovery--his concept of labor which revealed the laborer to be not just a force of revolution, but its reason--meant that the proletariat was the "Subject," the Universal Subject that was not just a product of history, but its shaper, negating, i.e. abolishing, the exploitative reality. The exploited proletariat is the transformer of reality. It is here that Marx saw the core of the Hegelian dialectic, naming "the dialectic of negativity as the moving and creating principle."

In actuality, continued Marx, there lies hidden in Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind "the movement of history." The mystical veil Hegel through over it must be removed, but far from turning his back on philosophy, Marx transformed Hegel's revolution in philosophy into a philosophy of revolution. Which is why Marx held that "Humanism distinguishes itself both from Idealism and Materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both... (and) capable of grasping the act of world history."

"Grasping the act of world history meant that he had to proclaim "revolution in permanence" when he saw that no sooner had the masses helped the bourgeoisie gain victory over feudalism in the 1848 revolutions than the bourgeoisie turned against them. And when he witnessed the greatest revolution in his time, the 1871 Paris Commune, and saw the masses take destiny into their own hands, Marx declared that non-state to be the "political form at last discovered to work out the economic emancipation of the proletariat." As Marx expressed it:

"We should especially avoid re-establishing society as an abstraction, opposed to the individual. The individual is the social entity."

Marx raised the question of "revolution in permanence" not only for his day but as the way out for all unfinished revolutions. No age can understand that better than our own, plagued both by transformations into opposite after each revolution--such as that which saw the first workers' state that arose from the Russian Revolution turn into the state-capitalist monstrosity that Russia is now; and by the aborting of today's revolutions before ever they come to completion.

The question is: What happens after the first act of revolution? Does conquest of power assure a class-less society or only a new class bureaucracy? Our age, which has witnessed a whole new Third World emerge from the struggle against Western imperialism (U.S. imperialism most of all) in Latin America as in Africa, in the Middle East as in Asia, needs to demand that "grasping the act of world history" means spelling out total freedom.

Here again, Marx can illuminate our task in the manner in which he spelled out how total must be the uprooting of the old and the creation of the new. He turned to the most fundamental of all human relations--that of man to woman. In it we see why Marx opposed both private property and "vulgar communism":

"The infinite degradation in which man exists for himself is expressed in this relation to the woman as the spoils and handmaid of lust. For the secret of the relationship of man to man finds its unambiguous, definitive, open, obvious expression

in the relationship of man to woman, and in this way, the direct, natural relationship between the sexes. The direct, natural, necessary relationship of man to man is the relationship of man to woman.

Clearly, "each of the human relations of the world--seeing, hearing, smell, taste, feeling, thought, perception, experience, wishing activity, loving" must transcend mere equality, a needed first achievement but not yet the needed total reorganization of human relations. Abolition of the old is only the first mediation. "Only by the transcendence of this mediation... does there arise positive Humanism, beginning from itself."

As one follows Marx's view of total freedom, one can see how far beyond technology Marx's philosophy of revolution extended. Long before the atom was split and out of it came, not the greatest productive force, but the most destructive A-bomb, H-bomb and N-bomb, Marx wrote in these Essays: "To have one basis for life and another for science is a priori a lie." With Hiroshima, we saw what a holocaust the lie of separating the reason for being from the reason for scientific development can become. Now, with the eruption of the world-wide anti-nuclear movement, we can see all over again how urgent it is to study and practice Marx's new continent of thought. As the great English poet, William Blake, expressed it, nothing is more binding than "mind-forged manacles." Let us finish with those manacles once and for all.

It is with the striving for such a manifesto of total freedom that I, as Marxist-Humanist, express my solidarity with the Iranian revolutionaries as we all aspire to a new internationalism. The struggle continues.

November, 1980
Detroit, Michigan

Dear Charles Denby: I am writing you to tell you that I will not be publishing the article on the revolution in Iran in the next issue of News & Letters, but I thought I'd like to discuss with you some of the past revolutionary developments there so that today's context can be seen in its totality, that is to say, not only as anti-Shah and anti-imperialism but fully revolutionary. For that, we need to return to November, 1917, because it was the ramifications of the Russian Revolution which spread throughout the world and included Iran. The first thing the early workers' state did was to abrogate the Tsarist imperial treaties, which for Iran meant the end of the old Anglo-Russian division where Iran in the north was Russia's "sphere of influence," and in the southern oil fields it was England's. It is now Iran that stands for oil, but as far back as the turn of the century no less than 200,000 Iranians, many from the province of Gilan, were working in Russia's Caucasian oil fields. The 1905 Russo-Japanese war shook up the whole East and Middle-East, since it was the first time an Asian power won over Tsar. And just as, within Russia, it produced a revolution, so it led to the establishment of the first Marxist group also in Iran. In any case, by 1917, the revolutionary impact on the Iranian masses, again in the province of Gilan, led to a revolutionary upsurge which, by 1920, actually established a Socialist Republic in Gilan. Since it was a coalition of Marxists and nationalists which established the Republic, they no sooner declared for land reform and the liberation of women from the veil than there was a breakup of that coalition. By the time the Republic also tried to liberate Iran, it was bloodily put down. And who do you suppose did that in 1921? It was the father of the present Shah, an army officer named Riza Khan, who soon thereafter crowned himself the Shah. British imperialism permitted his rule to continue up to World

