

July, 1983

Draft Perspectives, 1983-1984

# Mass Unrest at Home and Abroad in the Global Year of the Missile

Introduction: The Supreme Artificer, Ronald Reagan

"... the darkness of thought, mated with the  
clearness of expression."  
— Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, p. 707

The rulers of the seven richest, most technologically-advanced countries, meeting in colonial Williamsburg, manifested their Grand Illusion that there is no need to face the burning question of the day:

Can "the year of the missile," which Reagan had the gall to christen "the Peacekeeper," really hide the global, continuing, massive unemployment in each of their countries and absolute poverty in the Third World — a poverty so deep that it matches the days of the Great Depression of the 1930s — while the whole world is now faced with massive unrest?

While Reagan achieved success by transforming what was supposed to have been an "economic summit" into a military unanimity for stationing medium-range missiles in Western Europe, the mass attitude to the President at home was sharply and succinctly expressed by a Native American, Reubin Snake, chairman of the Winnebago Tribal Council in Nebraska who was speaking for the whole National Tribal Chairmen's Association. He described the President as "the great forked-tongue liar and the great deceiver that sits in the White House." So disgusted are the Native Americans with the Reagan retrogression that they demanded all programs relative to Indian affairs be removed from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and placed in the hands of Congress.

None at Williamsburg paid any attention, of course, to those voices. The same deafness was displayed by the rulers to all mass opposition — whether by labor, the Black masses, Women's Liberationists, or youth anti-war activists. They likewise kept mum about the U.S. stranglehold on Latin America; all of them have their own "spheres of influence," even as they collaborate with each other both in the Middle East and in South Africa — and, above all, in lining-up with the

U.S. nuclear Titan against the other pole, the Russian nuclear giant, as was clear from the military unanimity Reagan had achieved there.

It is true that bourgeois pundits weren't as fuddled as the rulers by all the whistling in the dark about "economic recovery" and talk of a "New Economy." But their ideology hardly differs from the false consciousness of the rulers when their independence of view is limited to calling for the creation of a "brainstorming group" to work out a "conceptual breakthrough." Instead of waiting for that impossible bourgeois breakthrough — impossible because any breakthrough requires a mass base, and the masses of proletarians, Blacks, women and youth are totally opposed to both the rulers and their ideologues — what is necessary is to look not at what is called "the New Economy," but at the true economic reality which includes the total mass opposition to the ruling classes.

1. See Albert Bressand's "Mastering the 'World Economy'" in *Foreign Affairs*, Spring, 1983.

## I. The "New Economy": Its Imperialist Tentacles Abroad; Its Labor Exploitation and Racism at Home

President Reagan, that supreme artificer, who had enough economic and nuclear might to christen the global death weapon, the MX missile, the "Peace-keeper," could say nothing that deceitfully dramatic about the economy. Thereupon, the pundits went on inventing new words for that "New Economy." Consider the extreme narrowness of the "conceptual breakthrough" of the one who called for the creation of a "brainstorming group" and proposed eliminating the space between two words so that "worldeconomy" as a single word would lead us to go beyond "national interests" and see that "our present crisis is one of values, world views, and economic philosophy . . . we seem to have lost (the capacity) for rediscovering the fundamental values we have in common . . ."

What exactly can writing "worldeconomy" as one word do when the reality shows the uncontrollable contradiction between capital and labor? The present capitalist onslaught against the unions, both in rolling back the hard-won wages and in worsening the conditions of labor, has not deterred the labor bureaucracy from its class collaborationism in forcing down the workers' throats those unconscionable wage concessions to produce ever-larger profits for the capitalist coffers. Just as the capitalists keep stressing what they call "the new economy" as if that absolves them from unabating unemployment, so the labor bureaucracy is using the question of the new technology to cover up its do-nothingness on the unemployment front.

The truth is that unionization would never have been born if the working class had buckled under to what Marx had called the capitalist "werewolf hunger" for ever higher and higher profits. Instead, they intensified their struggles, never abandoning their vision of a better world. The struggles for higher wages, for unionization, for changing the sweatshop conditions of labor, for shortening the working day, are what Marx called "a century of civil war between capital and labor." Indeed, it was only in that way that a modicum of suc-

cess could be achieved. The fact that the labor leadership has since become nothing more than the bodyguard of capital will not stop the struggles. What does the "new economy" with its robotics offer working people that the old capitalist economy didn't? Does it change the mode of production in any way to decrease the unemployed army? Quite the contrary. Of the 32 million unemployed in the industrialized West many will never be reabsorbed in the labor force. The fact that the U.S. has the highest number of unemployed — 11 million that are admitted to — doesn't mean that the situation is relatively different in any of the other countries, be that Tory England or Socialist France, or, for that matter, the state-capitalist pole, Russia, where officially they have "no unemployment."

