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**P**OLITICAL  
AFFAIRS

**The Battle  
for  
BLACK  
LIBERATION**

**Special Issue**

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# POLITICAL AFFAIRS

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HENRY WINSTON

## Unity and Militancy For Freedom and Equality

The Communist Party, USA, has a proud record of more than 40 years of fighting for Negro freedom. For years, almost alone, it led the struggle in the Deep South, under conditions comparable to those faced in Hitler Germany, for full freedom, for the right of black people to vote, to organize, to have equal access to all public places, for the repeal of the poll tax and for an end to lynching. Many of its members, Negro and white, gave their lives in those early bitter battles.

Benjamin J. Davis, Henry Winston, William L. Patterson, Claude Lightfoot, James W. Ford, Louis Burnham, Claudia Jones, Edward Strong, James E. Jackson, Hosea Hudson, Mildred McAdory, Pettis Perry, Ray Hansborough, Moranda Smith, Cyril Briggs and Otto Hall—these are but some of the black Communists whose pioneering efforts in the '30s and '40s helped prepare the ground for the great freedom struggles of the '60s.

Scottsboro, Angelo Herndon, the Martinsville Seven, Willie Mcgee, Rose Lee Ingram, are but a few of the great rallying cries that were later transformed into the battle cries of Selma and Mississippi. In these great traditions, Communists joined in the Scottsboros of the sixties.

We do not claim any special rights for our pioneering efforts, only the right to continue the struggle we will never cease. We frankly admit that we have much to learn from the new courageous leaders who widened and deepened the freedom path from the ground broken in earlier days. But in all modesty, we also offer the rich experiences we have accumulated, to help illuminate the difficult road ahead we must all travel together.

It is in this spirit that we offer our thoughts on some of the crucial problems facing black Americans and, as they do, all Americans.

We, 22 million black Americans, have arrived at a point of grave crisis in our history. Clear thinking as well as courage are the needs of the moment. The question posed for us and, indeed, for white America as well is: How shall black people achieve full equality NOW—in these days, not in the dim future of more unborn black

generations? Time has run out for leisurely discussion and debate, for "studies" and "reports" by an endless parade of government commissions. The question is on the action agenda now!

It is a question that must be decided by our sober assessment and not by government provocation. And, indeed, we are being provoked.

Rebellions in more than 120 cities against the misery, poverty and depression in the ghettos are being "studied" in Washington while President Johnson's \$74 billion-a-year military budget, including \$30 billion for the genocidal war in Vietnam, is hastily rushed through Congress. More riot training for more police and more National Guardsmen; more repressive laws; more racist hysteria whipped up by the press; more police brutality in the black communities, and more than equality in the casualty lists in Vietnam for black soldiers—what are these but the most provocative incitements to violence?

### *The Real Instigators of Violence*

They point to the real instigators of the violence that has erupted in our cities—the men who sit in the White House and in the halls of Congress.

No one—least of all those who have enslaved us for 350 years, who cage us in ghettos, inflict depression and disease upon us, invade and destroy our homes with all the cruel instruments of modern warfare, taunt us by spending billions for bombs and pennies for poverty, and goad us with terror, official violence and legal lynchings—has the right to caution us to refrain from violence. Twenty-two million black Americans are faced with a struggle for survival. We need ask no one how to defend our inalienable right to live as human beings.

For countless years, countless black people have been lynched and outraged, their basic human rights trampled upon by forces of law and order and by white racist bands, often working as close partners in crime. Today, racist violence against the Negro people has spread to all parts of the United States—Detroit, Watts and Cicero, as well as Selma, Milwaukee, Newark, Montgomery and Mississippi. The right, indeed the responsibility, to defend oneself, one's dear ones, one's people, from violent attacks by racists, in or out of uniform, by all means including armed defense if necessary, is inviolable. We support that right.

The continued and increased spread of police brutality against the black community, the growth of the influence of the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan and racism in the police departments all

over the nation, has led to the demand for the right of Negro people to police their communities. We fully support that right.

The Communist Party of the United States, like Communists everywhere, has always affirmed the right of oppressed people to forcibly overthrow an oppressive regime whenever the channels for democratic change are closed to them. That right is also affirmed in the Declaration of Independence. Therefore, there can be no question of the right of the Negro people in the United States to use violence to free themselves from oppression and to win full freedom.

Whether that right to violence should be exercised is determined by time, place and circumstances, and by a sober estimate of the concrete situation which prevails at the moment. Surely, everyone would prefer to win basic change without the use of force.

### *Tokenism Will Not Suffice*

What is the situation?

The stubborn refusal of the ruling class of our country, and the Johnson Administration in particular, to permit anything but token changes in the unbearable conditions faced by black Americans, especially in the ghettos, despite the massive peaceful demonstrations of recent years, has led to a growing lack of confidence in the possibility to achieve meaningful change through the democratic process.

The meaning of the mass rebellions of 1967 in the black ghettos should be clear: millions of black Americans will no longer live under the condition of the depression '30s while the U.S. boasts of the "affluence" of the '60s.

The failure of most white Americans, including large sections of the liberal and progressive forces, to understand the desperate nature of the crisis in the ghettos, their failure to ally themselves with the black people in their struggle for the necessary radical changes to resolve the crisis, has resulted in an increasing lack of confidence in the ability of white masses to overcome racism and in their readiness to join with black people in the fight for meaningful solutions.

The repeated failure of the Federal government, and those in the cities and state, to take decisive action against the racists who murder and maim black people, has aroused a new awareness of the need for greater reliance on determined self-defense, including armed defense.

The Minutemen, the Birchites, Ku Klux Klan, White Citizens Council, National Riflemen's Association and American Nazi groups,

are openly inciting and organizing racial violence with impunity. Alabama's former Governor Wallace is not only given free rein to spread the plague of racist violence, but is rallying the racist and fascist-like forces all over the United States.

Black people, with good cause, smell the flesh-burning stench of the gas chamber in these menacing developments. They have rightly served notice that they have no intention to play the role of passive victims of genocide.

Moreover, an alternative program to violence, radical enough to solve the problems of the ghettos, and possible of achievement, has not been put forward with any conviction.

Furthermore, there is a lack of class consciousness and an understanding of revolutionary tactics, geared to specific U.S. conditions—and not borrowed from other countries—in the ranks of the leadership of the Negro freedom movement. The world liberation struggle of recent years, particularly in Africa, Asia, Latin America, has inspired the determination to fight for full freedom in the United States.

All of these factors have given rise to a new emphasis, on the part of some, on the need for armed struggle particularly in the black ghettos.

Courage is the banner of the fight for black freedom. Communists join all militant black freedom fighters in bearing this banner high. The ghetto uprisings, and countless heroic battles, have made it amply clear that black people are prepared to fight to win full freedom NOW. The task, especially of Negro leaders, is jointly and skillfully to seek the ways to make the best use of our heroic people's militancy. The task is to prevent the power structure, by its provocations, from misusing this militancy and turning it against the black people.

#### *Militancy and Unity—or Guerrilla Tactics*

The task ahead is: how to make the most effective use of every position gained, how to exert the utmost skill in rallying allies to our struggle, and in isolating our enemies. It is for this reason we stress courage and clarity of purpose. It is in this spirit that the question of armed struggle should be soberly considered.

Communists believe in the use of violence to achieve political change only when reaction has closed off the channels whereby a majority of the people can realize their objectives by peaceful means. As we see it today, the overwhelming majority of the American people,

including black people, are not yet convinced that the system must be changed, much less that it is necessary to do so by armed force.

Armed uprisings for such objectives cannot be undertaken successfully by the black communities alone, no matter how courageously they struggle. They require power allies, in the ranks of the working class—white and black. Therefore, we reject the organizing of armed uprisings in the black communities today. However, it is necessary to issue the warning that there are extremely dangerous pressures to close the channels of democratic process and, in many areas, they have virtually been closed. Should this continue, it would leave the black people no alternative to violent struggle.

We believe that conspiratorial, terroristic actions which are not based upon a program aimed at improving the conditions of life for the masses, and which do not receive the support of the people, are adventurous, provocative and politically irresponsible, inviting reprisals against the black community. They should, therefore, be rejected.

We also believe that terrorism within the Negro community, directed against so-called Uncle Toms or others who refuse to go along with such tactics, is entirely out of place, divisive and harmful to the struggle for full freedom. It, too, should be rejected.

Although we do not advocate a policy of looting and arson, it is clear, that while ghetto uprisings were unable to end the unbearable condition against which the spontaneous revolts were directed, they did achieve certain positive results. These militant actions forcefully exposed to the nation and the entire world the urgent nature of the crisis in the ghettos. They made it painfully clear to many white Americans that life in our great cities will be unbearable for all, unless it is made bearable for the people of the black communities.

#### *Right of Self-Defense Against Organized Violence*

Moreover these militant actions have intensified and deepened the mass resistance to the unjust war in Vietnam and inspired to greater militancy the struggle to end it. They greatly stimulated the struggle for Negro representation, spurred the Negro communities to the highest levels of political unity and contributed to convincing larger sections of the white communities to work for, and accept, black municipal leaders. They have compelled the Administration to respond to the pressure for additional black representation on all levels. Every advance that has been made in Negro representation in the recent

period owes much to the message contained in the explosions in the black ghettos in 1967.

However, those who conclude that the task now is to give an organized character to the spontaneous uprisings in the black ghettos, gravely misjudge both the mood of the black communities and the relationship of forces such organized armed uprisings would have to contend with. The strength of the 1967 uprising lay in their spontaneity. It was this quality of the rebellions which rallied the sympathy and support of black communities and jolted large numbers of white Americans into an understanding of the depth of the crisis in the ghettos.

It would be quite a different matter, under present conditions, to win support in the black communities, let alone in the white neighborhoods, for an organized armed uprising. Nor can there be any comparison between the repressive measures employed in the suppression of the spontaneous uprisings, harsh as they were, and the unlimited force that would be used by the ruling class and its government against an organized uprising.

Black communities, of course, have the right to take necessary measures to defend themselves from invasion and assault by armed forces. But the real task at hand is to rally nationwide support of all truly democratic white Americans, especially white workers, to stop the annual "summer slaughter" and to aid the struggle for survival of black Americans.

### *Inspiring Mass Militancy in Struggle*

The Open Letter of the Communist Party, USA, addressed to the President before the "hot summer" of 1967 exploded, called for "united action of all forces on the Left regardless of differences." It called for the "most sacrificing all-out efforts of every Communist to work tirelessly to unite all Americans of conscience, black and white, to act at once."

The need for such united struggle cannot wait for another "hot summer." It must be directed NOW toward the elimination of the unbearable conditions that will breed not only more hot summers but even colder winters.

There is an urgent need for organized, militant and united struggle in every black community in the United States. Its arsenal of tactical weapons should include any and all forms of struggle that will most effectively and most speedily advance the fight for full freedom: mass

marches, demonstrations, massive militant civil disobedience, boycotts and strikes. It should include sit-ins, sit-downs and sit-outs, and armed defense when necessary. It should include black community mass marches to the polls to elect Negro mayors, U.S. Senators, Congressmen and Negro public officials on every level.

The door should be wide open to any new and effective forms of struggle forged in the fires of the freedom fight. The only test for tactical weapons of the freedom struggle should be: will they advance or set back the struggle? Will they unite or divide the mass of the black people? Will they aid in winning allies or isolating us.

Militancy, the indispensable ingredient for all effective struggles, has to meet the test. The courage of brave individuals has played, and can play, a significant role in today's freedom struggle. But the militancy of individuals lies in the ability to inspire *mass* militancy. It can never be a substitute for it. Individual courage, therefore, must be synchronized with those forms of struggle to which the mass of black people are ready to respond at any given stage of the struggle.

There is an urgent need, too, for consideration of forms of organization which will unite the people in the black communities and coordinate the communities themselves on a city, state and national level. The aim should be effectively to bring to bear on the power structure the collective will of the black people, to organize and direct mass actions on every front and at every level.

The objective should be to unite the black communities politically, and to make full use of their strategic position in our cities. From such positions of strength they can, in alliance with other oppressed minorities and progressive sections of the white population, struggle effectively for unprecedented new levels of Negro representation and, thereby, drastically alter political relationships in the country.

Through united action, an effective fight can be waged for black control of black communities, for federal, state and city responsibility to provide billions for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the black communities, placing them on a par with the rest of the nation. Jobs, at all skills, in such reconstruction, should go to the people of the black communities, especially to the youth, and at union wages.

To inspire the struggles of today, black communities should be united in commemorating our black heroes, among them Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois and former New York City Councilman Benjamin J. Davis.

Unity of the black communities can truly spell black power.

It is wrong to conclude, as some do, from the stubborn refusal of the power structure and the Johnson Administration to deal adequately

with the crisis in the black ghettos, that the channels for democratic change are closed to the black people. It is true, they are being blocked by racist and reactionary forces who are determined to close them. But they are not yet closed. On the contrary, the Negro people have achieved their strongest political position in our country precisely during the past decade.

