

# AN INTERNATIONALIST MARXIST-HUMANIST YOUTH DISCUSSION BULLETIN



SEPTEMBER 23, 1979 — Manhattan is a sea of faces as activists rallied to protest nuclear power

## CONTENTS

- I. Minutes of National Youth Gathering, Aug. 31, 1979 in Detroit
  - 1. Report by Jim Mills.....p. 1
  - 2. Report by Peter Wermuth.p. 5
  - 3. Minutes of Discussion...p. 8
- II. On the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee  
by Gene, LA.....p. 15

Published by the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee,  
Bulletin #1, September 1979. News & Letters Committee

**25¢**

Introductory Note

The following discussion bulletin came out of a national meeting of Marxist-Humanist youth held Aug. 31 1979 in Detroit Michigan, on the eve of the national plenum of News & Letters Committees. At this meeting we took a look at our experiences as thinkers and activists over the past year, as preparation for helping the full revolutionary potential of today's freedom struggles unfold as the activities against this racist, sexist, class ridden society intensify in the months ahead.

As for all our work, a central focus of that discussion was working to articulate new expressions of the desire for total liberation by connecting Marx's philosophy of revolution to the daily development of the freedom struggles--anti-nuke, anti-draft, women's liberation, the struggles of young labor, and Black and Latino liberation.

Working through an ongoing process of infusing revolutionary practice with a philosophy of revolution is not something that can be restricted to one national meeting, much less to ourselves alone. It demands your participation--and we offer this bulletin as a contribution to initiating a dialogue with you. To find out more about us, write us at the addresses below:

DETROIT

News & Letters  
2832 E. Grand Blvd. Rm. 316  
Detroit Mich., 48211  
(313) 873-8969

SAN FRANCISCO

News & Letters  
PO Box 77303, Station E  
San Francisco, CA 94107

NEW YORK

News & Letters  
PO Box 5463, Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10017

LONDON

Rising Free Bookshop (Box NL)  
182 Upper Street  
London, N1, England

CHICAGO

News & Letters  
343 S. Dearborn, Rm 101  
Chicago, IL 60604  
(312) 663-0839

FLINT

News & Letters  
PO Box 3384  
Flint, Mich., 48502

LOS ANGELES

News & Letters  
PO Box 29194  
Los Angeles, CA 90029

## MINUTES OF

THE INTERNATIONALIST MARXIST-HUMANIST YOUTH GATHERING, Aug. 31, 1979

## 1. Report by Jim Mills, Youth Representative to REB

Jim, Detroit----In the past two months, we've talked about and recounted the activities and the re-organization as theoretic preparation for revolution that the News & Letters Youth Committees went through since the last time we met. In the Youth Report to the REB in July (see Pre-plenum Discussion Bulletin 2) I offered a view of the relationship between youth committees and the Marxist-Humanist Draft Perspectives, "The Shift in Global Politics and the Need for a Philosophy of Revolution." as a way to begin meeting the 1980's.

What we want to do today is draw together some of that dialogue, and this meeting itself is one of the steps each one can present that relationship--through the eyes of a local, a study group, an Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee, as participant in the Iranian revolution, to the opposition to the draft and militarized economy here; the movement against ID badges and cops in the schools--and much more.

One new springboard for this dialogue is the first publication of the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee--the Farsi translation of Iran: Unfoldment of, and Contradictions in, Revolution. In getting to this springboard, though, look again at the ground for this pamphlet, which is a product of the re-organization already begun. Contradictions and the second America characterize the other element of what is new--the onslaught of recession and the activities of young labor and Blacks. So there's no better place than Detroit to focus upon.

The last recession is actually something that never went away for much of Detroit, especially the inner city schools from "favored" Cass Tech to "unfavored" Highland Park. But the whole period of that ongoing recession is better typified by what high school youth wrote in News & Letters and in 'High School Blues'. They challenged the bankruptcy of ideas in the administration at the same time that they created a visible current of protest.

The opposition to the ID badges is an ongoing movement today. Moreover, you get an idea of the reality by looking at that militarization inside the schools. That reality is one of unemployment and the assembly line. But this reality is also the consciousness of struggle and youth's opposition to what amounts to being reduced to a thing. The call for re-institution of the Draft exposes that reality since opposition to militarization within the military poses a barrier to the real oil crisis--the Pentagon's insatiable appetite for oil necessitating a reliable standing army. Coupled with the permanent depression of the inner city, what goes by the word "recession" is really seen as a rapid downward plunge for the economy.

-2-

This summer we have met many of the Black high school youth protesting at the mayor's office and the public agencies because of the retraction of CETA funding for summer jobs. Part of the proof of the permanence of economic stagnation is the fact that the biggest human holding program, the military, has inducted youth straight from the ranks of the unemployed for six years.