One thing state-capitalism calling itself Communism knew from the start was that living labor alone is the source of all surplus value (profit). What both Western capitalism and Russia (and Japan which has been labeled the "West") have pursued in common is the intensification of labor — cutting the labor force, having one worker do two jobs. So great by now are the concessions that have been wrung from labor that in

many shops relief time and wash-up time has been given up; even highly skilled craftsmen, as at Good-year for example, have agreed to work 25% of the time outside their crafts; and since women still earn only 59% of what men are paid, there is the continued drive to hire women at lower rates for many jobs. That "nationalization" brings no different conditions is proved by the fact that Thatcher has managed to cut the labor force in Britain's nationalized steel industry by no less than 52%.

When we look at a single basic industry, like steel, the decrepit "New Economy" shows even more starkly what it really is. Steel runs at only 42% capacity. With 199 steel mills closed in the past eight years and the prospect of 53% fewer jobs, the steel industry is at a point where it might face extinction. Not only are U.S. steel mills outmoded — as is clear from the fact that only 26% of the steel produced in the U.S. is produced by continuous casting, compared to 61% in Europe and 86% in Japan — but, instead of spending money on research and development (they spend only 0.6% of their revenue there), they prefer a "quick fix" for easier profits through mergers. Thus, U.S. Steel purchased Marathon Oil, incurring a debt of \$14 billion, instead of improving its facilities.

Moreover, where the U.S. was formerly the major supplier of manufactured goods to the Third World, its position has deteriorated with the Third World's production of some of its own goods. That includes steel. South Korea under a dictatorship pays steel workers \$3 an hour compared to \$14 in the U.S. Brazil is about to open a new steel mill, built by the Japanese, which will be the most modern plant in the world and turn out three million tons of steel in its first year.

The fundamental truth, however, is that the greatest contributor to those high and immediate profits of U.S. industry is cheap labor, whether from U.S. or Third World workers.

At the same time, capitalism's excrement — the State — has so insatiable an appetite and demand for global dominance that the rulers will not tolerate any diminution of the endless billions — and now trillions — needed to finance the military. Which is why its ideologues are now declaiming: "But can the U.S. allow its basic industries to atrophy and still remain a major industrial and military power? McDonald's now employs more workers than U.S. Steel." John Nevin, chairman of Firestone Tire & Rubber put it this way: "It's utter nonsense that we are going to become a high-tech and a service economy. The high tech companies have more manufacturing offshore than here. The idea that we can have an economy by selling hamburgers to each other is absurd." And Harvard's Robert B. Reich, author of *The Next Frontier*, says: "The choice is not between a smokestack America on the one hand and high-technology, on the other. That is a false choice." The challenge confronting the U.S., we are told, is "how to use high technology in the smoke-stack industries." *Therein is the rub.*

2. See "Time Runs Out for Steel," *Business Week*, June 13, 1983.

3. "The New Economy," *Time*, May 30, 1983.

The retrogression in all areas of human life, beginning with the attack on the conditions of labor, has also seen Reagan storm-troop his way blatantly into the field of education. In the very beginning of his break with bourgeois society Marx knew that you had to fight bureaucracy not only in the State but also in education. In 1843, in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Marx wrote:

"State objectives are transformed into objectives of the department, and department objectives into objectives of the state. The bureaucracy is a circle from which no one can escape. Its hierarchy is a hierarchy of knowledge. . . . The examination . . . is nothing other than the bureaucratic baptism of knowledge, the official recognition of the trans-substantiation of profane knowledge into sacred (in every examination it goes without saying, the examiner knows all.)" (Marx-Engels, *Collected Works*, 3:46,51)

What Reagan is now calling "merit pay" is one more artifice aimed, at one and the same time, to set parents against teachers and to destroy the teachers' unions, part of the Grand Design to destroy all labor opposition for which he laid the ground with his destruction of the air controllers' union, PATCO.

The attack on public education and the cutbacks in federal financial aid for everything from school lunches to libraries, and on everyone from Head Start to the post-graduate level, has been the most devastating to Black students and Black colleges, whose students are going into Black communities across the country to beg for money to keep their schools open. The Joint Center for Political Studies has published a report by Black scholars voicing alarm that the entire "30-year drive to enforce Black civil rights" is now threatened by the Reagan-inspired rebirth of white racism.

The truth is, however, that although the pundits have no trouble using such dehumanized expressions as "Human workers will go the way of the horse," the rulers know that they not only have a need for human cannon fodder, but that human power has also been known throughout all of history for making revolutions — and they are worried about how to keep short of provoking those. They wonder how long that artificer, Reagan, with his skyrocketing military spending and one hundred billion dollars plus deficits, can confine the restless masses at home.