This is the meaning of the tremendous increase in voter registration in the South, notably in Mississippi. This is the meaning of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party—the symbol of new politics in the country. This is the significance of the new level of black-white unity achieved at the convention of the National Conference of New Politics that has given birth to the “Spirit of Chicago.”

### *Keep the Door of Democracy Open*

Thus the fateful question: will the channels of democracy be closed to the black people?—from which would result, inevitably, that it would be closed to all Americans—has not as yet been answered in the affirmative. On the contrary, conditions exist for opening wider the door of democracy. This requires a militant fight resolutely to combat every fascist-like attempt to close them. This is the path not only toward winning greater partial aims, but to preparing the best grounds for the fight for revolutionary change—for the establishment of a socialist society.

The costly experience of Hitler fascism should serve to remind revolutionaries, and democrats as well, of the terrible price paid for the failure to defend each precious democratic right to the bitter end.

Many white people, frustrated by the dangerous drift to disaster of our cities, have responded with fear to the uprisings in the black ghettos. The racists have been quick to seize upon these fears to inflame deeply imbedded prejudices that exist. Thus, a serious situation is developing which can turn our streets into bloody battle-grounds of racist strife.

But, it should also be noted, that among increasing numbers of white people there is evident significant new levels of understanding of the real meaning of full equality for black people. This is reflected in the readiness of large numbers of whites to accept and work for increased black representation. The basis for achieving higher levels of black-white unity are present today.

This is especially so because the crisis in the black ghettos has served to put the spotlight on the crisis of our cities. There is no way of

resolving one crisis without at the same time resolving the other. Thus, life itself has joined the fate of the black communities with the fate of our cities, including the white communities. Of course, the answer to both crises lies in Washington, in changing federal responsibilities to the cities, to provide adequate funds for decent homes, for schools, hospitals and transit.

### *Unity of Black and White Around Common Interests*

Above all the answer lies in drastically changing our nation's priorities: from waging aggressive war to providing for the long-neglected needs of peace-time living. That requires the speedy ending of the unjust war in Vietnam.

More and more Americans, white as well as Negro, have come to recognize the interrelation of three crises: the ghetto, our cities and the war in Vietnam. An irresistible force can be brought into being by uniting the mass of Americans to fight for the resolution of all three unbearable crises. This struggle, by uniting white and black around their common interests, can weaken the dangerous inroads of the racists in the white communities. It is toward the development of this irresistible force that black and white progressives, especially revolutionaries, should bend their efforts.

To achieve such unity in struggle, it is incumbent upon white progressives and revolutionaries to conduct a consistent and courageous battle against racism in their own communities, shops, offices and schools.

The struggle for black freedom faces not only great trials but great opportunities. Both aspects of the present situation have to be grasped. More, they have to be acted upon, and acted upon unitedly, in time to make the 1968 elections the arena for great and victorious struggles.

## Path to Black Liberation Under Capitalism

An important new feature of the black freedom movement is a growing recognition that capitalism is the source of black oppression.

If capitalism is the source of the inferior status of black people, and it is, then it would follow that only with the elimination of the system can Negroes gain equality. Generally this is true. But from this truth, some wrong and harmful conclusions are drawn.

There are some on the Left who advance the idea that no substantial changes in the Negro's status is possible in the capitalist framework, that only token gains can be made. For example, Paul A. Baron and Paul M. Sweezy, in *Monopoly Capital*, say the following:

Today Negroes are on the bottom, and there is neither room above nor anyone ready to take their place. Thus only individuals can move up, not the group as such. Reforms help the few, not the many.\*

If the Negro people's movement accepts this viewpoint, the struggle will be set back for generations to come. To tell the Negro masses that only a few individuals can move upward so long as capitalism exists is to say in effect: Sit down and wait until socialism comes about. Or, it can lead to premature and self-defeating measures to bring it about.

The establishment of socialist society requires a process of struggle varying according to time, place and circumstances.

The road to a socialist reorganization of society is no longer a matter of hypothesis or guess-work. One-third of the world has taken the socialist path and another sector among the newly liberated countries is heading in that direction. Thus, a wealth of experience has been accumulated. And as the struggle for socialism goes forward in the rest of the world, new experiences will be added.

### *Immediate Demands and the Socialist Goal*

Within that framework, however, there are some universal truths that have withstood the test of time. Among these is the fact that

\* Paul A. Baran and Paul M. Sweezy, *Monopoly Capital*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1966, p. 279.

the struggle for socialism develops within the framework of democratic struggles. In all instances where the socialist struggle was successful, it was preceded by mass struggles which placed the necessity for a radical shift or change within the old society. The classical form this has taken is the struggle for the extension of democracy.

Today in the United States the struggle of the Negro people for equality is essentially a democratic struggle. And in this struggle it is possible to change their status substantially, short of socialism. Indeed, the balance sheet of struggle for the last fifteen years has in some areas already passed beyond "tokenism."

Some argue that placing the question this way can only feed illusions in the capitalist system. Now it is true that reforms under capitalism can temporarily create such illusions. But it is also true that the ongoing struggle for greater and greater reforms can also expose the limitations of the system and lead to greater consciousness of the need to change it.

But this does not happen automatically.

Some of those on the Left and some freedom fighters who argue against struggles of an immediate nature pursue a policy which holds forth no perspective for socialism. The history of the socialist movement is full of deviations of both extremes.

There have always been those who have conducted abstract propaganda for socialism and urged non-participation in the day-to-day struggles. The classic example of this erroneous view is the mummified Socialist Labor Party. The bankruptcy of these views becomes apparent when we see that people holding such views have established socialism nowhere in the world.

On the other hand, struggles for immediate demands without the propagation of socialism will also not lead to a socialist society. This was the historic lesson of the Second Socialist International. Its concentration on the struggle for reforms within capitalism became an end in itself. In many instances where socialism was on the order of the day, these forces became the greatest obstacle to making the change.

Both deviations can be most harmful.

Conscious socialist forces must identify with the people who seek relief from the miseries of capitalism on a day-to-day basis and at the same time point out the limitations of such demands.

What will follow is an examination of what black people can achieve within the framework of capitalism and what will have to wait for a socialist solution.

*The Nation's Number One Economic Problem*

In the period ahead, what is needed is a program or a series of programs that tie together the problems of all Americans with the special problems of black Americans. America today faces a political crisis which in many respects is more deep-going than the crisis of the Civil War years. A program to meet this crisis is urgently needed.

In recent years there has been an upsurge of social muckraking which is reminiscent of the 1930's. In almost every single arena of our national life, men and women have produced important works which have probed into the nation's innermost problems. Just to cite only a few: There are the works of Michael Harrington and Leon Keyserling on the poor; of Fred Cook, on the fascist danger and of Mitchell Gordon, on the crisis in our cities. But it is characteristic of most such writers that while they present the problem, they appear overwhelmed by it and are still only groping for a way out. There are some exceptions, such as Professor Seymour Melman. In his work, he showed the source of the problem when he related almost all our social ills to an economy geared to war purposes.

He defines the character of the period we are now passing through in these words:

The Cold War, with its fearsome ultranationalism, military threats, and depletion, can be made to give way at home and abroad to the competence of a productive society—bringing productive power to bear for the solution of man's problems.\*

This, he says, is the American agenda, 1965 to 1985.

Another author who has made a penetrating analysis of the problems of this period is Whitney Young, Jr., Executive Director of the National Urban League. In his book *To Be Equal*, he defines with even greater precision the nature of the period ahead of us and what is required to meet the problems. He likens it to the New Deal period of the 1930's. In this respect, I believe his observations are very sound. As a result of the war economy and the deferred social needs, he says, we now confront problems that will have to be tackled in a manner characteristic of the New Deal administration of F.D.R. However, the problems we face today are far deeper and will require much more radical solutions than the reforms of the New Deal period.

For one thing, the class alignments will have to be different. In the New Deal period, sections of the big monopolies supported F.D.R.

But the problems of today require a challenge to the controls of big business over the direction of the government. Hence progress today dictates the building of a powerful coalition directed against monopoly capital as a whole—against the military-industrial complex.

Mr. Young not only defined the general character of the coming struggle, but he placed the Negro question in a central position. Unfortunately, most of the authors who have written about our social ills do not deal with this problem. Mr. Young placed it as a special problem, and says that what is needed is a special effort.

Over a quarter of a century ago, F.D.R. said that the South was our number one economic problem. Today, the Negro constitutes the nation's number one economic problem. Young says:

The American Negro has been out of the mainstream for more than three centuries and a special effort must be made to bring him into the central action of our society. The effects of more than three centuries of oppression cannot be obliterated by doing business as usual.\*

*Programs to Fight Poverty*

Therefore, to meet the problems of the Negro in our ghettos, cities and among the rural poor requires the elaboration of programs that encompass every aspect of American life.

There are many organizations which have advanced programs on how to combat poverty. A few years ago, the Communist Party of the United States presented a comprehensive plan which called for a program involving the outlay in the next ten years of over \$150 billion. More recently the Randolph Institute, working with the economist Leon Keyserling, has produced a plan designated as the "Freedom Budget," that calls for an outlay of \$180 billion in the next ten years. This plan tackles the problems facing Americans generally, as well as many of the special problems facing the Negro in the ghetto. It has been endorsed by a large number of people's organizations, both Negro and white, including labor organizations. Around this program, we already see evolving the kind of unity which Professor Melman called for and which the times dictate.

There are many inadequacies in the plan, and one must take issue especially with its presentation as a program which can be achieved within the framework of a war economy. Nevertheless, one can em-

\*Whitney M. Young, Jr., *To Be Equal*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1964, p. 27.

Seymour Melman, *Our Depleted Society*, Holt, New York, 1965, p. 285.

brace it as the most meaningful program that has yet been produced to meet the ills of our society. It is not the kind of program that can be won overnight, however. It is a long-range program. But it should not on that account be construed as something unobtainable, as something that will have to be set aside until times get more favorable. The time to advance such a program and to fight for it is now, and it is not impossible that many of its aspects can be won in the immediate future.

The struggle for such a program consists of two parts. First, there is the legislative struggle, which means the drafting of bills and the fight for their passage. Second, there are the struggles that must take place outside of the legislative arena. Both must be related specifically to a program of struggle inside the black ghettos. To overcome the problems of the ghetto in regard to employment, housing, health, education, etc., the intervention of government at all levels—federal, state, county and city—is a fundamental requirement. Especially is a massive federal intervention necessary, as is pointed up in the Freedom Budget. But substantial changes in the ghetto can also be won, with or without aid, through direct mass struggles.

#### *Need to Raise Income in the Ghetto*

The main problem in the black ghetto is that of income. The Negro market, according to the United States Department of Commerce, today amounts to \$27-30 billion. This represents a considerable quantity of consumer purchasing power; therefore it can become a tremendous lever in breaking down areas of job discrimination by many of the companies which follow such practices. However, this is a secondary aspect of the problem, to which we shall return later.

The primary problem is how to increase the income of the ghetto. The Negro in the ghetto is the victim of a hierarchy of super-exploitation, embracing wages, rents, interest rates and consumer purchases. The central problem in this hierarchy is wages. The fact that Negroes received only \$27 billion in income in 1966 out of a gross national product of well over \$600 billion in itself suggests the nature of the problem.

A program to "overcome," therefore, requires first of all a fight to raise the wages of the Negro worker. And this entails a certain relationship to the trade union movement. This point cannot be stressed too much, because an outstanding weakness of most civil rights leaders, especially the younger radicals, is their failure to comprehend this fact. To be sure, the labor movement in the last fifteen years, un-

der the leadership of George Meany, has done many things to chain the working class to the chariot of American imperialism. Indeed, the activities of the George Meany-Jay Lovestone clique represent some of the most shameful pages in the history of the American working class. But despite this, what civil rights leaders must come to understand is that, unless changes take place within the labor movement which make of it a more effective instrument of struggle for the interests of the working class and the people, no really meaningful changes for the Negro will take place in our society.

How can we conceive of making serious inroads into the low wage rates paid Negro workers without a struggle to organize the unorganized workers, both black and white, both in the South and the North? How can we conceive of making inroads into the estimated \$22 billion differential between wages paid white workers and those paid Negro workers without a struggle inside the unions for the upgrading of Negro workers? These are the clear lines of battle required to enhance the Negro's economic status, and yet this is the most neglected sector of the battlefield. Millions of Negro workers are employed in service industries, in which the wage level is often lower than what people receive on relief. These workers must be organized, and anyone who does not address himself to this problem and still talks about Black Power, misses the essence of what is required to achieve that power.

#### *Labor Must Be Compelled to Act*

If the labor movement is not now measuring up to its responsibilities in doing this, then it is incumbent upon the conscious freedom forces to bring the necessary pressures to bear to get on with the job of organizing those service industries in which the Negro's wages are at such a low level.

When the Negro conceives of a program to share power in the political arena and neglects the labor movement, he again misses the centrality of what is required to obtain and exert power.