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War II. By then, with U.S. imperialism's connivance, he was forced into exile because "the West" was suspicious of his dealings with the Nazis and wanted to keep the shipping lanes open for military aid to their new ally, Russia. That doesn't mean that they put down the so-called Pahlavi "dynasty". No, they enthroned Riza Khan's son, then only 21. Once again, there was the Anglo-Russian occupation of Iran and the young Shah learned he was but a vassal of U.S. imperialism. Stalin's Russia, however, was not the Russia of Lenin and Trotsky, and had its own illusions about remaining in Iran, demanding, in fact, some oil concessions. At the end of WWII, U.S. imperialism quickly put an end to that illusion and Stalin also learned that U.S. imperialism was the global power.

We know that U.S. imperialism was likewise not without illusions. It dreamed that its military might was sufficient to keep a new revolutionary upsurge from reappearing. The exact opposite was the case. This time, the National Front, strengthened by proletarian and peasant revolts, succeeded, by 1951, in putting Mossadegh in power. With it came the nationalization of the oil industry. By the time these events had developed sufficiently to put fear in the heart of the Shah and make him flee, U.S. imperialism had produced a global Cold War, which brought Eisenhower to the White House, sent Dulles to the State Department and McCarthyism to the U.S. Within a week of the Shah's fleeing, the CIA engineered a military coup and brought the Shah back to power. The repression started at once: it was not long thereafter that the SAVAK outdid the CIA in brutality.

We know that the 1960s were a revolutionary decade throughout the world. But the bourgeois press in this country so played up the Shah's so-called "White Revolution"--a mild land reform--that what did not stand out glaringly was that this came after the Shah massacred a genuinely popular uprising in Tehran itself in 1963. Along with these developments came the billions from oil, the corruption in the palace and in the military, the gobbling up of those billions in arms, and the Shah's new Grand Illusion that he was truly a global power.

What they all try to forget is that the 1970s are not the 1950s, either in Iran or in the U.S. The CIA does not have any such power as it wielded in 1953 in the Iran coup--which, unfortunately does not mean that they do not have intentions of repeating another counter-revolution in Iran.

The very fact that martial law had to be declared not only in Tehran, but in 11 other cities, including Isfahan, also brings up the question of the religious movement. The Shah tries to cover the unyielding revolt of the masses as if it were nothing more than a "mob" urged on by those who wish to turn the clock back. While there is no doubt that some of the Moslem clergy are reactionaries, it is not true that they are setting the direction, that they comprise what the Shah, with his penchant for contradictions, calls

"Islamic Marxists." What is true is that when a revolution is genuinely popular, it involves the nation as a whole. And in that confrontation some unsavory characters may be present.

It is the mass movement however that decides the direction, raises the flag of liberation, and shouts, "Down with the Shah" as one of the many demands for the end of this tyranny, propped by American imperialism. For that matter, some of the most radical women students have started to wear the veil, not because they are rolling the clock backward, but because under the veil can be hidden arms.

From the imperialist, most reactionary point of view--and that is headed by U.S. imperialism--let us not forget that it is not just the Shah that is being protected against the mass revolt, but the global interests of the imperialists. And it is not at all excluded that, if the Shah and his military regime cannot totally destroy this movement, the Shah would be removed. Everything from a "constitutional monarchy" to a full military regime is possible.

What makes it not just possible, but probable, is the fact that the other global power, Russia, is not ready to initiate WWII over Iran. And the supposedly more revolutionary regime, China, though it considers Russia as Enemy Number One, finds more in common with Russia in the sense that, as state capitalists, they are just like the "private" capitalists in their total opposition to one thing and one thing only--and that is an outright proletarian revolutionary regime.

This is the international tragedy--that the Left, even that part of it which does see that Russia and China have separate national interests that outweigh everything else, does not see that it is not only as nations that they do not come to the aid of the revolutionary movement in Iran. Rather, it is that they are opposed to revolution--genuine mass revolutions in their own countries and elsewhere. It is this which unites them against spontaneous revolt: though each, as nation, considers the other, as nation, "Enemy Number One," both are equally opposed to revolution, nationally and internationally.

At this point, however, both of these nations are simply standing aside. American imperialism will do no such thing. Whereas it cannot achieve what it achieved in the Cold War, it has no intention whatever of letting the revolutionaries win. It cannot be underestimated that it put the present Shah on the throne; it killed the national revolution in 1953; it prefers the Shah, whom it has armed to the teeth, above even Saudi Arabia as "the guarantor of the Gulf and the Indian Oceans."

It is not only that Iran's oil (and that is second only to

Saudi Arabia's), is crucial to Western imperialism, but that Iran is the passageway for all of the Middle East's oil to the U.S., Europe and Japan. Indeed, its geographic location makes it every bit as crucial to the whole global conflict as its oil--for it is the passageway to the Indian Ocean as well as the Red Sea, the crossroads to the Middle East and also to Africa. Not only, therefore, must we solidarize with the Iranian masses against U.S. imperialism, but we must focus on the fact that U.S. imperialism heads the global counter-revolution. The best way to end that role is to intensify the revolutionary activities right here.

Yours,

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