And what about the Third World? Donald Kimmel, Director of the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, has spelled out what absolute poverty means for the 600 million people there: they face the worst food shortages since the 1870s when no less than 200 to 300 thousand men, women and children starved to death. The 18 African countries threatened with the worst

famine in a decade are Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde Islands, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

It is clear that the genocidal nature of imperialism has not changed ever since it first appeared at the end of the 19th century. It was because of the barbarism of German Imperialism and because the leadership of the German Social-Democracy showed such opportunism on the question — and such insensitivity to what was happening to the African peoples under the whip of imperialism — that Rosa Luxemburg issued an outcry that can be heard to this day:

"The poor victims on the rubber plantations in Putumayo, the Negroes in Africa with whose bodies the Europeans play a game of catch, are just as near to me (as the suffering of the Jews.) Do you remember the words written on the work of the Great General Staff about Trotha's campaign in the Kalahari desert? 'And the death-rattles, the mad cries of those dying of thirst, faded away into the sublime silence of eternity.' Oh, this 'sublime silence of eternity' in which so many screams have faded away unheard. It rings within me so strongly that I have no special corner of my heart reserved for the ghetto: I am at home wherever in the world there are clouds, birds and human tears. . . ."

Today it is U.S. imperialism's tentacles in Latin America that are inciting the Salvador military clique to extend its genocidal war against its own people into "regional" wars by engineering attacks from Honduran soil by Nicaraguan counter-revolutionaries, all duly trained and supported by an American military that has acquired its genocidal expertise in the unholy Vietnam War.

Political crises abound everywhere — and never for a moment does Reagan forget that the whole aim is the ultimate confrontation with the other nuclear Titan, Russia, under the fantastic illusion of winning a nuclear war and thus making this the "American century."

4. This letter from Luxemburg to Mathilde Wurm, dated Feb. 16, 1917, was written from prison, where Luxemburg was confined because of her anti-war activities. It can be found on p. 63 of Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*.



## II. Political-Military Crises Abound: in Latin America, in the Middle East — and the Ultimate Global Nuclear Threat

Ronald Reagan has this year begun an intense campaign to embroil all of Central America in a militaristic counter-revolution. Not content with the attempt at wholesale destruction of the people of El Salvador, where some 35,000 civilians have been murdered in the past three and a half years under U.S.-sponsored terror, the Administration has stepped up its support for counter-revolutionaries across the entire isthmus.<sup>5</sup>

In Nicaragua, it is sponsoring those counter-revolutionaries who have invaded from the border area of Honduras and Costa Rica. Some 8,000 are estimated to be in the field now. Their arms and other military equipment — indeed, their very existence as a counter-revolutionary force (labeled the "contras") — is dependent upon U.S. imperialism. Their numbers have escalated sharply in the last few months as the U.S. government has made its decision to ignite all of Central America in an imbroglio, hoping in that way to crush the indigenous revolutionary movement that overthrew the neo-fascist military dictator Somoza.

In Honduras, the U.S. is in the process of transforming the countryside into a military fiefdom. The number of American military advisors in the country is in the process of being tripled to almost 200 — more than three times the number of military advisors in El Salvador. A new military base is being set up for training both Salvadoran and Honduran soldiers. The Honduran military dictatorship, anxious to please, is asking in turn for hundreds of millions more in military aid and requesting the establishment of more military bases. Not only do they provide sanctuary for the Nicaraguan "contras", but they are now providing mortar fire for their invasion of Nicaraguan territory. Only self-discipline on the part of Nicaragua has stopped a full-border war between Honduras and Nicaragua.

In Panama, the U.S. is using its Howard AFB as a weapons depot for the new invasion.  
5. See especially Robert E. White's "Perilous Latin Policy", *New York Times*, May 2, 1983.

weapons shipments to El Salvador and Honduras as well as for night-time reconnaissance flights with special planes for El Salvador; while in Guatemala, the U.S. special Ambassador Stone used his one-day visit to sing the praises of that iron-heeled regime that the Reagan Administration is now preparing to re-arm overtly.

The only thing missing from this cabal is the actual entry of U.S. military troops. What, however, constrains these nuclear-armed madmen, dreaming of an "American century," is not only the sharp hostility of the American people to any invasion of El Salvador by the U.S. military, but the memory of their total failure in Vietnam.

We cannot allow ourselves to be fooled that the centerpiece of the Reagan Administration's designs in El Salvador is limited to that country — and in this Secretary of State Shultz is proving more adept though less noisy than his predecessor, Alexander Haig. It is true that any victory by El Salvador's freedom fighters would both strengthen the Nicaraguan revolution and open a new page of freedom for all of Latin America. It is not true that domination over El Salvador or even Nicaragua satisfies all the ambitions of U.S. imperialism.