The organized labor movement is one of the most powerful forces within our society. Its weight in economic matters is undeniable. And if some workers, both black and white, enjoy some part of the nation's affluence, it is not just that the imperialists give them some crumbs from the superexploitation of the third world, the colonial world; it is primarily because the workers, through their unions, have waged tremendous strike struggles and forced the employers to make concessions. Labor's ability to shut down production is the most potent

weapon the working people possess. Whether this power is always exerted on behalf of all aspects of the worker's needs is beside the point. The important thing is that the power is there, and if it is not being adequately used, a struggle must be waged to make it available to protect the interests of the workers and of all the people.

The ability of the organized labor movement to bring about meaningful political changes has no peer among the democratic forces. Its membership, which runs to some sixteen million; its finances, which run into the hundreds of millions of dollars; the experienced organizers at its disposal; its ability to effect organization not only in the shop but in the smallest political sub-division—all these things make it potentially the common people's most powerful weapon. It is evident that the failure of this movement to live up to these potentials is due to reactionary and opportunist leadership. But given a highly organized rank and file movement, these things, too, can be changed.

Another aspect of relating to the union movement is the need to tackle discrimination within the unions. For Negro freedom fighters to stand on the sidelines and deplore the terrible conditions within the unions, and not to get inside of them and fight for solutions, is to withdraw from the battle. Until recently, the Negro brewery workers in New York City were discriminated against both by the company and the union. They were never able to acquire enough seniority to enable them to get permanent union cards. As a consequence, they did not get much work. But they did not resign themselves to the discrimination. They led a struggle to change the situation and succeeded in breaking the system down. The *Amsterdam News* noted that, as a result, they brought an additional few million dollars into the black community. This was but one small example. Many similar ones exist across the land, and given a determined approach by freedom fighters, many of the practices of discrimination within the union can be broken down. This, too, will add to the income of the ghetto.

In the context of the primacy of the struggle on the wage front, the struggle to organize the Negro market can be a valuable instrument in enhancing the income of the Negro ghetto. Floyd McKissick, national leader of CORE, defines as one of the central aspects of the Black Power slogan the Negroes' consumer power. Timuel Black, a Chicago civil rights leader, has pointed out that the power structure of our country does not respond to moral persuasion, but reacts only when profits are distributed. An increasingly large number of influential Negro freedom fighters are dealing with the weapon of consumer power. There is nothing wrong with this concept. Labor has

long found that to gain concessions from its exploiters, it has to use its power to stop production and profits. The Negro, in using his power, as a consumer, is similarly employing a basic weapon to defend his interests.

Some civil rights leaders, however, see this as the only line of battle. This form of struggle alone will not basically change the situation; the struggle on the wage front must be our principal concern. Nonetheless, the period ahead must also witness the growth of organizations which will promote the fight on the consumer front. In a number of communities, such organizations are being built and are already in action. For example, in Chicago a movement called "Operation Bread Basket" exists, which has organized boycott campaigns against certain companies which have followed discriminatory practices. It is estimated that its actions have already added over 15 million dollars to the income of the black ghetto of Chicago.

Finally, to increase the income of the ghetto and to reduce the degree of super-exploitation requires struggle and organization on many other fronts. Wherever there is rent gouging, there must be organization to combat it; wherever there are disparities in the prices of commodities, there must be organization to eliminate them; wherever there are exorbitant interest rates, there must be laws to reduce them. These types of action, coupled with the struggles of a broader-based trade union movement, involvement of the underemployed Negro and utilization of consumer power, constitute the line of march forward.

#### *Needs of Negro Youth—a Major Concern*

A program to meet the problems of the ghetto must of necessity reflect the interests of all the people within it. But the problem of Negro youth transcends all others in urgency. Dr. James B. Conant and others have already pointed to this urgency, but the power structure still glosses over the problem and fails to respond in the way that the situation requires.

While the overwhelming majority of Negro youth still maintain a positive approach to struggle and are playing a positive role, there are an alarmingly large number who are falling into depths of despair and hopelessness. Mayor Lindsay of New York City, speaking recently at Princeton University, signaled this point when he said:

. . . the youth in the Bedford-Stuyvesants, the Folsoms and the Watts of our cities seem to be approaching the belief that nothing

they can do can bring any tangible improvement in the world that imprisons them.\*

As a result of this hopelessness, thousands of Negro youth have organized into gangs and are roaming the streets of the ghettos, creating tremendous problems. The difficulties confronting these youth constitute one of the main challenges of any program designed to alleviate ghetto living. Whitney Young, in his book, pointed out that if a national disaster, such as a flood, hit any section of our country, the federal, state, and city government would rush in with funds and other assistance to alleviate the hardship and suffering. The problem of these youth is of a similar order. The catalytic agent in the 150 eruptions in black ghettos in the last few years has been the youth, and yet no relief is forthcoming.

The program on poverty, with its "job training," has thus far proven to be a farce. One approach to how this problem *could* be met has been presented by Director Edwin Berry of the Chicago Urban League. Following the outburst on the West Side of Chicago in 1965, he convened a conference of some of the major industrial leaders, welfare agencies, and others. He placed before the conference a plan for a crash program of jobs for Negro high school dropouts, which called for industry to open its door to at least 30,000 Negro youth. He pointed out that it would be necessary to lower some of the rigid requirements that industry uses to screen prospective employees, such as a high school diploma, no jail record, etc. He called for an on-the-job training program in the plants, with a guarantee of employment following such training. The leaders of industry were not prepared for such a program on such a scale, undoubtedly because it would affect their profits. But eventually, there was a meeting of minds on a minimum program. Agreement was reached to work to integrate 3,000 Negro youth along these lines. An organization called "Jobs Now" was set up, with most of the social agencies joining together to help process the plan.

Out of the first 125 persons enrolled, there was a 29 per cent drop-out. Some social workers, seeking an answer to this, came across statements such as, "Man, I can make more money hustling back in the community than I can on that man's job." What was evident here was that Negro youth are not prepared to take jobs in menial capacities, or to become a part of the army of underemployed. Because

\**New York Times*, December 3, 1967.

of such experience, some of the youth going through this program are being given jobs which offer more than poverty level wages, and with opportunities for promotion. As a result, drop-outs declined. This is a small beginning, but it goes in the right direction. What is needed is a national effort, led by the federal government, to set up a job-training and placement program for at least half a million Negro youth across the land. Such a program would require an immediate outlay of several billion dollars. It would require that all the pressures of the federal, state and city government who have contractual relations with private enterprises be used to compel concessions along the lines of the Chicago project.

#### *Political Arena—A Key Area of Struggle*

The social problem we have been discussing—the cold war and the deferred economic and social problems of the nation, the dangers inherent in the military-industrial complex, the sick society, the crisis in civil rights—show clearly that we are dealing with problems that are malignant in character and eventually will require surgery. The period of palliatives is slowly evaporating. These problems will require a re-examination of old concepts by all strata of the American people. They should retain those that are still valid, but unhesitatingly discard those that have been proven obsolete, bankrupt, and incapable of moving our society forward.

The American agenda, as outlined by Professor Melman, is to make a radical social shift within the framework of the existing system. But such a shift is going to require a reconstruction of American life such as we have never known. Yet almost all the writers who placed before us the facts regarding the present state of affairs, with hardly an exception, have failed to address themselves to what is going to be required in the political arena. A Fred Cook speaks of a warfare state, but does not tell us what is required to end it. A Leon Keyserling says we can vastly increase the gross national product in the next several years and produce enough for both butter and guns, but proposes to do so while having the political apparatus undisturbed. Seymour Melman tells us what is on the agenda for the next twenty years, but he does not tell us what will be required in the political arena in order to carry out that agenda. Whitney Young says we need a New Deal, but nothing is said about how it can be achieved.

The crux of the matter is that the deprived masses in America cannot successfully resolve the aforementioned problem in the context of the two-party system as it presently exists. They can do so

neither through the Democratic party nor the Republican party. Both are vehicles of the very forces that have brought our country to this critical state. In a certain sense, the political situation today brings to mind some of the circumstances which existed in the years leading to the American Civil War. At that time, the Whig party was the main vehicle of the Eastern capitalists and Northern interests, but it was the party which from 1820 to 1859, led the retreat before the onslaught of Southern slaveholders. It took a long time for the democratic forces to find the proper political medium to do what history demanded. In the present historical period the democratic masses have placed their main reliance on the same kind of party—the Democratic party. Time and experience will demonstrate to them, as with the Whig party over a century ago, that this party is incapable of meeting these problems, that they will need to take the line of march to the eventual formation of a new people's party which will be capable of making some very basic reforms within the framework of the existing capitalist system.

#### *Increasing Negro Representation*

The Negro people are today giving a splendid example of an approach to the solution of the problem. The concept of Black Power, no matter how one views the slogan itself, means essentially the right of the Negro people to have a share in the power structure of this country. In this regard, the struggle for Negro representation, within and outside of the two-party system, is an important step toward the eventual formation of a new political party of the people. The Negro people have now placed on the agenda the necessity for them to have a voice and vote in the carrying out of the laws, the executive actions and the judicial rulings which their mass struggles have brought into existence. The 1966 and 1967 elections showed that this trend is now in motion, even though a long, hard road still lies ahead.

Ernest Calloway, a Negro leader in the Teamsters Union has taken note of this development. He says:

While the eyes of the nation—in the recent off-year elections—were *piercing* the political darkness for the various and sundry “back lashes” manufactured by the daily press of the nation, a real political revolution was quietly taking form in the big city ghettos of America. For the most part it had all of the earmarks of a new, sustained political development brought on by the his-

toric Supreme Court's decision in the legislative reapportionment case.\*

Representative John Conyers, Jr. of Michigan, after taking note of the gains made in 1966, optimistically looks to the future when he says: “By 1970, we can expect to double the number of Negro Congressmen and have mayors in Newark, Baltimore, Cleveland, and Detroit.”\*

The developments which evoked these responses came as a result of the election of nearly 150 Negro Americans to office in the 1966 elections. The number elected to state legislatures was doubled. For the first time since Reconstruction, a Negro was elected to the United States Senate. The 1966 trend continued through 1967.

The election of Cleveland Mayor Carl B. Stokes and Gary, Indiana Mayor Richard B. Hatcher were the outstanding events. Black people were elected to the legislatures in Virginia and Mississippi for the first time since the Reconstruction period. Also in Mississippi four county supervisors were elected. In Kentucky, Mrs. Georgia Davis became the first black woman to serve in the State Senate.

These electoral victories were accompanied by an unprecedented show of unity and independence from the party machines.

The growing migration of Negroes into the larger cities, North and South, the putting into effect of the voting rights legislation in the South, and the growing political consciousness of the Negro masses, all herald a new era of Negro representation which could surpass the achievements of the Reconstruction period.

The trend toward Negro representation will proceed differently in different phases and circumstances. This process cannot be compressed into a rigid mold. The slogans under which Negroes run for public office will also vary. In some circumstances, in an area of Negro majority, where there is a white incumbent, the thing to do may be to raise the slogan of Negro representation and strive to obtain bi-partisan unity of all Negroes in the area. In an area of Negro minority, the slogan of Negro representation may not be the *main* slogan raised. This would be true at the big city, county and state levels, where the Negro is a clear minority. Stokes and Hatcher could not have been elected without some white support.

Therefore, the Negro people, in placing political representation as one of the principal needs of this period, must do so in a way

\**Missouri Teamster*, December 1966.

which will win white masses to this concept and this necessity. Negro representatives, whether they come from areas of Negro majority or areas of Negro minority, must show that they are capable of representing the true interests not only of the black masses, but of the impoverished and dispossessed white masses as well. Objectively, the ability of Negro representatives to reflect what is needed by these masses will often exceed that of their white opponents.

Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, as Chairman of the House Committee on Labor and Education, has been one of the most outstanding defenders of the interests of labor that this committee has ever had. The period of Reconstruction, which resulted in Negroes holding public office at almost all levels of government, certainly did not hurt the broad white masses. It hurt the slaveholders, who were the exploiters of both black and white. Moreover, Negro legislators in that period made contributions that to this day stand as a hallmark of Southern progress.

Their role is described by Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois in these words:

The first great mass movement for public education at the expense of the state, in the South, came from Negroes. Many leaders before the war had advocated general education, but few had been listened to. Schools for indigents and paupers were supported, here and there, and more or less spasmodically. Some states had elaborate plans, but they were not carried out. Public education for all at public expense, was, in the South, a Negro idea.\*

The coming period will witness a growing impetus toward Negro representation. This will be expressed, on the one hand, in growth of representation on a quantitative level, and on the other, in its growth on a qualitative level. On the quantitative level there will be many more Negroes elected who are more responsive to the white political structure than to the Negro masses. On the qualitative level there will be a growth in numbers of those who are responsive to the will, desires and needs of the masses, and who will therefore be in constant conflict with the power structure. Civil rights forces should endeavor to aid and facilitate *both* developments, because in the final analysis, even those who are elected by the white power structure will find it increasingly politically advantageous to identify with their people and not with the machines which brought them into office.