But for those who were able to choose the auto factory as an option, the future has just ended. The figure for layoffs in auto is one-in-eleven and growing. That growing group already includes the young and minority and women workers for whom getting their jobs back is an impossible dream in a receding economy. But what lies ahead--and what makes our perspective all the more exciting for a study of Marx's Capital amidst global crisis--can be seen in the crisis in production that young autoworkers spearheaded during the good years of the auto contracts which are about to expire.

Maybe some of the experiences I've had in the shop can illustrate those crises in production. First, every new hire discovers he or she is up against a probationary period without union representation, and you're vulnerable to the ways management prod you for production. Your up against 54 hour work weeks.

So when the 1976 contract deadline expired, the younger workers walked out instead of waiting for the word from the union reps. When hundreds came to the union meeting to hear about the new contract, I thought, "here are plenty of people who feel the same way I do."

Young workers took the initiative and shutdown factories by walking out repeatedly the next summer because of overtime and because of one working condition everyone relates to--the heat inside the plant which intensifies every bad condition. Many got fired for going out. When the general foreman collared me on the way out the door in our heat walkout, I refused to go with him to the production office without having a chief steward on hand. While we argued, friends from all around the work area, angry about having to work, surrounded us, and he backed down.

In the fall, several workers refused to go back to work after lunch since nothing had been done about paint fumes from freshly undercoated chasis. Instead of getting respirators, today they got action--the undercoating operation was discontinued until it was changed to end the fumes problem.

When the miners were on strike later on, the intensity of that struggle came through clearly in the auto shops. Chances were that any given conversation was about the strike. Everyone understood perfectly well that working conditions were the central issue, and felt that their own future rested in the outcome. Last year the company had a dress rehearsal for the current crisis when it sped-up the whole plant. My department lost a third of the workers in it. Everyday for a month, I thought we would go out on wildcat. Again, hundreds of workers came to a union meeting to complain. The local union and the company held emergency bargaining sessions, but the truth was that we got stuck with a new agreement accepting the speed-up. We weren't even allowed to vote upon it.

5970

-3-

There were more job actions I heard about this year, like the sitdown in the metal shop because of poor housekeeping, or the one when we sat in the cafeteria until the production manager promised to repair the heater in the plant. I'm sure there are plenty more you don't hear about. Not only do they represent why productivity is off 2.8%, but this is the group who are now joining the army of the unemployed.

The ideas and passion for something entirely new on the part of these youth can represent a revolutionary opposition to the recession and energy economics Carter has elevated from being a "moral equivalent to war" to "a crisis in confidence." Already a segment of the anti-nuclear movement has experienced a war since the Three Mile Island incident--the deaths of a Basque woman activist in Pamplona Spain (there were three days of pitched battles between youth and police after her death) and of a man in Houston Texas, as well as the courtroom fights involving anti-nuclear protestors in many parts of the country.

The Rancho Seco 13 and the Big Rock 14 are two examples of court battles after anti-nuclear occupations. The anti-nuclear coalition in Michigan, however, hasn't integrated that struggle into its other activities yet. It's not just a question of avoiding having the movement get stuck in the courts.

The U.S. government under Nixon often practiced its war at home by diverting the anti-Vietnam war movement into legal fights. But in the trial of the Gainesville 8--8 Vietnam veterans against the war whom the FBI wanted to silence--hundreds of people came from all around the U.S. and ringed the courthouse. The feeling I got there was that the events outside the courtroom made that trial important. But the end of the trial, which was a victory, was not a new beginning.

On the other hand, in one respect that segment of the anti-nuclear movement has come up against a formidable state before the rest of the movement. Another side to the SALT II ratification as a cover for the U.S. and Russia looking for new war partners as they aim for all out war is Carter's Energy Mobilization Board. It will bring the full might of the state to bear on all opposition to nuclear power, environmental destruction, and unsafe energy production for which workers have fought for continuously. It undercores its opposite, the essence of the immediate outpouring after Three Mile Island--that is, the opposition to nuclear madness is rooted in opposition to capitalist production madness.

It seems as though Marx was talking about the diversion by the anti-nuke organizers into theses on the technology of energy production and educating the public--and this still after 120,000 rallied in Washington D.C. May 6, when he said:

"The weak points in abstract materialism of natural science, a materialism that excludes history and its process, are at once evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions of its spokesmen, whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their speciality." (Quoted from *Philosophy and Revolution*, p. 72.)

What's revolutionary about the anti-nuclear movement is not the speciality of the anti-nuke organizers; but it is our speciality.

5971



-4-

Along with what we caught in the outpouring since Three Mile Island, along with the labor dimension within the anti-nuke movement from Karen Silkwood's legacy, to the Navajo Indian uranium miners, to the "sponges" (young unemployed people whom reactor operators use to make brief repairs while absorbing their entire lifetime allowance of radiation)--along with these, the objective and subjective situation of Detroit, that is, the youth revolts and the economic recession here can be the beginning of the intensification for the anti-nuclear and anti-draft struggles.