The truth is that ever since the Cuban Revolution succeeded — spontaneously and all on its own — to throw out Batista and deliver a sharp blow to U.S. imperialism, it is the Cuban Revolution that has been in the sights of the U.S. military. First, it was the Kennedy Administration which thought a few counter-revolutionaries, armed by the U.S., could overthrow that legitimate regime. The Bay of Pigs put an end to the illusion. Reagan now thinks that if he can start a counter-revolution at a weaker point, like El Salvador, and then blame Nicaragua for sending it arms, while he sends armed troops, somehow all will change. What utter nonsense.

The real truth is that the century-old struggle in Latin

America against U.S. imperialism is now revealing itself in such spontaneous, massive forms that it is opening doors to deep social revolution and attracting support from American revolutionaries who want to stay the hand of U.S. imperialism. That is true not only in Central America but extends to South America, as is proved by the ongoing mass rebellion in Chile, where Nixon-Kissinger's counter-revolution was successful in installing that military dictator Pinochet for a full decade.

This year, however, no less than 100,000 came out in mass protest led by Rodolfo Seguel, the head of the copper workers' union who is the spokesman for the Labor Command. He was immediately arrested — which only produced another day of demonstrations, this time including students, housewives and political parties long underground. Two deaths and hundreds arrested brought on a third day of protests. Nor have the protestors been scared off by Pinochet's labeling them "Communists." Indeed, the students at the University of Chile answered by burning an effigy of General Pinochet.

There are new struggles also in Argentina, where the movement from below has forced the military to call for civilian elections this October. The outcry there against the military's attempt to whitewash its role in the disappearance of over 6,000 people through right-wing death squads in the 1970s signals an ever-growing revolutionary opposition. In Brazil, the so-called "controlled return to democracy" has been challenged especially by labor, which wants less control and more democracy. And in the Andes, the Bolivian workers and peasants who forced a military retreat and a reinstatement of civilian rule have not yet had their last say on the direction they wish this social transformation to take. The Bolivian Workers Federation has challenged the popular front government of Hernan Siles Zuazo with strikes and sit-ins. They have been joined by peasant unions and students.

There are two histories alive in Latin America, that of the oppression and that of the revolt. The oppression is double-edged. There is the oppression of the native rulers, as in Peru where martial law has just been declared all over again; and there is the oppression that is intimately tied to the U.S. Even so solid a bourgeois ideologue as the former Undersecretary of State in the Kennedy Administration, George W. Ball, who surely should know the details of that unholy, savage Vietnam War, calls the Reagan-type of "Latin regionalism" the same as the doctrine Brezhnev used for his counter-revolutionary march into Czechoslovakia to put down that revolution.<sup>6</sup>

But it is the history of revolt that we, as American revolutionaries, need to watch, learn from, and assist. This is what we in News and Letters Committees have been doing very concretely, in a multitude of conferences and support rallies, in our newspaper and in our pamphlets — especially those we have issued bilingually, like *Latin America's Revolutions, In Reality, In Thought*, and our most recent *Guatemalan Revolutionaries Speak*.

6. See "Brezhnev by the U.S." by George W. Ball, *New York Times*, June 14, 1983, which traces U.S. intervention in Latin America from 1927 when Calvin Coolidge sent the Marines into Nicaragua and then imposed the Somoza dictatorship on it, through 1954 when Dwight D. Eisenhower did the same in Guatemala, 1961 when John F. Kennedy launched the Bay of Pigs, and 1973 when Nixon-Kissinger engineered the coup in Chile, to the Reagan-Haig-Shultz counter-revolutionary maneuvers today.

The emphasis on Latin America in our Perspectives this year is because that is where U.S. imperialism, at this moment, has concentrated its military might — and it is the task of American revolutionaries to do all we can to fight against that drive. Moreover, the U.S. concentration there is not only because it considers Latin America its "sphere of influence," but because it is afraid that that is where Russia is looking for an opening.

The exact opposite attitude to what the rulers consider their "spheres of influence" is the attitude of the workers. Moreover, the mass opposition to "spheres of influence" is concrete — and that holds true whether we talk of Latin America, or the Middle East, or East Europe. Take the great outpourings in Poland at this very moment. That massive outpouring is not only to hear the Pope, much less to accept the Pope's interpretation of the origin of Solidarnosc — which, far from having been started by the Catholic Church, had its true origins in the genuinely new organization of workers and intellectuals known as KOR. Those demonstrations are to reaffirm their continuous struggle for freedom.