\**Black Reconstruction in America*, World Publishing Co., New York, 1964, p. 638.

### *Work Within and Outside of Two-Party System*

The outcome of these developments will be to push the Negro into positions of strength and power within the political directorate. The foregoing should suffice to show that a rise in Negro representation, in Negroes having a share of power, is in the national interest and is not divisive. The slogan of Black Power, hated by some, deplored by others, and distorted by many, can have a positive effect in accelerating the development of greater political independence by all segments of our people, both within and outside of the two-party system.

These may well be the initial sparks which bring into existence the kind of political party that the times require. The formation of the Black Panther Party in Lowndes County, Alabama and of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party constitute important steps in the direction of a realignment of political forces.

However, a new people's party will not emerge full-blown overnight. The path will be marked by many twists and turns and, above all, by many local variations.

The Black Panther Party and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party are playing an important role in moving the Negro masses into an independent position outside the confines of the Democratic and Republican parties. But it would be wrong to see this as the sole arena of struggle. The fight must be waged also within the two major parties. This is not to imply that the advanced democratic forces can capture either party. However, there is a growing differentiation between progressive and reactionary forces in these parties which can lead to eruptions whose outcome no one can at this time predict.

Negro representation in the South has grown considerably in recent years. There are now Negro representatives in several Southern states. Ernest Calloway reports:

In six states and 12 cities, 30 Negroes were elected to state general assemblies—4 State Senators, and 26 lower house members . . . Texas elected a Negro woman to the State Senate and she becomes the second Negro woman sitting as a State Senator; Maryland elected the first.\*

In Alabama, the first Negro sheriff was elected since the Reconstruction period. These plus advances made in 1967 took place as a result

\**Missouri Teamster*, December 1966.

of struggle within the Democratic party, with the single exception of one Negro who was elected on the Republican line.

A successful policy requires a combination of tactics, struggle within as well as outside of major parties. Onesidedness in either direction can prove harmful.

### *Toward a New People's Party*

The situation shaping up today brings to mind the realignment of political forces which took place prior to the Civil War and which we have already noted. At least twenty years before a significant section of the people understood the necessity for a new party, the Abolitionists formed the Liberty party. This party, although based on the program to which the nation later rallied, was at that time too narrow to bring about the changes desired. But its formation and activity no doubt helped to make other forces aware of the necessity for a change.

Later, the breaking away of the Free Soil party from the Whig party greatly enlarged the forces committed to non-extension of slavery and an end to the compromises. But still it was not strong enough to take over the reins of government. After the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, a bloody battle ensued to prevent the extension of slavery. This Act was, so to speak, the straw that broke the camel's back and a few years later a large bloc of Whigs broke away and formed the Republican party.

The Republican party gathered all the popular democratic forces to its side, including the Abolitionists. As a consequence, it became from the beginning a party which expressed the national mood and was capable of waging a successful struggle for power.

Such were the roads leading ultimately to a successful resolution of the struggle against slavery. Today the issues and the class forces are different, and there are many other dissimilarities. But the process involved is instructive for those who would build a new people's party capable of winning a national election and not merely registering a protest.

The advanced forces may find it necessary to form new parties, independent tickets, etc., but these efforts must not become an end unto themselves. They must be conceived of rather as part of an ever widening process which brings the advanced forces within the Democratic and Republican parties to understand what is required to resolve the basic problems of our time.

The achievement of this result will require time and patience. But the objective circumstances in which we operate give us no reason for pessimism. The needs of today, like those of a century ago, cannot long be denied.

One of the factors inhibiting many from supporting a new party is the fear that it cannot win. The ideologues of the *status quo*, with the help of the electoral laws in most states, do all they can to encourage this fear. There are also those who argue that the reason why minority parties never seem to get traction is that one or the other of the two major parties takes over the program of the advanced forces, at least demagogically. This has indeed happened. The Wallace campaign in 1948 and Truman's demagogic espousal of much of Wallace's program is a good example. However, the issues before the nation are now becoming so grave that mere demagoguery or half-hearted concessions will no longer suffice. A radical solution is required, and for this end, a more radical party at the controls will increasingly become more obvious.

The coming to power of such a party is a prerequisite to basically change our foreign policy, eliminate the ultra-Right danger and begin the reconstruction of our economic and social life. It is the condition for making some radical changes in the Negro's position in our society. A government based on the rule of a new people's party must of necessity be anti-monopoly in its policy and must be prepared to take all the necessary measures to curb the power of big business over the life of the country.

With regard to political representation, the Negro can move into every arena of government. We can win hundreds of legislative seats on the federal, state and city levels. We can elect mayors in a substantial number of our large cities in both the South and the North. The gains in this field can far transcend what existed in the Reconstruction period. But even with all these changes, the Negro will not be truly free and equal. This will require a new system which not only restricts monopoly rule but does away with capitalism as such.

### *Only Socialism Will Bring True Equality*

In the present stage of the struggle substantial progress for our Negro citizens can be secured. It is conceivable that jim crow and segregation can be smashed, that substantial gains can be made in overcoming the income gap between black workers and white workers. In other words, it is conceivable that serious inroads can be made

on the system of superexploitation, that the ghettos can be transformed and that Negroes in the South can get some land.

But even with such far-reaching changes, the three hundred year differential between black and white will still not be wiped out. The Negro will still have no means of basically influencing the economy. And where there is no economic equality there is no real political equality.

In this age of monopoly capital, the Negro will never be able to amass enough capital to have a major voice in economic affairs. The banks, insurance companies and industries are run by private individuals whose stock holdings determine policy. Trade unions exercise some influence, but not basically. The only way black people can achieve voice and vote on economic policies is for the working class to take power and nationalize all the major industries. Under such conditions, the political weight of black people can be exerted in all the factories, mills, mines and workshops of the nation.

The rationale for changing the status of black Americans under socialism is observable under capitalism in the public and private sectors of the economy. Their position and status in industries operated by government far exceeds that in those operated by private enterprises. His vote at the ballot box can influence the public sector but has little effect in the private. Under socialism, where the government controls the whole economy, Black Power at the polls will influence the Negro's position in all aspects of our national life.

It is in this context that economic equality, the elimination of the effects of three hundred years of inequality can be wiped out.

It is in this context that black people can amass the power to protect their freedom and make Black Power a reality in its totality.

This is the goal. But it cannot be achieved except in relationship to a series of ongoing, expanding programs of an immediate nature.

In this respect the African Revolution surfaces many lessons for the Afro-American. It passed through two stages of development. The first was the struggle for political independence. After it was obtained, economic independence came to the forefront. The former laid the basis for the latter. And so the struggle of the Afro-American today for a greater share of political power can lay the basis for bringing closer the struggle for full economic power tomorrow.

## Strategy and Tactics in New Stage of Struggle

The struggle for Negro freedom is at a new level. In an over-all sense the new level is a rebellion against tokenism. While some headway has been made against jim crow, there is at the same time a continuation of the deteriorating conditions among the masses of Negro Americans, especially in the ghettos. There is a continuation of the struggle for a correction of the evils arising from the policy of oppression, but increasingly the demand is for the elimination of the system of oppression in a more fundamental way. It is a struggle for jobs, housing, education, but increasingly it is a demand for the elimination of the system that has created the inequality in jobs, housing and other conditions.

This new level of struggle forces the development of a corresponding set of tactics, alliances, political and ideological underpinnings. The relevance of our Party to these struggles will be measured by our contribution to the solution of the problems on this new level.

The rate of unemployment and the conditions of the unemployed in the ghettos are now worse than during the depression of the thirties. The policy of "containing the ghettos" as enclaves of oppression, poverty, slum conditions and police terror has become even more firmly institutionalized. The capitalist corporate structure has not given up the special system—the system of discrimination against Negro Americans. Basically the racial bars maintained by many of the trade unions remain. Jim crow remains the most critical domestic issue.

I want to speak about winning white America's participation in the struggle, but first a few words on the present nationalist trends. It is clear from recent experience that it is very important for us to be more sensitive to the direction of these nationalist currents and developments. But we must also agree as to the direction in which we want these trends to develop. We must know and sense the progressive elements within these trends. Not to determine in what direction we want these currents to develop would make us passive observers relying on spontaneity. Hence, as in all areas of struggle, both are im-

portant: being sensitive to the trends, and knowing in what direction we want to influence their movement.

We have to agree on direction in order to determine our position on such questions as alliances. We must clearly answer such questions as these: Do we want these nationalist currents to move in the direction of go-it-alone, or should we help them to find a different path? Do we want these currents to move toward alliances mainly with the liberals, the middle classes, or should we try to find a path of struggle that leads to alliances with the working class and with the working poor? These are very fundamental questions that we must at all times keep in mind.

Alliances presuppose independent and separate struggles by the various components and movements within them. Alliances do not replace such struggles. An alliance gives new strength to each component sector. It attacks with greater force the common obstacles that stand in the way of all the sectors. An alliance must be a stimulant which raises the struggles of the separate sectors to new heights. Thus, struggles by one sector on a more advanced level can stimulate the struggles of other sectors which are not so advanced.

#### *Burn Out the Influence of Racism*

The main thing to which I want to direct attention is a central weakness afflicting these struggles. Its correction is key to victory. This central problem, and the main challenge for us, is the task of winning greater numbers of white Americans to the struggle for Negro freedom, the task of burning out the influence of racism amongst white Americans. *The winning of this struggle is key to Negro-white unity. We can achieve such unity only to the extent that we accomplish this task.*

Our Party has made important contributions in this direction throughout its history, including this last period. But we have to say that we have too few "experts," too few "professionals," on this aspect of the struggle. While I don't want to criticize white Communists who study and seek to understand all phases of the Negro people's movement, the fact is that to do so and fail to be an expert on winning white Americans for the struggle against jim crow is a serious weakness. Communists who are white must above all be experts on this aspect.

Not only do we have very few experts, but we also have very little literature in this area, and that is something that should shock all of us. Furthermore, when have we heard an analysis of an experience on

this aspect of the struggle? If we had experts, if we had experiences and analyzed them, we would also have literature. But thumb through our present literature and you will find very little on this, the most difficult of all phases of the struggle.

The extent of the influence of white chauvinism in our own ranks must be measured by how effective we are in the struggle against racism in the ranks of white America. These are not two separate questions; they are two sides of one ideological problem. In our Party we must now say that it is not enough merely to condemn racism. That cannot be the yardstick of our understanding of this question, no matter how fierce or how correct our condemnation. Ideological concepts are best molded in the heat of struggle. The test of our ideological firmness lies in how we back up our ideology in practical activity.

#### *How to Wage the Battle Against Racism*

There are, of course, obstacles and difficulties besides the influence of chauvinism in our ranks, but here I would merely indicate that these are themselves consequences of the influence of chauvinism. There are white individuals who argue that it is not necessary to win white Americans for the struggle for Negro equality; instead they call for armed uprisings in the ghettos. This is not radicalism; it is only a radical-sounding cover for not fighting against the influence of racism. There are those who maintain that the task is hopeless, that you can't win white Americans for the struggle for Negro freedom. This idea, which we must firmly reject, also has some roots in our Party, expressed in many ways. And there are reasons for it. There is the fact that jim crow has such a long history in America. There is the concept that ideology is some kind of abstraction, unrelated to problems of reality. Hence, "once a racist, always a racist." It's there and there's nothing you can do about it. These people do not see the struggles and developments of life as having any effect on racism. Such hopelessness reflects a weakness in understanding of ideological struggles in general and a defeatist attitude toward the struggle against American capitalist ideology in particular.

In our approach to this question, we have to ask whether it is possible to win the struggle against the influence of racism amongst broader sections of the American people simply on the grounds that it is wrong—that it's "sinful," that it's anti-democratic, that it's contrary to the principles of religion and the concepts of brotherhood. Can we win this ideological struggle on that level? To be sure, such arguments are helpful. But they are not enough. They are an insuffi-

cient base for the struggle against racism in the U.S. And they are inadequate because our society has not reached the level of civilization where such moral and ethical standards are guides to daily mass behavior. Many bow to such standards on Sundays, but their practice on the other six days of the week is in line with racism. These arguments *influence* but do not *determine* behavior and therefore they are not enough. Certainly they should be used. But more is needed.

There is the need to explain the class roots of ideology. In the U.S., racism influences many. It is propagated by people of all classes, but its roots are in capitalism. It is an instrument of exploitation, of class rule. It is an instrument for the exploitation of *all* workers. This understanding of the roots of racism is a cardinal element in the development of class-consciousness among our workers.

#### *Mutual Self-Interests of Negro and White*

It is the mutual and parallel self-interests of Negro and white which constitute the key instrument of leverage in the struggle against racism, a pillar in the struggle for social progress. We can play our role as a Party or as individuals only if we become experts in its use. We need to make use of this leverage of mutual and parallel self-interests, for instance, in such areas as the struggle for democracy or the struggle for peace. Now, one does not have to argue very long to show that racism is the wedge for anti-democratic forces. This was obviously the case with Hitler and anti-Semitism; it is likewise the case with the ultra-Right today. It is Wallace's main stock-in-trade. But we are not experts in exposing this. We are not experts in showing that the American people cannot win the struggle for democracy unless white Americans see the need to struggle for Negro freedom.