Something like an autonomous Marxist-Humanist youth committee at Wayne State can itself represent as well as project an actual inter-relationship between the two. And that is the kind of condition we can create for presenting Raya Dunayevskaya on "The Life and Death of Rosa Luxemburg and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution", and expanding a dialogue on the concept of revolution unfettered by anything that would narrow it, through a series of classes afterwards.

When Carter and Lopez-Portillo met to discuss oil and undocumented workers earlier this year, ironically the second Mexico and the second American Chicano and Mexican farmworkers were working out a new relationship within the farmworkers movement after the murder of Contreras in California. It took me back to 1973 when I was involved in the campus farmworker support group. What the murder of two UFW strikers then meant was an intensification of the strike and the boycott. But many student UFW activists in the state dropped away because the UFW's position on deportation of undocumented strike breakers. So hardly anything could be more instructive of the self-development of a proletarian struggle than the determination within the ranks to propel the movement onto another battle stage. What I recalled was a conversation with Cesar Chavez. I had read Worker's Battle Automation and expressed to him my concern that farmworkers would be challenged next by automation in the fields. He probably had the latest news on the mechanical harvesters in California. What concerned me though was the self-process of workers struggling, the movement from practice to theory represented by 30 years of battles against automation.

So I find the fact that we placed 84 copies of Indignant Heart: A Black Workers Journal in the WSU bookstore this year and that Charles Denby has spoken to several classes already, an element that opens the door to a new relationship between WSU student, especially working students, and Marxist-Humanist philosophy. That can in turn be a path for a new form of youth revolt expressed by a creative study of the Marxism of Marx via his Capital, as well as Marxism and Freedom.

I tried to think of where we go from here, but "here" will be different for each of the committees present. For NY, for example, it could be proletarianism by Russell and Marcotte and the Latino dimension; Hostos and La Lucha Latina, and the spontaneous victory celebrations following the fall of Somoza. For LA, it certainly is the new form and new opening that the new pamphlet creates, or the Latino dimension there. As we continue the discussion, do join in. What is new for your locality and future activities that could help form an Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee?

5972

## 2. Report by Peter Wermuth, Youth Co-columnist of News & Letters

Peter, LA---The importance of our meeting here today is to discuss the experiences we have had over the past year, so we can take a look at the coming one by working out the process that can bring out the totality of the desire for freedom youth are expressing worldwide in everything we do and think as youth committees over the next period.

This task is certainly more urgent than at any other time in recent memory, because 1978/9 witnessed the release of new revolutionary subjects and freedom struggles on a scale not seen in a decade. Both Iran and Nicaragua experienced full-blown revolutions, with young people in their vanguard. At home we witnessed the emergence of a totally new movement, anti-draft, as well as the flowering of another, anti-nuke. In these struggles and many others, we have made our presence in order to project a banner of total liberation, whether that be by speaking at anti-nuke rallies, or in publishing a farsi translation of the Political-Philosophic letter on Iran for our work in the Iranian student movement inside the U.S.

What we have also encountered over the past year as the level of activity has increased in several areas is the depth of a duality between what is implicit in the movement, and the actual expressions given to it, which demands our active intervention. For alongside the release of new ideas and passions for liberation amongst the movement participants, we have the struggles' spokespeople and leaders who want to make them as non-descript as possible for the sole sake of roping as many numbers of people into demonstrations as possible. As we have seen again and again in anti-nuclear activities, when the leadership tries to water down the range of issues addressed for the sake of narrowing the vision of struggle, the expression of desire for a total break with capitalism is smothered. When that happens, not only is the self-expression of liberation cut away; so is the effort at working through the process of concretizing that in daily activist, organizational work. Thereby, the human force of total revolution is not confronted, leaving us once again staring into an objective crisis that is total.

So what we want to start working out with today is how are we going to be there when the activities develop so we can bear those passions for liberation, and even more importantly, how are we going to leave them not at spontaneous expression alone, but have them become the ground, essence, and process of all our activity as Youth Committees?

It was thanks to recognition that we have the responsibility of doing this by placing Marx's new continent of thought into living, organizational form for the youth movements that we have been discussing the creation and development of autonomous Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committees this summer. As a way of concretizing a permanent process of Marxist-Humanist intervention, we took up autonomy as the form for connecting the new in Marx's new continent of thought, Marxist-Humanism, with specific subjects of liberation that we meet. And because internationalism is not just a goal we always try to attain to, but was the actual basis of new youth work this year around the Iranian revolution, we discussed our internationalist dimension as the best way to prepare.

for the American revolution-to-come.