There is no ground for the euphoria of the Catholic Church, which is calling these outpourings "spiritual"; nor is there any reason for the Communist totalitarians to think that by allowing the Pope to visit Poland they would accomplish any significant lifting of the sanctions that have been imposed on Poland by the West. Above all, what all of them — the Pope, the Communist Party, and the Western rulers — agree on at this moment is that nothing will be said or done about the trials the Communist rulers are planning against the revolutionary dissidents, Kuron, Modzelewski, and other KOR founders.

Because what both Russia and the U.S. are continuously preparing for is the ultimate confrontation between the two super-powers, they must both worry about the revolts at home and jockey for positions throughout the world. Thus U.S. imperialism is all over again whitewashing Israel's genocidal role in Lebanon and sending it new arms. Far from that war against Lebanon ever having ended, the so-called peace which U.S. imperialism engineered merely transformed open warfare into a war of attrition, which by now has produced new warlike stances both in Syria and among the Palestinians, directly in the PLO itself.

There is sure to be another Arab-Israeli War in the offing.

Above all we cannot exclude the possibility of the ultimate — a nuclear holocaust between the two Behemoths, Russia and the U.S. — which the Reagan Administration is doing all it can to so exacerbate as to put a question mark over the very survival of civilization as we have known it. Faced with such imperialisms — whether of the private capitalist or the state-capitalist nations — it becomes imperative to measure our activities and tasks for the coming year — and, indeed, of our whole 30-year existence — against the objective movement from practice and against the methodology Marx disclosed as he constantly discovered new paths to revolution.

### III. Marx's Final Writings Let Us Hear Marx Thinking

In this year, 1983, the Marx centenary has given our generation the opportunity to hear Marx thinking. Now that we finally have Marx's writings, including the heretofore unpublished *Ethnological Notebooks*, we can discern therein a trail to the 1980s. The writings of Marx's last decade open new paths to revolution by letting us hear Marx thinking as he studied pre-capitalist human cultures — whether that be the Iroquois women or the Australian aborigine; whether it be the peasant communes in "the Asiatic mode of production", or discovering possible new relations between the "East" and the "West." We see, to use an expression of Marx's, how philosophy becomes a "material force." In a word, Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" has such relevance for our age that, in hearing Marx think dialectically, we learn the methodology needed to work out his philosophy for our age.

Take Marx's new attitude in that last decade to the highpoint of his greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, "The Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" — which post-Marx Marxists have interpreted as meaning that revolution will come first in the most technologically advanced West and that "therefore" Russia needed first to develop into full capitalism. Yet when Mihailovsky, a Russian Populist, claimed, while Marx was still alive, that these determinist views were what was expounded in *Capital*, Marx hit back with the accusation that Mihailovsky was transforming into a supra-historical Universal what, to Marx, had been a description of the path of development of the West alone. We can literally hear Marx thinking, as he not only objects to Mihailovsky's misinterpretation, but embarks on disclosing other paths to revolution.

In the year before his death, Marx had not left his new vision of other paths of development only in an unmailed "letter to the editor" but articulated it as a prediction of revolution in Russia ahead of the West, in nothing less than the preface to a Russian edition of the historic and popular *Communist Manifesto*. That this prediction was as undigested by post-Marx Marxists as his *Ethnological Notebooks* (his marginal notes to the thousands of pages of then-newly published bourgeois empiric anthropological studies), reveals exactly the state of ossification Marxism had undergone in their hands. They had no belief in revolutionary, human, historic leaps, and were therefore unable to discern, in Marx's Promethean vision of human development, a trail to their own age. Having failed to grapple with Marx's dialectical methodology as the dialectics of "revolution in permanence" which led him to experience new moments of human development, post-Marx Marxists treated those historic leaps by Marx as if they were rhetoric, or only some utopian views of the young Marx reappearing in Marx's

7. Marx's letter to the Russian journal, *Fatherland Notes*, which had published Mihailovsky's critique, was written Nov. 1877 but not published in Russia until after Marx's death, in 1886.

old age. Ryazanov, when he discovered the *Notebooks*, even dared to call them "inexcusable pedantry."

Works on pre-capitalist society, like Morgan's *Ancient Society*, excited Marx (though not as uncritically as Morgan's work later enamored Engels) to further develop what he had earlier called "the Asiatic mode of production" and had first developed in the *Grundrisse* as one of the four forms of human development. In the *Ethnological Notebooks* he, at the same time, singled out a new feminist dimension when he drew attention to the fact that the Iroquois women, and the Irish women before English conquest, both had greater freedom than women under capitalism. Clearly, what he was developing was a multilinear, dialectical view of human development beginning with the gens.