Or, to take another example, there is the need of being experts in the field of economic struggles. How should Communists have worked to win white workers in the Ford strike for specific demands arising from Ford's policy of Negro oppression? There are some real problems here.

The workers in the foundry, which is a very big department at Ford, are mainly Negro (90 per cent) and a large section of the assembly line workers are also Negro. What is unique about these two departments? It is that they are the dead-end departments. They are the departments where time of retirement is time of death, because there are many health problems in them—problems of silicosis, of smog produced by the motors running in the assembly line. The union raised this question in these negotiations. Now, is it not obvious that

white Communist workers in Ford's should be the experts, should take the lead in the struggles in this union to put an end to such conditions? Should they not have striven to convince the white workers in Ford that they can't fully win the other demands unless the union stays united, and that to stay united the union must fight the deadly conditions in these two departments? For workers at Ford's, this is the test in the struggle against racism, against chauvinism.

Consider the struggle for peace and the struggle against U.S. imperialism. Here we should become experts at convincing white peace workers that to win the struggle against the war policy they must become active in the struggle for Negro freedom, experts at making clear to them the relationship of the two. Life has united these issues, and the struggle should reflect this unity.

When we raise the question of mutual and parallel interests, does this mean that there is need to tell the Negro people to fit their actions into the schedule and readiness of white people and white workers to fight? I don't think so. The militant, advanced pressure of a united, fighting Negro people is not in contradiction to the concept of seeking out those areas that will enhance the struggle for mutual and parallel self-interests with white workers. I believe there is a dialectical relationship between the two.

Once more, take the Ford strike. There is no contradiction in white Communists mobilizing the union in the struggle against the specific conditions in the foundry and assembly departments and a caucus of Negro union members militantly raising the same question in the union. On the contrary, there is a dialectical process here that everybody should understand. As long as black workers at Ford suffer from a special oppression there will be need for special forms of struggle. And as long as it exists the union will not be able to use its full power on any question.

When we speak of becoming experts, does this mean we must start from the premise that when our white comrades take up the struggle for freedom it will of necessity result in their isolation in broad movements? There are some thoughts in this direction, but I think that is misreading the present movement. Such thoughts are part of that same hopelessness of which I have spoken.

I don't think that's been our experience. I don't think that in Ford's it will lead to isolation of our white Communists if they raise this question in the union, in the self-interest of the union, the black workers and the white workers. It would lead not to isolation but rather to class unity. That it is a struggle, yes; a difficult struggle, yes.

But it is not a struggle that will necessarily lead to isolation. In fact, I am convinced from experience that if the struggle is conducted properly, it is the racists who will be isolated, not the Communists.

### *Expose Class Roots of Racism*

We have to be experts in exposing the class roots of this whole question. Working-class consciousness is the most solid base for the struggle against racism. White workers will understand if we can show that racism is a weapon in the interests of the ruling class.

The final result, and in fact the goal of the many-sided system of discrimination, is an inequality of economic status for black Americans. This is the class base, the profit of the system.

Thus, the elimination of this inequality is the rock bottom test for all struggles for freedom. The struggles must all in some way contribute to eliminating this gap.

This is also the test of how successful we are in winning the support of white Americans for Negro freedom. We Communists must become experts in winning the support of white Americans to wipe out the economic inequality in all spheres of activity. Again, it can best be done by exposing the class roots of the system. Communists in shops, in local unions, in communities, must become experts in leading struggles that will wipe out every vestige of the inequality. The same applies to the areas of rents, taxes, prices, etc.

And I would suggest further that our Party, and each club as a part of this discussion and the discussion on Comrade Lightfoot's report, probe the following question: Why am I—or we—not a bigger force in winning white America for this struggle? Why are we not the experts, the professionals in this arena? And when we relate the struggle against white chauvinism to these concrete tasks, then we will also win the struggle against the influences of chauvinism in our Party.

Order additional copies of this issue to be sold to your neighbors, friends or shopmates. Mail copies to community and trade union leaders.

## Class Source of Left Adventurism

The world today is distinguished by the fact that yesterday's bonded millions are everywhere engaged in the politics of revolutionary struggle to reconstruct the order of things political, economic and social. In all countries the best of the human race is deeply engaged in the struggle to secure the end of tyranny, exploitation, racism; in the struggle to open the way to a peaceful, prosperous and happy life for all mankind. As never before in the history of the world, there is a spirit of solidarity which links working people and fighters for freedom of all lands and climes in ever stronger bonds of mutual aid and fraternity.

Fifty years ago, with the capitalist world in the throes of a general fratricidal war between its two rival camps for the plunder of the human race, wracked and ruined by the economic consequences of the mass killing game, the working class of Russia, led by the Party of Communists with Lenin at its head, broke the dominant monopoly of capitalist imperialism, took power and commenced the building of socialism on one-sixth of the earth's surface.

From the lusty infant of October 1917, socialism emerged from World War II as a world system of states covering more than a fourth of the globe and counting in its population almost a third of mankind. The growth of socialism into a *second world social system* powerfully increased the state power base of the revolutionary process of the world working class, and gave added leverage to the struggle of the revolutionary forces throughout the world.

Socialism and the influence of the working class grows in power; capitalism declines in influence and suffers the loss of one area after another of its former colonial preserves and its internal contradictions are aggravated all down the line. Attesting to capitalism's general crisis, and contributing to it, is the growth of the anti-imperialist movements, the revolutionary movement for democratic, working-class and socialist goals.

In our country the mass crimes, the depredations against humanity which the apotheosis of world imperialism—the government of the United States of America—is committing against the people of Vietnam, is causing many of a broad class spectrum who fear war to look with revulsion upon the system of society in whose

cause such a barbaric war is being waged. Out of their experience in the struggle to stop the aggressive war which the U.S. imperialists are waging in Vietnam, large numbers are coming to conclude that the system of capitalist imperialism itself must be abolished.

The cause of the freedom and the emancipation of the unfree peoples has produced a great phalanx of national liberation movements which independently enters into the world-wide revolutionary process in support of, and alongside of, the world working-class movement. Large numbers of fighters for national equal rights and freedom from colonial bondage follow the logic of their experience with imperialism into the ranks of the conscious revolutionaries for a socialist alternative.

### *Petty-Bourgeois Radicalism*

The mass enrollment of these new revolutionary forces has posed before the Communist parties certain serious ideological and organizational challenges due to the fact that they have come largely from non-proletarian classes. They have come to the party out of their experience in the mass struggles for Vietnam, for national liberation, against discrimination and racism, for agrarian reform and livelihood. They are from the poor workers in agriculture and of the urban petty-bourgeoisie—the students, the intellectuals, the professionals. The assimilation of the non-proletarian revolutionary forces into the Communist Parties, without adulterating the theoretical purity or diminishing the Leninist norms of organizational standards, are important present and exacting tasks urgently confronting Communist Parties in many countries including our own and generally speaking, on a world scale.

It is a welcome sign of the times that the petty-bourgeois militants—from the cities or the countryside—enroll in movements of mass actions, and the best among them come to our Party. At the same time they generate the main pressure and constitute the primary source for the current attacks upon vital features of the Communist Party's policies in the spheres of ideology, organization and tactics.

In the United States at the present time the main attacks from the Left upon our Party and the main efforts to negatively influence its course now come from those militants from the non-proletarian strata who stand upon positions of petty-bourgeois radicalism.

Let me offer in evidence a case history of the depredations against revolutionary realism of the petty-bourgeois deviation. Representative of, and major publicists for, the most pretentious non-Party

petty-bourgeois vagrants of the political Left Bank, are the editors of the magazine *Monthly Review*, Paul M. Sweezy and Leo Huberman. With some reputation as liberals—even Marxists—in academic circles, they have set themselves up as the senior counselors to and theoretical innovators of “updated” Marxist (really) r-r-revolutionary doctrines for the young wave of radicals of the “New Left.”

The pattern of the anti-working-class, anti-Party, demagogic and diversionary work of these theoreticians of petty-bourgeois radicalism is clearly revealed in an editorial article entitled “The Black and the Red,” which appears in the September 1967 issue of their magazine.

### *Call for “Sniper Warfare” in Negro Ghetto*

Commencing with a correctly sympathetic appraisal of the rebellions of the poor which flared forth from the Negro ghettos in Newark, New Jersey and Detroit, Michigan last July, the authors proceed to the elaboration of a “new theory” for the Negro people to conduct their struggle for equality and freedom. Their theory calls for the fight against Negro discrimination and oppression to be waged through “the development of sniper warfare which is a form of urban guerrilla warfare.”

To our Party the main new feature of Detroit's uprising was the absence of white versus black racial violence and the fact that some white workers were participating with the Negro workers in that demonstration of wrath of the jobless and miserable, that “rebellion of the poor” in the resistance to the police, and in expropriating foodstuffs and household goods from the stores. To the gentlemen radicals of the *Monthly Review*, however, the main thing was the snipers on the scene. In the course of several pages of playing “sniper” or soldier, and advising on the ways of urban guerrilla warfare, they set forth the following advice to the U.S. Negro movement:

The “ghetto jungles of America's large cities” can accommodate numerous Black guerrilla bands. “No matter how anxious many of the people concerned . . . may be to remain out of it . . . it is not the wishes of the majority but the determination to fight of a militant minority plus the dialectic of the unfolding struggle itself which will decide who is and who is not to be drawn into the maelstrom.”

Now that “the Blacks of the ghetto jungles of America” have guns and are grouped into guerrilla bands, whom are they to shoot? This is the *Monthly Review's* reply: “The ghetto lacks the means to project its power outside its own narrow confines. This is most obvious in a

military sense. If a Black guerrilla band ventures out of the ghetto, it must operate in an entirely hostile environment from which it can expect no help whatever."

But whom do the Black guerrillas shoot? Editors Sweezy and Huberman explain: "All struggles against oppression are therefore by their very nature wars on two fronts—against the 'external' oppressor and against his 'internal' allies and collaborators." Since, as the editors observed before, "the ghetto vis-a-vis the outside world is relatively powerless," the Black guerrilla fighters can't get through to the real seats of the power, so they must wage their guerrilla warfare within the ghetto (!). That is, they must wage "the struggle against the enemy's fifth column of collaborators, infiltrators, provocateurs, and informers."

#### *A Policy of Defeat and Disaster*

But this task of shooting out of the way those other Negroes who show less than enthusiasm for the operations of the Black guerrilla bands can get messy and difficult to confine to the "proven enemies of the resistance movement"; the time has then arrived, we are told, for a genuinely revolutionary political organization to be born out of the muzzle of the guerrilla's gun.

"What is needed," we are told, "is a clandestine organization, disciplined, security-conscious, with a highly developed intelligence system enabling it to differentiate friend from foe, and above all possessed of the will and the moral authority in the community to mete out justice to those who betray the cause."

Then, "without for a moment relaxing their necessarily clandestine anti-fifth-column activities, they will tend to form something like above ground 'liberation fronts' which will for the first time bring real political organization and representation to the ghetto masses . . . they will also take on economic and social functions which are normally the responsibility of Constituted Governments."

But the Black ghettos suffer from the lack of everything now—houses, employment opportunities, schools, hospitals. How can they benefit as a barricaded isolated outpost when still within the confines of the center city? "Blacks in the U.S.," says Sweezy and Huberman, "are without illusions about the possibility of accomplishing anything by the methods of bourgeois democracy; and don't believe in the worth of reforms inside the ghetto . . . This world must be revolutionized; there is no other hope."

Negroes will just have to wait for that great day a'coming, Sweezy

and Huberman gloomily opine, because "if the the military power which the ghetto can bring to bear on its environment is small, this is no less true of its political power in the traditional sense. Here the chief weapon of the ghetto dweller is the vote . . . as a means of putting pressure on city, state and federal governments it is practically valueless. If the ghetto sends its own representatives to outside governmental bodies, they are in a hopeless minority. And if it uses its votes to support one or other of the establishment political machines, it simply helps to decide the particular identity of its oppressors."

Furthermore, they say, "the capitalist-imperialist system created its black ghettos, exploits them in various ways to its own profit and advantage, and means to hold on to them . . ." Besides, "to allow Blacks to escape, to simply walk out of the center of the empire, all those in the super-exploited periphery will be greatly encouraged to follow their example."

Nothing can help you now, Black folk, conclude our authors, save the psychological values you will accumulate through your guerrilla war games in the ghetto. However, "those of us who are outside these areas [white theorists for Black minority guerrilla insurgency!] . . . will be laying the groundwork for the day when a common struggle for common aims will be possible."

The gentlemen revolutionary theorists who prescribed the above for the Negro freedom movement in the United States are doing the work of *agent provocateurs*; they are in fact working against the development of the real revolutionary process. These pretenders to Marxism, if heeded, would bring tragedy and defeat to the Negro freedom movement.