In Los Angeles we have made some modest starts in trying to concretize this perspective. We began a study group at Cal State LA on Marxism and Freedom, as the first activity of the youth committee, to lay down the philosophic foundation needed for any further activity. And as our first publication, we chose the farsi translation of the PPL on Iran, in order to connect the newest statement of Marxist-Humanist philosophy to a specific subject of liberation certainly of importance to us, the Iranian student movement inside the U.S. Autonomy in this case becomes a way to communicate our ideas "in the language" of those youth we are meeting. And even more important, it became tied to the perspective of not leaving our work with it to selling, lit tables, or occasional discussions, but that we have an ongoing youth committee where an organizational form is present for its presentation. In the same way, we are looking forward to seeing the contribution by Latino members of the M&F study group extend into relations with LA's large Chicano community; and we certainly have a basis to develop such work with La Lucha Latina, a publication which is in many ways a youth pamphlet as well. Many other potential avenues are also open: like functioning as a group to figure out how to present Marx's Marxism to an anti-nuke rally, through the work of creating a leaflet for it. And the need for a new relationship between working and student youth is something we can offer, with the participation of Gene in the study group as well as the youth committee.

In short, because the youth activities before us will increase in depth and number as the world crisis intensifies, and because the fullest expression of the desire for a total break with capitalism coming from within them cannot be stated unless in strict relation to a philosophy of revolution, called for is a permanent process of Marxist-Humanist intervention that begins, not with small mass-partyism, but with a unity of dialectical cognition with action. We can do this if we are continuously involved in a process of measuring all activist work we do to the new for today in Marx's Marxism--a process that only begins with this meeting.

To get such a process going naturally involves seeing how we can, in our specific localities, relate our philosophy to actual work as committees in the year ahead. If the mark of success on carrying out our perspectives as youth committees involves a continuous series of actions and discussions uniting Marxist-Humanism with the freedom movements, then demanded as well on ourselves as individuals is a permanent process of dialogue, where we are also exchanging new experiences and working through how they can affect our committee form of functioning as well as the actual statements we make in demonstrations, leaflets, etc. Towards that end, I'd like to suggest that Jim take responsibility for coordinating correspondence among the youth this year, to see that this meeting not become a conclusion to our dialogue, but a beginning. Such correspondence, I feel, can insure that our existence as youth committees become ongoing by it helping to have us write a full statement of our views by year's end--the Internationalist Young Marxist-Humanist. Such a pamphlet can be a weapon in the effort to help give direction that the freedom movements take, and it can also help us respond to the urgency of dealing with every new objective development philosophically.



The need to make those kinds of links is evident in everything that we do, and extends from our participation in the Youth Page of News & Letters, to our own contributions to local discussions, to the specific work done in women's liberation, unemployed youth, etc. Indeed, I think the new kind of perspective we have, working out a new form for connecting Marxism to subjects of liberation we meet through autonomous youth committees, can make a big difference for the Youth Page of News & Letters. We have often noted at prior national youth meetings that while we have a lot on activity in the youth page, we are weakest on theory and organization. We usually conclude promising that we'll write more theoretical articles for the page in the coming year, but then somehow never do. But with our new perspective, perhaps that's not inevitable: let me give you one example. In NY this fall, we attended an anti-apartheid conference, and reported on it in the pages of N&L. We then said the vanguardist Left had succeeded in taking over the conference, and we attacked the way the voice of the independent student was not heard. But we did not have the perspective of a permanent, ongoing intervention there which could have made a difference in the way we reported on the conference--we didn't get the floor to force them to allow those "voices of the independent student" to speak, and we limited ourselves to a lit table, rather than trying to set up a workshop, or even a leaflet to invite others to continue further with us. If we did have that fuller intervention, the article would have contained more theory, for it would contain what we had to say. In this sense, the more we function as autonomous committees in the year ahead, the more our own articles will have to include philosophy and organization in addition to the spontaneity.

The process of developing ourselves organizationally as well as philosophically through the Internationalist Young Marxist-Humanist will much depend on the experiences we have over the next few months. It is by taking the perspective of autonomous youth seriously, however, that can assure we do work out the process of uniting theory and practice in a truly Marxist-Humanist type of organizational activity, even if we are not in a local where a functioning committee is an immediate possibility. My thought is that as long as we struggle to understand how the new points of departure in our organization compel us to practice the total opposite of capitalism, through a year-long internal and external dialogue, we will have broken new ground.

-8-

## 3. Discussion

Gene, LA---I noticed that there was a lot of concentration on the campuses today, but I also see a lot of young people on the jobs who are not involved in campus activity. In LA, we have the Latino struggle that is very much part of the job situation, much like Blacks. Where I work, it is mainly Latino workers, though there were Black workers there before who were moved out. Many of the Blacks are from the South, and have been part of the struggle going on there. People at work see the need for a movement that is more than the movement down South that was suppressed, and they are looking for something new.