Now that we have the complete Marx oeuvre: — complete, that is, in that we now have both the previously published and the heretofore unpublished works — it is the maturity of our age which can aid us in the hard labor of working out Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" and which demands a different attitude to Marx's unpublished documents as contrasted to post-Marx Marxists of another period.

Thus with eyes of 1983 we can see that, when Marx's *Humanist Essays* first became known in the 1920s — or even as they reappeared in the 1950s on the actual historic stage of East European revolt — the attitude seemed to be a matter of contrasting the young to the mature Marx, as if there were two different Marxs, instead of one Marx who was constantly developing his Promethean vision as measured against the objective and subjective situation of his age. And when we take a second look at the discussions around the *Grundrisse* when that became available in the late 1950s, we see that the question of the "Asiatic mode of production" was then reduced to a question of feudalism, or at best a recording of past history, rather than grasping it as an expression of Marx's new appreciation for all pre-capitalist societies. Inherent in them were the new paths to revolution, which Marx made crystal clear in his *Ethnological Notebooks* and the correspondence with revolutionaries and scholars around that question in his last years.

If we take a second look at another new moment of Marx's last decade, this time one in which Engels had participated — the 1875 *Critique of the Gotha Programme* — we not only see that it took Engels 15 years before he could get the German Social-Democracy to publish it, but must ask ourselves why, even then, did the very point in question, the relationship of philo-

8. See Chapter 12 of Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, "The Last Writings of Marx Point a Trail to the 1980s", especially Section 2; "The Unknown *Ethnological Notebooks*, the Unread Drafts of the Letter to Zasulich, as Well as the Undigested 1852 Preface to the Russian Edition of the *Communist Manifesto*."

sophy to revolution and to organization still remain in limbo. The German Social-Democracy paid no more attention to it after it was published than before. The reason is that the focus of all post-Marx Marxists, beginning with Engels, even when they took up the philosophic question, always focused on the relationship of dialectics to economics, not to revolution and organization.

Lenin, after the collapse of the Second International, did return to Hegel and reorganized his philosophic past. Turning to the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Lenin then wrote one of his greatest works, *State and Revolution*, developing the dialectics of revolution not as a question just of economics but of the destruction of the state. He developed the dialectics of revolution so concretely that in that work he never once raised the question of "the Party to lead." The organization that emerged from the spontaneous actions of the masses was the Soviets — and Lenin's first slogan in the 1917 Revolution was "All Power to the Soviets." But by not repudiating the concept of vanguard party, Lenin's philosophic ambivalence allowed for contradictory interpretations of what, precisely, was the relationship of party to mass.

When Leon Trotsky joined the Bolsheviks and accepted Lenin's concept of the Party which he had previously attacked, what he accepted was the 1903 concept without any of the qualifications Lenin had introduced in both the 1905 and the 1917 Revolutions.

We alone have related the dialectic not only to actual revolution and to a philosophy of revolution but as ground for the revolutionary organization itself. That, after all, was exactly what was at the center of Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, which had opposed the projected unity of the Marxists and Lassalleans on the basis of a program that was devoid of a philosophy of revolution. That, to Marx, was the theoretic preparation needed for both revolution and the transition, after the conquest of power, to the ultimate goal of ending the division between mental and manual labor and creating totally new human relations.

What permeated our Marx centenary National Tour around the publication of Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, was its challenge to all post-Marx Marxists. The National Tour was the most extensive we have had, not only geographically beyond where we have actual locals, but in its focus on the four forces of revolution as Reason we have singled out — Labor, Black and all minorities, Women's Liberationists, and Youth. Just as there was not a single one of the Black and national liberation audiences we addressed that did not include the question of Women's Liberation in their lecture requests on the tour this year, so there was not a single historic period that failed to have a very great urgency for today, as witness the impact of the 1905 Russian Re-

volution not only on the 1906-11 Iranian Revolution but on the Iranian Revolution of 1979.

Marx's works as a totality have so illuminated the relationship of philosophy as action for future generations of revolutionaries that no Marxist will ever again be able to limit Marx's Humanism to "economics."

Thus, lectures on Marxist-Humanism were sponsored by four different Afro-American Studies departments, a Third World Women's Conference and an Iranian Conference — which revealed how very relevant to the activities of the Third World is the Marx centenary because of their own great passion for a philosophy of revolution and their intense interest in the Second America. Indeed, it is impossible to separate theory from our activities in the Black world, whether here or in South Africa, as is clear from the invitation to Lou Turner, co-author of Frantz Fanon, *Soweto and American Black Thought*, to represent Marxist-Humanism at the Black Consciousness Movement's commemoration of Soweto here in June. (See *Worker's Journal*, p. 3, this issue.)