A not unrelated fact is that these two count themselves valued counselors and theorists on the Latin American revolution. Indeed, Latin American comrades will recognize familiar features in the advice which Sweezy and his associates give to the Negro people in the United States.

#### *Denigrate the Working Class*

It is well known that a singularly important feature of the 22 million oppressed Negro people of the United States is their predominantly working-class composition, and the fact that the 70 per cent of the Negro people who are urban and working-class are not a separate but an integral part of the American working class, notwithstanding the fact that they suffer all manner of racial discrimination. In Sweezy and Huberman's "thesis for the Negroes," there is no single

mention of this working-class composition of the Negro people. But this factor makes for *objective bonds* between working-class white masses which are more powerful than the *subjective imposition* and cultivation by the monopolists of racism and anti-Negro prejudice. It indicates the main way for the development of the struggle to secure unity and of Negro people's-working-class alliance in the struggle against the common foe—the monopolist class oppressor and exploiter.

It is characteristic of the theoreticians of petty-bourgeois radicalism to represent the national liberation movements as divorced from the working-class movement. Indeed, they represent it as being in contradiction to, and opposed by, the working class.

While questioning the leading role of the working class in the further development of the world revolutionary process, such mock Marxists as Sweezy and Huberman exaggerate and extend the task of the national liberation movement far beyond its historic role and capability. They sneer at the working class of the capitalist countries, dub them "aristocrats" who have become a part of "the establishment" (of the monopolists). They assign to the national liberation movement the task of the revolutionary overthrow of imperialism (a task to be performed, of course, under the directional baton of such disenchanted dropouts from the bourgeoisie as Sweezy and Company!). Regis Debray, in his *Revolution in the Revolution*<sup>2</sup>, even boasts that "in a group of revolutionaries of bourgeois extraction" are really found the "connecting link in the worker-peasant alliance."

Having rejected the leading role of the working class, the petty-bourgeois radicals scorn the Communist Parties as conservative and old-fashioned. They are hostile critics of the Soviet Union and scoff at the primacy of the force of its influence, and the great influence of its example of socialist successes, in favoring and accelerating the world revolutionary process.

In the single example which we have cited, of the harmfulness of the petty-bourgeois theoreticians to the practical daily work of the movement, other points are self-evident. They make obvious identity with the position advanced by kindred petty-bourgeois souls in Peking and elsewhere who have been busy inventing new dogmas to govern tactics and strategy—unscientific dogmas and methods which could misdirect the revolutionary movement and impose unnecessary detours and setbacks.

Our two editors are not untypical of a new breed of anti-Leninist ideological tinkerers and adventurers who have been born of, and in turn seek to insinuate their viewpoint among, the non-workingclass

forces of the world revolutionary movement.

They exert an extravagant expenditure of energy striving to tailor the theory and alter the structure of the movement to correspond to the diktat of their petty-bourgeois prejudices, romanticism and vanities.

They are busily refurbishing old and long-discredited theories of revolutionary action as first set forth by various brands of organizational nihilists, anarchists, terrorists and rebellious student romantics.

They seek a way to make social revolution against capitalism without winning the working class.

They seek a passage to socialism without, and in opposition to, the party of the Communists.

#### *Idiological Struggle Against the "Revolutionary Phrase"*

In our country, influence of the petty bourgeoisie, departures from Marxism-Leninism as reflected in the writings of such individuals as Lin Piao and Mao Tse-tung, Regis Debray, Paul M. Sweezy and James Boggs, have a serious disorienting effect within the broad Left and to some extent upon our own cadre.

Lenin always sought out the class roots and causes of each particular contrary tendency and deviation in the developing revolutionary process. "There are . . . moments," he wrote, "when a question must be raised sharply and things given their proper names, the danger being that otherwise irreparable harm may be done to the Party and the revolution.

"Revolutionary phrase-making, more often than not, is a disease from which revolutionary parties suffer at times when they constitute, directly or indirectly, a combination, alliance or intermingling of proletarian and petty-bourgeois elements, and when the course of revolutionary events is marked by big, rapid zigzags. By revolutionary phrase-making we mean the repetition of revolutionary slogans *irrespective of objective circumstances* at a given turn in events, in the given state of affairs obtaining at the time. The slogans are superb, alluring, intoxicating, but there are no grounds for them; such is the nature of the revolutionary phrase . . ." (*The Revolutionary Phrase*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, p. 19.)

Karl Marx was in a continuing struggle with the deviations of non-proletarian radicalism. Profiling the nature of the petty-bourgeois radical, Marx wrote in reference to Proudhon, that he "is at once both bourgeois and man of the people. . . . A petty bourgeois of this type glorifies *contradiction* because contradiction is the basis of his existence. He is himself nothing but social contradictions in action." (*The*

*Poverty of Philosophy*, International Publishers, New York, 1963, p. 193.)

Still, the whole point of our concern is not that we fear contact and alliance with the militants from the petty-bourgeois masses. On the contrary, we must welcome this harvest of recruits to the revolutionary movement and count it a further evidence of the winter of capitalism's general crisis and the wide sweep and deep penetration of the revolution's appeal. The challenge is to assimilate, to win over ideologically these non-proletarians to the standards of the Marxist-Leninist party of the working class.

What Lenin taught in reference to our attitude toward work in the Right-led "reactionary" trade unions, applies in equal measure to our task in connection with the "new wave" of radicals from the ranks of the non-proletarian masses. Lenin wrote in "*Left-Wing Communism—An Infantile Disorder*": ". . . a certain 'reactionism' . . . is inevitable . . . Not to understand this means a complete failure to understand the fundamental conditions of the *transition* from capitalism to socialism. It would be egregious folly to fear *this 'reactionism'* or to try to *evade* or to leap over it, for it would mean fearing that function of the proletarian vanguard which consists in training, educating, enlightening and drawing into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and the peasantry." (*Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, p. 49.)

In our epoch the banner of Marxism-Leninism flies at the head of all the struggles in which peoples join for the advancement of humanity toward the satisfaction of the material needs and spiritual happiness, for a world of peace, brotherhood, freedom and abundance—for Communism!

Our Party, the Party of Negro and white, endeavors to imbue the working class with the understanding of the imperative necessity for a strong and firm alliance of labor and the Negro people. We stress that this alliance is mutually necessary and indispensable in the struggle against the common enemy—Wall Street monopoly capitalism—for the achievement of better living conditions today, for Negro liberation, and for the achievement of socialism.

PETTIS PERRY, *The Party of Negro and White*.

H. W. HERBERT

## The Negro-Labor Alliance in Chicago\*

In his report to the National Conference on Negro Affairs, Comrade Lightfoot says: "It has been historical, as well as current, experience that a coalescence of struggle of black and white at the grass roots level is the main prerequisite for social advance in our country. Yet, at a time when the nation faces unprecedented problems such as war and peace, the growth of a fascist danger and new economic difficulties, to many people black and white unity has become a dirty word."\*\* Understanding this statement is the key to building and extending the Negro-labor alliance. If there is no black and white unity the Negro-labor alliance will perish.

The Negro-labor alliance, which flourished in the '30s in the building of the great industrial unions, was greatly weakened by the ruling class with connivance of some top labor leaders in the '40s. They recognized its great potential and saw it as a threat to the capitalist system.

The racist rulers of our country and their faithful retainers in the ranks of the labor leadership have used every deceptive trick to prevent the redevelopment of the Negro-labor alliance. A chief method is the containment policy which Comrade Gus Hall analyzed in his report to the National Committee last June.\*\*\* The containment conspiracy is aimed at weakening the working class as a whole by cordoning off a substantial part of it—the Negro workers. It is practiced by government at the city, state and federal level, to contain the Negroes in the ghetto in a permanent status of poverty, and by the corporations to confine Negroes to specific low-paying jobs and departments.

Some labor unions also practice containment by preventing Negroes from advancing to leadership at all levels, by failure vigorously to pursue a policy of upgrading Negro workers to skilled positions. The

\*This article is based on a report to a panel at an Illinois Conference on Negro Affairs held recently.

\*\* *Black Power and Liberation, A Communist View*, New Outlook Publishers, p. 3.

\*\*\* *For A Meaningful Alternative*, New Outlook Publishers, pp. 35-39.

building trades are a most glaring example of this practice. These unions have resisted the admission of Negroes to membership and have discriminated against Negro youth in their apprenticeship programs where, at best, only token breakthroughs have been made here and there.

### *The Struggle Against Discrimination*

Discrimination in these unions is related to the craft ideology which permeates them—the ideology of supremacy. This is not the same as pride in skill, which all skilled workers, Negro and white, share. It is the chauvinist concept that a craft skill is a superior skill, which is the special attribute of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestants, and cannot be attained by Negro workers.

At one time this chauvinist attitude was directed against the Irish, Italians, Slavs and Hungarians, who were restricted to unskilled and semi-skilled work. Today it is directed at Negroes first of all, but also to Spanish-speaking minorities. This craft-racist ideology persists in the building trades as well as in some areas of the metal trades, particularly in the machinists and the tool and dye trades.

Today, even as unemployment is growing especially among Negro youth, the number of unfilled job openings in Chicago—in skilled and semi-skilled work—stands second only to New York City, and on a proportional basis is probably the highest in the country. For example: of the nearly 19,000 job openings in Chicago on June 1, 1967, almost 12,000 had been open for more than 30 days. Significantly, more than 2,000 of these openings were in the metal trades, more than 2,000 were for bench work, nearly 3,000 were for professional and technical work and over 5,000 were for clerical and sales positions. Yet, practically nothing was done to fill these jobs with Negro workers and technicians.

This wide gap between job openings that are known to exist and the persistent failure to fill them with Negroes can only be attributed to the discriminatory policies which continue to operate. Those who maintain that “no qualified Negroes” can be found for these jobs, cannot have it both ways. For their cohorts in the establishment stoutly maintain that the Chicago vocational schools have been training Negro youths for skilled work.

The particular points of discrimination in this instant go directly to the discriminatory placement policies of both the companies and the Board of Education, and to the failure of the trade unions to intervene to see that vocational school graduates get jobs and are

admitted to union membership. For example, at Jones Commercial High School, where key punch and machine transcription are taught, only 6.3 per cent of the student body is Negro and the record shows that no Negroes have been placed in jobs.

The state of affairs at other vocational schools dramatizes this problem even more sharply. At Chicago Vocational, which teaches 14 trades including cabinet-making, sheet-metal and welding, 40 per cent (1,608) of the students are Negro. But no one in the Board of Education, or the labor movement, has bothered to follow through on the job placement of these youths, or those who came before them, to fill some of the 19,000 job openings. Dunbar teaches the various building trades crafts, sheet-metal and welding. There, 99.8 per cent of the student body is Negro—a level that has existed for a number of years. Obviously, lack of training is not the cause for the situation.

Needless to say, all is not well in the Chicago vocational schools. Much discrimination is prevalent here. Take Prosser where electronics, machines, tool and die trades are taught. Of 1,143 students, only one is a Negro. Little wonder that a Negro tool and die maker is such a rarity; that Negro machinists are so few. To get tool and die or machinist training at Prosser, a youth must have a job. This goes directly to the hiring policies of the employers, banded together in the Tool and Die Institute. That outfit must become the target of a mass-movement demand for the immediate employment of hundreds of Negro and Spanish-speaking youth—a movement of such power that it will enlist the support of the machinists' union and the school board.

The situation at the Flower and Richards schools merits special attention. At the Flower school, which teaches child care and home management to young women, 94.5 per cent of the students are young Negro women. At the Richards School, teaching home management and cosmetology (beauticians), 19.5 per cent are young Negro women. These figures expose the flagrant racist attitude towards Negro women who are primarily trained for kitchen work and child raising, as domestics to be exploited in the suburban homes of the wealthy. The exception is the training of beauticians—and this, only for a small number. The freedom movement and the trade unions need to undertake the task of reversing this state of affairs and help to assure that training for skilled production and office work is opened up to young Negro women.

While advancing the fight to end all discriminatory practices in the training of Negro youth, the fact remains that there are skilled and semi-skilled Negro building trades workers who are being kept out

of work and out of the unions. The recent Building Trades Conference in Bal Harbor, Florida, acknowledged as much. But despite the fanfare that a big change was in the offing, nothing of any real meaning has come out of this gathering. All the fine promises will be realized in life only by the unfolding of a persistent mass struggle.

The new federal office building which is scheduled to be erected in the downtown area should be singled out as a target for a massive campaign to bring about the hiring, in quantity, of Negro workers in the building trades. This needs to become the central focal point of the freedom struggle in Chicago for the immediate period ahead. A major breakthrough can be made. But it will take the combined efforts of the freedom movement, progressive labor forces and their democratic allies.

### *Organizing the Unorganized*

The Chicago chapter of the Negro American Labor Council's white paper showed that there are some 400,000 employed poor in Chicago. Organized workers have a vital self-interest in getting these unorganized workers into trade unions. *Commerce*, the organ of the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry, stated in its November 1967 issue:

If, in 1960, Negro expenditures for current consumption had been equal to those in the white population, the added direct purchases by Negroes would have been nearly \$7.5 billion. Because of multiplier effects, of course, the total impact on the economy would have been much greater than that. And because of population growth, the figure would have been much larger today.