John, NY---I have been involved in anti-Draft activity in NYC, and you can see it's not just a youth issue per se; there have been people of all ages at the activities. There is an understanding that the move to re-institute the Draft is part of a movement to total oppression. But I don't think the leadership of the anti-draft activities has yet thought out how to truly make it a broader struggle than it now is.

Mike N, Detroit---It is very important that the anti-draft movement on campus reach out to those off-campus; right now there is a certain moralism to anti-draft that I've seen, a tendency to say having the Draft is wrong, but it's o.k. to have a volunteer army. What we have to get across is that a standing army is a reactionary army--it is used by the capitalists as a final police force. It becomes very important to connect this perspective to the anti-draft movement, as it's just not getting dealt with.

Chris, Bay Area---In San Francisco, we don't consider ourselves as a youth committee, yet we are active at SF State, and we have a forum there. We are going to have Charles Denby speak there this fall, and having him is not just a question of Denby, but is part of the question of how to establish an organizational presence there, who to talk to, and what to say to people. What excites me about youth is not youth per se, as I've always felt sort of uncomfortable in that category, but that we are now talking about forming an organizational process, whether that be in anti-nuke, anti-draft, women's liberation. This whole concern is not specifically related to youth alone, but rather a coming together of Marxist-Humanists under a Marxist-Humanist banner. What excites me about this discussion of youth is that it concerns the creation of a form of organization; not that LA has the process that others just follow, but that each have to work that process out for themselves in their own locality.

Jerry, Chicago---I see it as very important that we present the need for a philosophy of revolution, and push for total freedom by trying to relate the Marxism of Marx with the thoughts of people. I hope we can have this continuous dialogue, this method, because this is the way we can be developing with people. This is very important because other groups use divisions in the movements to play off groups of people against each other; in opposition to that, we need the unity of Marxism. From my

5976

-9-

own personal experience, it's very clear that this society has no respect for people, no respect at all for the human being. To see that all you have to do is look at the DC 10 crash, where it's not the people who died, but the money it costs them, which is of concern. The kind of exchange of experiences we are having here today is very important because this is the way we get back to Humanism. For we are seeing that for any one person to be free, all have to be free. I hope over the next year we can continue to bring people together around true Marxist ideas, and that is going to be especially important with the anti-draft activities.

Karen, Bay Area---On the Draft, also keep in mind that they are talking about drafting women; and even if they end up not doing so, women will always be pulled into reproducing for the sake of creating soldiers to fight wars in this society.

At first I had trouble with the idea of youth autonomy, as it seemed sort of ambiguous to me. Then I realized that it had to be ambiguous. I guess I expected a ready made answer for autonomy, but now I see it is only by trying to create it that I can understand it. It's not up to another to define what it is, and up to me to merely apply it, but it has to be worked out; it's like individualism that lets nothing interfere with your universalism. What I see is that this discussion is very much connected to new developments in News & Letters Committees as a whole. Recently we were involved in a study group in SF, and in it, we had the feeling of being on the verge of something, but could not yet articulate what it was, as Iran and Nicaragua had not yet had their revolutions. From these events we're now talking about organization as a philosophic category. I also at first had trouble with seeing us in News & Letters as "the new beginnings". Now, though, I see that the vanguard party is built into the very structure of capitalism, and in opposition to that, we need an organization around a philosophic tendency. In the Bay Area, many of us haven't done work through the youth committees--maybe that can now change. What I find important is that when we define ourselves as Marxist-Humanists, we present the whole of what is new, and that has to be expressed in everything that we do.

A..LA---The youth play an important part in revolutions throughout the world, as in Nicaragua and Iran. We are aware of the fact that thousands of young people have been killed in revolutions that have taken place around the world this year. For this reason youth need to form organizations where they can discuss their part in transforming this society. The capitalist system is a worldwide phenomena, so the struggle against it must become a worldwide opposition. United with other youth struggles, youth within the armed forces can stop the war preparations of the capitalists. As Iranian students we will be having study groups based on the freest participation. In these study groups we would like to study works that analyze the Iranian revolution, such as Raya Dunayevskaya's PPL on Iran, so that we can better understand that revolution. We see such study as unseparated from discussion on and with the international women's movement, the anti-nuclear movement, the anti-draft movement, the struggle against censorship and terror and police brutality. The time

5977

-10-

has arrived for the destruction of capitalism both in its private and state capitalist forms. At this time the fever of world revolution has spread among the youth and has led them to take up arms as they did in Iran and Nicaragua in order to fight for the freedom of a human society. Long live the international fight of youth!