It is in that same context that the editor of *News & Letters*, Charles Denby, sees the new paragraph on Marx and the Black world, written on the tour, as the focus of our new Introduction to *American Civilization on Trial* we are preparing this year on its 20th anniversary (see Denby's *Worker's Journal*, N&L, June, 1983). We plan to have the new edition of this history of the two-way road — from Africa to the U.S. via the West Indies and back again — off the press for the August 27 March on Washington.

The second pamphlet we plan for this Marx centenary year is one written by anti-nuclear activist Peter Wermuth directly on the relationship of Marx's writings in his last decade to the Third World today. It is both original and has so seriously grappled with the *Ethnological Notebooks* that no way is left to think that Marx's philosophy of "revolution in permanence" is abstract. It is sure to have as much organizational impact as our actual activities in the support committees for the many national liberation movements in which we are active.

The third pamphlet we are undertaking comes out of



the very first public meeting on the National Tour — which took us back to our very beginnings in West Virginia and our participation in the momentous 1949-50 Miners' General Strike. What we had not expected was that this prologue to our birth as Marxist-Humanists would come alive in 1983 not only in thought but through the living participants in that strike, who were present and still identified with Marxist-Humanism, both as we were in 1950 and as we are now developing Marx's Marxism as a totality and a trail to the 1980s.

This remembrance of things past, not only as history, but as methodology to work out for today, carried through in New York, when the Tamiment Library, which already has the microfilm of our Archives — "Marxist-Humanism, from 1941 to Today" — asked for an interview for their Oral History of the Left, precisely on that 1950 event and our participation in it, because it was a missing page from American labor history. By the time the tour was completed on the West Coast, other Marxist-Humanists who had been active in West Virginia discussed their remembrance with the eyes of 1983.

In a word, by no accident whatever, the Marx centenary year has led to the decision to publish a pamphlet by Andy Phillips and other participants on the 1950 Miners' General Strike both as 1950 activity and as 1983 view of it. This is a special need today when rank-and-file labor confronts its so-called labor leadership as the actual bodyguard of capital, forcing down the workers' throats all those unconscionable concessions. Contrast that to the thought and actions of rank-and-file labor when confronted with a labor leader like John L. Lewis, who was a militant — but nevertheless, when confronted by the might of both the state and the judiciary, ordered the miners to return to work. The workers not only answered "No", but revealed the why underlying their "No." What was spelled out was that it was not just a question of wages but the kind of labor demanded by the new technology — Automation, which they called "a man-killer."

As the "New Technology" has moved from Automation to Unimation to robotics, what is demanded now

9. These archives are on deposit at Wayne State University's Walter Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs under their title: "The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection." Microfilm copies of the 7000-page collection are available from WSU.

is not only political as well as economic answers but philosophic answers reaching deep down to the division between mental and manual work characteristic of all class societies, which must be abolished.

It was, after all, that question which transformed the book that was in process during that momentous Miners' General Strike, then called "Marxism and State-Capitalism", into the book that was published in 1958 as *Marxism and Freedom*. It laid the philosophic ground for listening to all those new movements from practice where we heard the new voices and recorded them, in pamphlets ranging from *Workers Battle Automation* to *Maryland Freedom Union*, from *Freedom Riders Speak for Themselves* to *The Free Speech Movement and the Negro Revolution*. The turbulent 1960s showed, at the same time, that too many in the new generation of revolutionaries thought that activity, activity, activity was enough and that theory could be picked up "en route", so that when the pre-revolutionary situation did not mature into a full-blown revolution in 1968, we felt the need to return to the Hegelian dialectic "in and for itself" as ground for the dialectics of liberation for our age.

The task of writing *Philosophy and Revolution* was made easier by the emergence of a whole new Third World whose greatest theorist, Frantz Fanon, arrived at the same philosophic conclusion as we — the need for a new Humanism. Our pamphlet on Frantz Fanon, *Soweto and American Black Thought* can be seen as an extension of *Philosophy and Revolution*. Nor was it any accident that both the chapter on the East European revolts, which took off from the theory and the actuality of state-capitalism, and the chapter on the "new passions and new forces", which included the Sheng Wu-lien, were in part written by the actual revolutionary forces involved.

The publication of Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* completed what we have called the trilogy of revolution which began with *Marxism and Freedom* and continued with *Philosophy and Revolution*. It was with its completion that the expanded Resident-Editorial Board-National Editorial Board meeting on January 1, 1983 decided to transform our national gathering this year into a Constitutional Convention.



#### IV. The Constitutional Convention and our Tasks for 1983-84

Just as the relationship between the objective situation and the subjective response of revolutionaries is the measure set by Marx's entire life and thought, so it is that measure which demands that we answer not only what this year or this new book has achieved in relationship to the objective situation, but that we test ourselves throughout the entire period of our 30-year existence.