In other words, the direct purchases today would be closer to \$10-12 billion dollars. Imagine the work and jobs for whites as well as Negroes!

Thus, the struggle to raise the income of the Negro community, to overcome the shameful condition of *employed* poverty in the ghetto and slums of our city would be of direct benefit to white workers as well. A drive to organize these hundreds of thousands of workers and bring about an increase in their earning power would be the most effective way to conduct the war on poverty.

It is gratifying to learn that, at long last, the International Typographical Union has decided to go all out in the organization of Donnelly's, one of the biggest printing plants in the world, where many Negroes are employed. The Teamsters and Local 73 of the

Building Service Union have made an important breakthrough in winning bargaining rights at the largest hospital in the city—St. Luke's-Presbyterian—resulting in substantial wage increases and improved conditions for the workers. This is a good beginning toward organizing all the 40,000 hospital and health-care workers, among the lowest paid and hardest working people of all in this area.

But these examples are only beginnings toward the real organizing drive that is needed in this city. Tens of thousands of workers remain unorganized in the candy, confectionary, sales, services and other industries. What is needed is a concerted drive of the entire labor movement—both the Industrial Union Department and the Chicago AFL-CIO Council—with the active support and backing of the community. It is vitally important to initiate a broad discussion in all local unions on the urgent need to organize the unorganized, and to explain why it is in the self-interest of white workers to help organize the low-paid Negro, Puerto Rican and Southern white immigrants in the city. Through rank-and-file pressure conditions can be created to compel the leadership of labor in Chicago to move.

### *The Negro American Labor Council*

The NALC is one of the most important organizations in the country because of its unique position of being, at one and the same time, a bona fide labor body and a movement for Negro freedom. It has the potential of acting as a bridge between labor and the freedom movement and of becoming a unifying force which provides working-class leadership to the struggles for full equality on the job, in the unions and in the communities.

The Chicago chapter of the NALC has great potential in playing this key role in the city. It was instrumental in establishing a chapter in Gary, Indiana which played a prominent role in the Hatcher election campaign. Its white paper helped to alert the labor movement to the need of organizing the employed poor. It has fought and won dozens of cases against discrimination and has secured jobs for scores of Negroes.

One of the most effective means of building the NALC is the establishment of Negro caucuses in all plants and local unions which will affiliate. Such caucuses are springing up everywhere. Recently one was formed in the Chicago Teachers Union. These black caucuses should be convinced to coordinate their separate efforts on a city-wide basis. The NALC provides the medium for doing this. In this way a

great force for equality and progress can be created which can wield powerful influence in both the labor and freedom movements.

### *Combatting Racism in the Unions*

The election results in Gary, Cleveland and Boston prove that trade unionists are not one reactionary mass. To the contrary. In Gary, it was the steel union which provided the main base of votes—Negro and white—as well as the major portion of the margin of victory. The endorsement of Stokes by the Polish National Alliance and the leading daily Hungarian paper also shows that nationality group workers are not one reactionary mass.

In waging the struggle against racist ideology in the labor movement, it is necessary to take into account the strengths that do exist. If these strength are overlooked, the fight against racism will be doomed to failure, and the existing weaknesses will remain.

Of course, there is no union which has won the battle against racism. But there are some unions, like the industrial unions, which have a better position on this question than the craft unions. For example, in the Packinghouse Workers Union, Negroes have been integrated on all levels of leadership, including the top offices. Negroes hold leading posts in the United Electrical, Steel Workers, and United Automobile Workers, although even here there are no Negroes in top international union positions.

The worst situation continues to exist in the Building and Metal Trade unions, where no Negroes can be found in top union positions and practically none at intermediary levels. At the local level, the most shameful situation exists in the Hod Carriers and Building Laborers Union, which is 80 per cent Negro in membership, with not a single Negro in leadership. We understand that this situation is typical in this union across the country.

In a number of locals of the Packinghouse Workers Union, where Negroes are a minority, Negroes have been elected to top positions, including local union presidents. This is beginning to take place in steel as well. The locals in Hammond and Muncie, Indiana, and in Morgantown, West Virginia, have elected Negroes as presidents, even though they comprise a minority of the membership.

This equality attained in union leadership is spilling over into the political arena. In Muncie, Indiana, for example, the Negro president of Local 1314 of the steel union, was elected a city councilman on a Negro-white slate of trade unionists running on the Democratic party ticket. Incidentally, the new mayor is a member of UAW and the slate

included two additional auto workers and two steel workers, most of whom were elected.

In the Chicago Teachers Union, the black caucus got together with two other caucuses of Negro teachers and projected the candidacy of a Negro as functional vice-president for the high schools. This quickly led to a joint meeting of the leadership of the Negro caucuses with the leadership of the democratic caucus—the Teachers Action Committee—composed mainly of white teachers, where it was agreed to withdraw a white candidate and give united support to the Negro. In turn, this led to the withdrawal of another white candidate. As a result the Negro was elected to this position with the support of all the progressive forces in the union.

This common effort has brought other results. The white teachers have now proposed that unity be developed behind a Negro candidate for the post of full-time vice president in next year's election. It was also agreed that a unified campaign be initiated to win the union behind the fight for certification and wage equity for the full-time substitute teachers, most of whom are Negroes and are employed in the inner-city schools.

This experience is rich in lessons. It shows that various trends among Negroes can unite; that whites will respond and rise to the demands of the times and, once having grasped the significance of the freedom struggle, can and will take initiative to carry it further; that rank-and-file and Left initiatives are meaningful and essential. What can be done in the teachers union can be achieved in other unions as well, provided there is understanding, initiative and drive. Above all, it is necessary to establish rank-and-file formations to initiate and implement such programs.

The last state convention of the AFL-CIO took a forward step when it voted to set aside the better part of a day at each state convention to discuss ways and means of advancing civil rights and building Negro-white unity. This decision came as a direct result of pressure from below, especially from the packing, steel and shoe unions, as well as from the Airline Stewardess Union, where the opposition of the leadership was defeated. Women trade unionists, Negro and white, played a big role in reversing the stand of the leaders and a white, Polish-American steel worker made the decisive speech in committee which decided this outcome.

UE has published a brochure entitled *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, which merits a wide distribution throughout the ranks

(Continued on page 73)

# Wipe Out the Stench of Racism

No other people, with the possible exception of the native population of South Africa, has been subjected to such persecution, indignity and super-exploitation as have the Negro people in our country. Nothing so exposes the sham and hypocrisy of the U.S. pose as chief guardian of freedom and democracy than the subjugation of the 22,000,000 Negro people and their subjection to the virulent racism and chauvinism which pervades every aspect of American life.

Yet many white Americans—even some who indignantly disclaim anti-Negro bias—have been ready to place the onus for the recent rise in racism on the Negro people themselves. This has become all too obvious in the reactions within the white communities—as well as in Congress and the White House—to the rebellions which have swept the Negro ghettos in many of the largest urban centers of the North.

To anyone with even slight political awareness of what things are like in these United States for the masses of Negroes, it should be clear that these rebellions were bitter, angry explosions against the frustrations and hopeless deprivation of the blacks huddled in the ghettos, a notice to white America that token freedom on the installment plan can no longer suffice.

But the cry of anguish has not been understood. Instead, from many whites have come denunciations: the Negro uprisings have hurt the cause of civil rights; "Negro extremists" are responsible for "stirring up racial hatred"; they have alienated white support and given rise to unchecked white extremism. An example of this reaction is that of Dore Schary, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League, who is reported to have stated that the Negro "racist revolutionaries" bear a major responsibility for the acceleration of the "white backlash," that the "ghetto violence" has strengthened attitudes favoring segregation in the white communities and made Congress "notoriously reluctant to face head-on the basic facts of Negro inequity." (Irving Spiegel, *New York Times*, November 22, 1967.)

Thus, the victim of oppression is accused of instigating race antagonisms, while the racist oppressor, responsible for the conditions that led to violence, and who persistently inflames anti-Negro hostilities, is taken off the hook.

## *Not A Backlash—But A Frontlash*

Playing upon existing prejudices, the racists have deliberately cul-

tivated what is euphemistically called the "white backlash." As Dr. Thomas F. Pettigrew, a social psychologist at Harvard, stated, the backlash is an "out from under the rocks phenomenon," a "real mobilization of the hate that was always there." (*New York Times*, September 19, 1966.)

Is not racism endemic to American life? Has it not polluted the very air Americans breathe? Who among us can stand up and say they are immune to its deadly, poisonous infection?

How else can one explain the absence of a crusade by organized labor and other democratic forces to help end the rising unemployment in the ghetto and to compel the enactment of meaningful job-training programs for the hundreds of thousands of Negro youth who now roam the streets without hope of ever getting work?

How else explain the silence of organized labor and other progressives to the callous actions of the man in the White House, whose answer to the anguish in the ghetto has been a call for a national day of prayer, improved "riot" training of the National Guard, and the setting up of a commission to "study" the causes of the crisis?

How else explain the absence of viable opposition to a Congress which, in the face of these explosions, concerns itself with anti-riot bills and other repressive measures but refused to pass a bill for a paltry \$40,000,000 to fight the rats that infest the city slums while appropriating, without so much as the blink of an eye, billions for the genocidal war in Vietnam?

Where is the reaction to the rise in KKK violence, to bombings and murders in the South, to arrogant police occupation of the ghettos and to police brutality which has become an everyday occurrence in the Negro community?

Where is the recognition that under the guise of "safety in the streets" and "fighting crime," new repressions are in the offing against the Negro people while organized crime, corruption and graft remain unmolested?

For years the Goldwaterites, Birchites and others of their ilk have been calculatedly selling the public the idea that the Negro is the real peril to "safety in the streets." A crass example is the following by David Lawrence (*U.S. News & World Report*, November 20, 1967) reeking with strong racial overtones:

Millions of people are afraid to go out on the streets at night. Many families don't even feel safe inside their own homes. Scarcely a day goes by that newspapers aren't reporting robberies, criminal assaults or murders in ordinary peaceful neighborhoods.

*Can this be treated as the product merely of a long neglect of sociological improvement and as something that will be cured by pouring billions of dollars into so-called poverty areas?* (My emphasis—B.G.)

This is not a backlash—it is a frontlash instigated by racists, exploiting the latent, and not so latent, racial prejudices in an offensive to halt the freedom struggle and “keep the Negro in his place.” Reverend Martin Luther King, in a Meet the Press broadcast (August 21, 1966) makes the same point as Dr. Pettigrew:

Our civil rights efforts have not aroused hatred, they have revealed a hatred that already existed. There is no doubt about the fact that there are many latent hostilities existing within certain white groups in the North, and what has happened now is that these latent hostilities have come out in the open . . . the hate is here. We didn't create it, we merely exposed it and brought it to the surface.

Admonitions of so-called friends of the Negro freedom movement urging the Negro people “not to push so hard,” to “cool it,” are hardly fitting when it is evident that civil-rights legislation—important as it is—has brought no relief in the conditions of ghetto life. The Negro people refuse to stay put until sometime in the distant future when the white Messiah will come to deliver them.

The determination of Negro Americans to win their freedom now springs from the same longing for human dignity and full political and economic equality that motivates the worldwide revolt of the colonial peoples for independence, for the right to determine their own destiny. National independence was never “granted” on a silver platter, and it is becoming clear that freedom and equality here will not be won without the component of the determined and united struggle of the Negro masses.

This is the challenge that confronts enlightened men and women in our land. Will they support, without equivocation, the Negro's right to freedom, denying once and for all that the black man is an alien in his own land; or will they stand by and permit the freedom movement to be crushed and dissipated? For the real problem at home is not the Negro—it is white America that has been remiss in meeting the challenge.

#### *A Democracy for Whites Only*

Since the beginning, democracy in these United States has been democracy for the white man only, while the black man was denied the most elementary human rights.

It is a historic fact that the first draft of the Declaration of Independence arraigned King George III for waging a “cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere in the transportation here.” But this statement is not to be found in the final text. It was deleted at the insistence of a number of Southern delegates to the Continental Congress. The final draft had nothing to say on slavery. Thus the founders of our nation saw no contradiction in proclaiming that “all men are created equal” while the Negroes were kept in bondage.

Nor is it by accident that for more than a century after the Revolution, the highest court in our land could insist that the Constitution did not recognize the rights of the Negro people. The fact remains that the basic law of our land did not include the Negroes among its citizens. The Constitution dealt with the Negro in three ways: a) it stipulated that Congress could end the slave trade, but not before 1808; b) it authorized the Federal Government to return runaway slaves to their owners; c) it provided that a slave would be counted as three-fifths of a man in determining the basis of representation to the House of Representatives.

No wonder that, in the infamous Dred Scott decision of 1857, Supreme Court Justice Taney could declare:

We think that they are not included and were never intended to be included, under the word “citizen” in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States.