Gregg, Bay Area---One thing this re-organization has meant for me is that any alternative that is not total can be absorbed by the system. I think in the past we projected more of a philosophic ideal, but now, we're working through a place to put those ideals into life, into the concrete, and that type of organization can't be coopted by the system. In talking recently to striking BART workers, I found that they are still fighting forced overtime. What we can now meet them with is a form of organization that has been tested in reality.

Erica, Detroit---I want to discuss what the work on the campuses means for WSU and Detroit. What strikes me is the word new--what we are always talking about is keeping one step ahead of what is by looking for what is new. And the three new things I want to take up are the new office here, autonomy, and the new book to be. Let me first welcome you to the first Youth meeting in our new office, the new national and international center of Marxist-Humanism. We in Detroit have been very fortunate to have a youth committee at Wayne State University not only in the physical sense that the campus is close to here, but in the philosophic sense--and by this I mean it is the home of Raya Dunayevskaya. The celebration on International Women's Day and the four classes in Philosophy and Revolution which Raya gave, really gave us a name on campus, in all the ways we projected Marxist-Humanism. There were many new ideas we put into practice at that very new type of class, from display cases to lit tables and ledlets. Raya made such an impact on one young man that she got the lead in an issue of the South End. But the reporter wasn't a Marxist-Humanist, and we kept on reminding him before then to come. This is one thing that shows how important follow-up is; something we weren't always successful in. I think this working out things on the part of the youth ties in nicely with the "autonomy" we've been talking about.

This is the first time we've used the word seriously even though it's been discussed for a long time. Now, whether you think of autonomy as being independent membership-wise from the regular local or whether you mean that autonomous is not running to the organizational 'veterans' for answers, but trying to work out ourselves and really grapple with ideas and problems, the fact remains that each youth group (though it is youth that binds us across the country) is still autonomous even down to its own locality. The situation is always different nationwide, and just as each group has its problems, each has its own opportunities.

Here, look at WSU. No one more than the Detroit youth have had the opportunity to host Raya as we have. Just as we were so fortunate last year to sponsor her lecture on IWD and the four "P&R" classes, so, this year we are going to be sponsors of the first lecture on the new book, Rosa Luxemburg, Today's Women's Liberation Movement, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution.

5978

Since the book to be is our first and foremost perspective for 1980, a massive re-organization has occurred here at the center, meaning a lot more responsibility for all of us. We, each and every one of us in this room, have a chance to help write that work-in-progress; that is a responsibility which should not be taken lightly. And I hope that we all view the work as a manifesto of freedom for our age, and not as Raya's book or even N&LC's, or as individual members, but for the entire world as a means with which to achieve a total philosophy of revolution and, thus, a new society for all humankind. It's a book that is so total in scope and method as to be worldwide, and it is the way to bring out the new, the new of the movements, and state what it represents. We will hear more on this in the Perspectives report at the plenum, and between this meeting and those discussions, I think our youth activity for the coming year can become something very different.

Dianne, Detroit---Whether we talk about Iran or Nicaragua; the anti-nuclear/anti-draft movement or the campus revolts against cutbacks, as self-organization of resistance--it is women and youth who have predominated. It is the same when we see a new stage in labor where youth are transforming the unions to women speaking out against sexual harassment in the plant. Therefore, I too, am concerned with how we as youth committees will meet the need for total liberation, and where counter-revolution will not feed off of the divisions within the revolutionary movement for another aborted revolution and more oppression. We can see counter-revolution within revolution as the example of our activity at an anti-nuclear meeting in Lansing Michigan, where 50 self-appointed leaders of this movement actually voted down a proposal for a "new human society". It was at this meeting where three Marxist-Humanists were demanding that proposal be raised as a banner. This shows it isn't just theory, but a very concrete question.

I too think it important to look at what is new in the world that demands a new response from ourselves, and I agree with the idea of Jim coordinating youth correspondence. As for autonomy, I see it as the process by which youth can express Marx's philosophy of revolution as a form of organization. I wanted to get a view of the history of organization, so I went back to take a look at the Organizational Interlude chapter in Marxism and Freedom. I was surprised to see what the Second International thought organization meant. They held the trade unions would organize the masses in the economic field, the youth would be organized on an anti-war front, and the party would provide the political leadership. But today, when Marxist-Humanists speak of organization as an autonomous form, it's not in terms of being restricted to a single tactic, but for the fullest expression of Marx's philosophy of revolution. In 1907, Karl Liebknecht wrote his pamphlet "Militarism and Anti-Militarism", and it was repudiated by the party. The youth then thought they were autonomous too. We need to ask in opposition to that what autonomy means for us today.