The reference we had made in our Constitution to that 1949-50 strike — "Since the 1949-50 miners' strike and the advent of automation, the problem of guiding their own destiny has moved to the point of production itself and posed the basic question: 'What kind of labor should man do? Why should there be a division between mental and manual labor?'" — does not reveal our participation in that historic event.

What 1983 has made clear is not only the significance of our participation but above all the objective relevance of this to today. Whether the question now is that of the "new technology" of robotics (which was then called automation) or whether the question is Reaganomics, Reaganpolitics and Reaganism's warlike stance (which was then spelled out as the Korean War and McCarthyism), it becomes necessary to look at the Constitution in the light of what we have since produced, on the one hand, and, on the other, the enveloping threat of nuclear war. The challenge to post-Marx Marxists that we issued with the publication of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* was not just a philosophic one. By no accident whatever it was issued to revolutionary Marxists.

Upon the publication of *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, we came up with the "slogan": Three Books, not One — by which we meant that the new book, along with *Marxism and Freedom* and *Philosophy and Revolution*, made a trilogy of revolution which in each case related itself to the whole movement from practice to theory which is itself a form of theory. It was for this reason that, far from being deterred by the pervasive McCarthyism of the 1950s and the bourgeois ideologues who had declared the period to be "the end of ideology", we launched *News & Letters*. Those who did not see

that period as a new revolutionary beginning (and that included much of the Left) hardly considered that the time for raising the banner of Marxist-Humanism.

As we put it in the Prologue to our pamphlet on 25 Years of Marxist-Humanism in the U.S., our beginnings focused on: 1) a new stage of production — Automation and the workers battling against it; 2) a new stage of cognition — Marx's Humanist Essays as they were brought onto the historic stage in East Europe (and Poland, in rebellion today, never lets you forget that fight for freedom); and 3) new forms of organization — a committee form of organization rooted in a philosophy of revolution, replacing "party to lead."

Today we continue to work out for our own age the new moments Marx discovered in his last decade. First, as he prepared a new and expanded French edition of *Capital*, Marx projected the concentration and centralization of capital as leading both to monopoly and further colonialism, as well as creation of a world market. Second, as he denied that the "Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation" was a Universal, Marx disclosed new paths to revolution. Third, at the very time that he forwarded to Bracke the French edition of *Capital*, he sent the "Marginal Notes" we know as *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, which reveal his philosophy of revolution as the ground of organization.

No doubt, the philosophy of "revolution in permanence" — i.e. continuous revolution — has been accepted "in general" as the theory of revolution by the greatest of revolutionaries, no matter how different their theories of the Party. Unfortunately, these post-Marx Marxist theoreticians tied it to the concept of the vanguard party. It is not true that Lenin alone did that. He merely elaborated and concretized the concept of Party which the orthodox Marxists, the whole Second International, held to. Rosa Luxemburg — who criticized Lenin on some points and certainly had a greater appreciation of the spontaneity of the masses and the need for the Party to be deeply immersed in that spontaneity — held on to the concept of the unity of the Party because of its vanguard nature, even after the Party betrayed and she called the Second International "a stinking corpse." As for Trotsky who had fought

Lenin so sharply, as to be with the Mensheviks rather than the Bolsheviks until 1917, he ended by out-guarding Lenin's concept of the Party.

It is the lethal contradiction between vanguardist conceptions of the Party and the failure to grapple with Marx's concept of "revolution in permanence" which has led to so many soured revolutions, and which has made us dig deeper into Marx's philosophy of organization as revealed in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, though it remained unprobed. What Rosa Luxemburg, *Women's Liberation* and *Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* has achieved is the disclosing of the integrity of Marx's philosophy of organization in his philosophy of revolution.

This is the ground for the continuation and intensification of all our activities this year. It goes without saying that to carry out all these tasks — publication of the three new pamphlets outlined here; continuation of *News & Letters*; and the expansion of our activities with all the forces of revolution — in the anti-nuke, anti-draft, anti-war movement; the Women's Liberation Movement; support movements for Latin American, East European and African freedom fighters; with the student youth; the Black revolutionaries; and rank-and-file labor fighting Reaganism and their own bureaucracy — we will need a substantial Sustaining Fund, to which we will ask all our friends and supporters to contribute.

As the National Tour this year has shown, it is precisely these writings and activities which have created an interest in News and Letters Committees — that is, an organization rooted in a philosophy of revolution — whether those interested were Women's Liberationists, Black intellectuals and activists, Youth or rank-and-file workers.

It is the philosophy of "revolution in permanence" that is the determinant for theoretic preparation for revolution. What is now needed is Marxist-Humanist organizational growth to help the American revolution be.

— The Resident Editorial Board  
June 23, 1983