Bonnie, NY---I was taking a look at the Young Marxist-Humanist published in 1963 a few weeks ago and was surprised to find out how much it relates to today. In the introduction, Raya quotes Lukacs: "The unity of theory and practice is only the other face of the historical special situation which makes self-knowledge and knowledge co-incide. Thus the proletariat is both the subject and object of its proper knowledge." This of course is in contrast to the division between mental and manual labor. This is the inner



-12-

essence of Marxist-Humanism, where the individual lets nothing interfere with his/her universalism. It is because of this reality and because this reality has been made frighteningly real to the bourgeois world that Raya points out in the Draft Perspectives that this is not some abstract shift in global politics, but a battle for the minds of men. Anyone who recalls the high school experience knows only too well what that battle means. And we all challenge and struggle against that domination everyday--whether its beginning from the time we are children or as unemployed youth.

We as youth committees exist to participate, listen, give voice to what remains implicit in a struggle for freedom, and by making it explicit a new quality is created. This is what we have ~~tried~~ to do on campus at both Queens, thru lit tables, discussion groups, presentations. We had a meeting on the relation of women's liberation to Marx's philosophy of revolution on the very day that thousands of Iranian women poured into the streets in Iran. What we found was that youth today no only are very new to Marxism but have a passion for a total philosophy to guide their struggles. This was best represented in the past year in two Latino study groups we were involved in at Queens that evolved out of involvement in the Nicaraguan freedom struggles, and at Hostos, where a friend initiated a study group around M&F. At Queens we have discussed with Egyptians, Iranians, West Indians, Israelis, many others: so internationalism is nothing new. New is that this year it has been made a specific category for youth. And because we organized ourselves from 1955 on in committee form, autonomy is not new either; new is that it is to be developed and expressed in the fullest sense this year, where autonomy represents the totality of N&LC...The form of the autonomous committee has the potential to provide for the time and space for self-development, for thinking, articulating, and acting upon a philosophy of liberation when it conceives of itself as a totality. Without this, we end up with a situation like Iran or Portugal, or any of the other unfinished revolutions...Iran has shown us that autonomy without total philosophy will lead straight back to the domination by the old forms of organization. It's taking up organization seriously which has inhibited our many youth contacts from attending local meetings or even P&R classes so far. There's a great difference between being dissatisfied with society and challenging it--the latter requires an organizational expression. Therefore, we are going to produce a leaflet to give out at registration to announce the Capital classes. It is also a challenge to me, as I am working on campus by myself, but I find the new responsibilities facing us very challenging. I find it very important to create a room, a place, where there can be a constant exchange of ideas.

Evan, Chicago---From what I've seen of N&LC so far, an integral part of the way this process of self-development works itself out is through making a connection between the campus work and the youth in the workplace. I'm wondering how much that connection ties into all the other work of the organization.

Gress---Everything we have in N&L is projecting something to the world, nothing is internal. The paper is a form of organization for us on the job, as the paper is bringing out the ideas of the workers.

-13-

Teru, NY---I was feeling a lot of confusion about the youth committees, but now I've really gotten excited about them; it flows directly out of an organizational process, it's related to the ideas of young people worldwide. N&L youth can show the youth outside that they have a great role to play in changing the world. I very much like the idea of creating The Internationalist Young Marxist-Humanist, as it will be a good way for the youth to engage in discussions with others on our ideas, and it will be a sign that what we're doing inside our organization is being taken outside.

Ted, Bay Area---I've spent a lot of time trying to form a youth committee, but one on the basis of the Union of Radical Political Economists (URPE). I was working with that group, and people did come to the meetings looking for a larger change, that they would not hear in the SWP, etc.--URPE does provide a certain forum you couldn't get elsewhere. But the hunger they came with was not satisfied by URPE, and I found myself not being able to respond there in terms of what I represented and thought. This year it's going to be very different, I'm going to focus my time and energy much more on N&L. URPE may be great as analysis, but I could not seriously develop as a revolutionary inside it, and it could not relate to me once I went on strike. If you want something new, you have to respond to this passion for a new society, and that's why I'm finding a dividing line that keeps coming up. In that sense, I was thinking of how we are a specification of the "four w's". We are recognizing ourselves as new passions and new forces, and that seems very dialectical. It's important to see, as if you're not looking for the new in the world, you can't self-develop. Part of my own self re-organization has meant moving away from economics and towards philosophy. I'm still not sure I think of myself as youth, but I very much want a living form with which to capture the new.

Jim---I wanted to throw out a few ideas. I get from this discussion that what was implicit in the activities of the past year was an attraction of ideas that is characteristic of the age. It's a question of self-determination reaching so high a stage, that we have a self-development of ideas. So how are we going to create more conditions for that attraction? It is total, or it is nothing, we have said. How are we going to extend those invitations to Marxist-Humanist dialogue, so we do meet the challenge of the new book? I don't think we'll have any trouble meeting the subjects of liberation. It's a question of how to get out the totality of what we are about--we can begin with a report of this meeting in the next issue of N&L.

I accept Peter's suggestion on correspondence. It's not just a matter of a one to one exchange. We in the Center can use such letters much as we use weekly mimeod letters to the locals, to show others as an invitation to Marxist-Humanist dialogue. One thing coming up for us in Detroit is an anti-nuke rally Oct. 21--that's an event we can work with to see how to present out ideas.

Miriam, Detroit---In the past I've shied away from involvement with the youth committees, as it seemed like a method of recruiting to me. This is the first time I understand it as far more than that. Today we see that the movement from practice needs us, and that makes this discussion exciting.

Kate, Bay Area---Before this meeting, we had two discussions in the Bay Area about organization, about the need to articulate our philosophy of revolution, and so I did some work, like re-read the Draft Chapter on "The Relationship of Philosophy and Revolution to Women's Liberation", and also did a presentation on women's liberation for the local. After that, my whole feeling about youth committees really changed, partly because of the work I was doing on women's liberation, which helped me understand what autonomy means: it's a process by which to both internalize and externalize our ideas. I feel it's such an incredible opportunity to develop ourselves, to define, articulate more clearly what we see as necessary on an ongoing basis. This is what a "new type of member" is all about: it means taking responsibility for organization, and so the emphasis on autonomy is at the heart on N&LC. I guess I didn't feel this before, much for the reason Karen had spoken of, thinking I needed a set definition for it, as if I wanted it as a frozen absolute. What's drawn me to N&LC is that it has no such absolutes, it's always changing and developing. And I truly feel that this discussion has captured the truth of that for me.

4. Following discussion, the following proposals were voted upon and passed unanimously:
1. That Youth Column for October N&L be a report of this meeting.
  2. That minutes of this meeting be written up in full, and published as discussion bulletin, deadline Sept. 30.
  3. That Jim Mills take responsibility for correspondence between the committees, especially to help bring forth:
  4. The creation of the Internationalist Young Marxist-Humanist by year's end, to appear in conjunction with Raya's talk at WSU on the new book.

Minutes by Peter, LA.

## ON THE INTERNATIONALIST MARXIST-HUMANIST YOUTH COMMITTEE

by Gene, LA

With the development of the International Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee we are having the study group on Marxism & Freedom by Raya Dunayevskaya serve as a point of organization, with the coming together of youthful forces of revolution-- Iranian, women, Black, Latino, intellectual and worker, each individual being the collection of Self.

In terms of the Iranian participation, we are looking at the first publication of the Internationalist Marxist-Humanist Youth Committee, the Persian translation of the Political-Philosophic letter on Iran by RD. In response to the movement here and abroad by Iranian revolutionaries, we can see that the student movement has played and will play an important part--and the Iranian youth on an international scale are very much part of the struggle that helped bring down the dictatorship of the Shah, and we will hopefully do the same with Khomeiny. We now have to look to the workers and students who are the future of that revolution, and have a big part to play in the creation of a philosophy that is truly Marxist that will bring freedom nationally and internationally to Iran.

In terms of international, there are also revolutionary forces in Central America who were brought to open revolt by Somoza's greed and sadism, and that revolution in Nicaragua will affect other revolutionaries around the world. Close by is El Salvador, which must be watched for new beginnings in revolt, and we have to see how this will affect the Latino movement here in the U.S. In LA in particular a thing to look for on the workplace is the creativity of the young worker moving more and more against the repression of recession and the connection of U.S. imperialism with Somoza that takes on a concrete form here at home for us in his investments in this country. At the same time, the immigrant worker is a force for change, and with the threat of war, Hispanic youth as a minority are an important part of the fight against the draft and war.

It is this that can bring us to the Black struggle of today, nationally, internationally, and locally. When I think of the word youth, I think of new ideas or new beginnings to an 'old' desire for freedom that runs through consciousness of self, from Fanon, to Biko, to Black masses in motion. We saw this with the Soweto revolt, that showed the courage of the youth in South Africa in rejecting the Afrikaner's language, and who died to be Self, or for the "Black mind." We see this as well with Decateur, where the movement is not for integration of the sixties which began with youth putting out a petition for then-jailed Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King who were helping the movement develop. Integration was won, but in 1979 the struggle is against a system that won't and can't change the racist practices which preserves the racist mind. There is also the struggle of the unemployed army of youth, a majority of whom are Black youth, that will grow to be one of the greatest threats to capital. Connected to this is the urgent need for a link between them and anti-draft, as we have the war possibility

-16-

that can spell nuclear war, and which is a threat to all humanity. Under the constant use of the machine, the Black employed are driven to the death, as are all workers, and they too need this social revolution for a human society.

The autonomous youth committee: its creativity all in itself, and is nothing like the control of youth by the vanguard party, but more a reflection of the whole of News & Letters Committees as we strive for Organizational New Beginnings.

*Olga*

5984