As late as 1896, in the Plessy vs. Ferguson case, the Supreme Court, in placing its stamp of approval on segregation, said: “If one race is inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them on the same plane.”

Thus our highly acclaimed democracy, born in the throes of revolution, never meant to include the black man. “And it is significant of the specifically bourgeois character of these human rights,” Frederick Engels takes note (*Anti-Duhring*, International Publishers, p. 117), “that the American Constitution, the first to recognize the rights of man, in the same breath confirmed the slavery of the colored race.”

By the time of the enactment of the Constitution the infection of racism had already taken hold. In the nearly two hundred years that

have elapsed, the Negro has yet to achieve the right to be a Negro and an American.

### *Racism Takes Root to Justify Slavery*

Discrimination in one form or another has plagued our country ever since the first 20 Negroes were landed in Jamestown, Virginia in 1619. It was not until the beginning of the 19th century, however, that the doctrine of racism, pronouncing the innate inequality of the Negro as the justification for chattel slavery, took firm root in the land.

Ashley Montagu, in his well-known book, *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (World Publishing Company, Cleveland), shows that racism is a product of capitalism and colonialism. Social inequality, emboldened by theories of biological inequality, paved the way for the oppression of colored peoples in Africa and Asia. It was the "white man's burden" to bring civilization and salvation to the inferior peoples of the world, and "save them" from savagery and barbarism. In a tone of irony, C. L. Sulzberger (*New York Times*, April 18, 1964) says in this connection:

Generally speaking, there was no known racial prejudice before the fifteenth century, when Iberian explorers skirted the African coast. Until then Europe viewed mankind as divided only between Christians and infidels. Religion's false prophets, unhappily, formalized the bigotry of race. When the white man came to Africa with the Bible, the Negro had land; after some decades the Negro had the Bible and the white man had the land.

Prejudices against other peoples did exist earlier, but these were directed primarily against the exploited classes of both slave and feudal society who were declared to have been born to toil for the slaveowners and the nobility. Aristotle, in ancient Greece, defended slavery: "By nature, too, some beings command and others obey, for the sake of mutual safety; for a being endowed with discernment and forethought is by nature the superior and governor; whereas he who is merely able to execute by bodily labor is the inferior and natural slave." No doubt, the term "lower classes," with its chauvinist implications—but used with impunity up to the present day—can be traced to the justification of the inferior status of the slave.

Montagu shows that as the slave trade faced opposition within the country, the myth of white superiority was used to intrench the institution of slavery. He writes:

A study of the documents of the English and American slave

traders down to the eighteenth century also serves to show that these men held no other conception of their victims than that, by virtue of their position as slaves, they were socially their captors' caste inferior. But that was not all, *for many of these hardheaded, hardbitten men recorded their belief that their victims were often quite clearly their mental equals and superior to many at home* (ibid., p. 38). (My emphasis—B. G.)

It was only when voices began to make themselves heard against the inhuman traffic in slaves . . . that, on the defensive, the supporters of slavery were forced to look about them for reasons of a new kind to controvert the dangerous arguments of their opponents . . . the champions of slavery could only attempt to show that the slaves were most certainly not as good as their masters. And in this highly charged emotional atmosphere there began the doleful recitation of the catalog of differences which were alleged to prove the inferiority of the slave to his master (p. 39).

The right of the slaveholder brutally to oppress the Negro was given sanction in numerous "scholarly studies" which, with pseudo-scientific pretensions, set out to "prove" the congenital and inherited inferiority of the black people. Slavery was presented as not only just, but of special benefit to the Negro who, "saved from savagery," was now generously cared for by his "benefactor and protector." The barbarity of slavery was transformed into a benevolent fraternity of the paternalistic Southern gentlemen and their contented wards—a mockery of scientific truth that all to many historians and present-day school textbooks have perpetuated.

Physically differentiated in outward appearance from the rest of the population, the Negro people were isolated and subjected to special oppression. Racial distinctions were used by the slave masters, and their sycophants in South and North alike, to devise a whole gamut of slanderous, degrading myths and stereotypes.

### *Racism Used to Impose New Chains*

The racism born with slavery did not die with the Civil War that culminated in the abolition of slavery. It was revitalized by the ruling bourgeoisie to impose new chains of super-exploitation, to enforce a vicious pattern of discrimination and segregation that continues to blight the nation until this day.

To the racist, the Negro is a lower form of being, mentally primitive, emotionally underdeveloped, lacking the intellectual capacity to assimilate the knowledge and culture the white man developed. With a larger brain, God gave the white man qualities denied the Negro

whom He also made subordinate to the white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant. "Keeping the Negro in his place," is thus prescribed by nature and is the "will of the Lord." Therefore, to protect the "purity" of the white race, it is incumbent to segregate the Negro, to prevent social contact, for fear that this will lead to intermarriage and the "mongrelization" of the white race.

Typical of the racist slanders with which the records of Congress are replete is the following excerpt from former U.S. Senator Bilbo of Mississippi in a debate on the Fair Employment Practices Bill in January 1946:

I said segregation was a law of nature. Segregation is perfectly natural in nature. It is natural in the animal world. We do not see horses out in the meadow land lining up with cows. No; the cows go by themselves the other way. Hogs and sheep keep apart. Hogs go by themselves and sheep by themselves. That general law also applies to the human race. People of the Mongolian race associate together. They intermarry and want to live together. The same is true of the Indians. The Negro race is the only one I know which is ashamed of its race and which tries to obtain for itself social equality with the white race. Most of its leaders preach that desegregation and mongrelization and intermarriage is the only solution for the race question in this country. (Cited by Barrows Dunham, *Man Against Myth*, Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1947, pp. 101-02.)

### *The Races of Mankind*

It is because such odious connotations have been connected with the term "race" that many scientists, progressives, including some Marxists, have urged the discontinuance of its use, recommending that it be replaced by "ethnic group." However, racist myths and slanders are not destroyed by manipulating the vocabulary.

The concept "pure race" is the invention of the racists. Science—biology, anthropology and sociology—have long ago established that the overwhelming majority of mankind is a mixture of many races, resulting from the mobility of formerly isolated groups in primordial times, their mingling and intermarriage over thousands of years. The intermingling of races has been going on almost from the beginning of human life on earth, and the process has been accelerated in recent centuries as new modes of transportation developed. Talk of a "pure race" is sheer nonsense.

Science, however, does not deny that mankind is divided into racial, or ethnic groups, differing in certain external physical traits such as body structure, texture of hair, color of skin—which are heredity and

transmitted from generation to generation. These physical features developed during the early stages of man, when small groups settled in regions with different climatic conditions, and over thousands of years of isolated existence. Thus a black skin provided protection from excessive exposure to the ultra-violet rays of the sun in tropical climes; the fold of the upper lid protected the eye from dust in semi-desert areas; and the lighter skin is typical of the moderate climes where solar radiation is weaker. Today, of course, people of various races live in all parts of the world.

Anthropologists may still differ as to the number of races comprising mankind. But, the most generally accepted classification is that of three basic racial groupings: Caucasoid (white) centering in Europe; Mongoloid (yellow) centering in Asia, including also the American Indian; Negroid (black) centering primarily in Africa.

### *The Essential Oneness of Mankind*

While generally agreeing on this broad classification, scientists also make two vitally important qualifications:

First, that the differing external physical features are relatively superficial, that all men are alike in their fundamental characteristics. L. C. Dunn in *Race and Biology* (a UNESCO publication) states categorically:

The judgment of biology . . . is clear and unequivocal. The modern view of race, founded upon the known facts and theories of heredity, leaves the old views of fixed and absolute biological differences among the races of man, the hierarchy of superior and inferior races founded upon this old view, without scientific justification. Biologists now agree that all men everywhere belong to a single species, *Homo sapiens* . . . all men share their essential characters in common, having received them from common ancestors . . . (p. 7)

The Soviet scientist, Mikhail Nesturk in *The Origin of Man* (Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow) makes another important observation. He says:

Darwin drew the conclusions that the Indians, Negroes and representatives of other races had a fundamental similarity with the Europeans in the basic features of their psyche, their inclinations and habits. He based his conclusions on the fact that, judging by the shape of stone arrow-heads gathered from various countries and belonging to various epochs of human prehistory, methods of fabricating them were amazingly similar (p 326).

Men everywhere showed the same inventiveness in developing tools to increase the sources of food supply, to house and clothe themselves.

A second qualification is that as a result of the commingling of different races over thousands of years there are today no sharp boundaries marking off one race from another. Thus the differences between the races are relative, not absolute. All races blend inextricably into each other, with great numbers of humans so-called in-betweens. Where one race ends and another begins is impossible to determine except by arbitrary judgment.

The fact that racial characteristics intertwine is another proof that the races of man have a common origin and are related to each other by blood. The essential oneness of mankind is fundamental. The superiority of the white race over darker-skinned peoples is an invention which has no basis in nature.

A conference of anthropologists and geneticists called by UNESCO in 1952, composed of leading scientists from all over the world, unanimously concluded:

1. There is no scientific knowledge that provides any basis for the assumption that the races of mankind differ in their innate capacity, their intellectual and emotional development.

2. Some biological differences between human beings within a single race may be as great or greater than biological differences between races.

3. Vast social changes have taken place which have no connection with changes in racial type, for genetic differences have little significance in explaining the social and cultural differences between different groups of mankind.

4. There is no evidence that mixing races produces disadvantageous results.

Clearly, the racist contention of superior and inferior races is a fraud, propagated to legitimize the oppression of the African and Asian peoples and, in the case of our country, to wring billions of super-profits from the super-exploitation of the Negro people. This racist fraud is nurtured to create Negro-white divisions, especially within the ranks of the working class, where unity of black and white is indispensable for the emancipation of all from capitalist enslavement.

#### *Some Liberals Underwrite Separatism*

As already mentioned, the problem in the United States is not the Negro—it is racism. While the Negro people from the very start vigorously resisted the spread of racism (see Herbert Aptheker's

*Documentary History of the Negro People*), this is primarily a task that should belong to the whites—to white Communists, to the white radical Left, to white workers, progressives and democracy-loving individuals. Regrettably, the fight against racism is sorely lagging in our country. In recent years a number of developments have taken place which indicate a withdrawal from the battle and capitulation to white chauvinism on the part of a considerable number of white liberals, students and even working-class organizations. In some instances, positions taken by liberals, whether wittingly or not, feed and do not undermine existing racist prejudices.

While remonstrating against the Negro "extremists" and decrying "black power" as "inverse racism," many white liberals have suddenly become supporters of separatism and feel that the goal of integration must be postponed. "A growing number of white liberals are saying," Gene Roberts reports (*New York Times*, November 17, 1967), "that integration is impossible for the foreseeable future, that the nation should concentrate instead on building up Negro institutions, and that only then—perhaps in a generation or two—can it talk about integration."

Richard A. Cloward, a white sociologist at the Columbia School of Social Work, now a leading advocate of separatism, proposes "that the black movement forget about physical integration and worry about power integration—building up power in the cities." W. H. Ferry, from the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, bluntly maintains that "racial integration in the United States is impossible." What then is the perspective? The goal should be, he says, "peaceful coexistence between blacktown and whitetown."

Shades of apartheid! What is the roadblock to equality and freedom for the Negro people? Surely it is not Negro intransigence.

In the past decade, the civil rights movement has placed priority on school and housing desegregation, on the elimination of job inequities and on apprenticeship programs. Despite the intensity of the struggle, there has been little progress in all these fields. Resistance to open housing legislation has stiffened, with the white exodus to the lily-white suburbs proceeding at a rapid rate. *De facto* school segregation has increased; unemployment continues to climb; and jobs are still an unfulfilled promise. Life in the ghetto has substantively deteriorated as a result.

The civil rights movement has therefore concluded that it must give emphasis to resolving the grave problems of the ghetto, such as raising the quality of education, easing slum conditions, finding jobs for the Negro youth. This has been widely interpreted as a retreat to

separatism, whereas in actuality it signifies a determination to improve the lot of people in the ghetto while not letting up in the fight for desegregation, open occupancy and job equality. Similarly, black power is in essence a demand for equal sharing in political power, using such new political strength to give flesh and blood to the fight for freedom and equality.

But the white liberals now say, "Good, build up *your* institutions, elect *your* representatives, and when the time comes we will be with you in the fight for integration." But when will the time be propitious?

Is this an admission that the racist roadblocks are impenetrable and that white Americans do not have the will to destroy them? Or is it an acceptance of the "modest proposal" made by W. H. Ferry in *The Center Magazine* (January 1968) to establish "black colonies" in "any area a mile square or more in size, having a population of more than 25,000 containing 75 per cent or more black inhabitants," to be directed by a Department of Colonial Affairs in Washington, with "a Secretary of Cabinet rank." Of course, these would not be old-type colonies, but "self-ruling units of government fitted into the American system."

It is hard to know whether Mr. Ferry is serious in his proposal or frustrated by the anti-Negro bias which continues to pervade the white community. For he does say with bitterness, "Black colonies will at least have the virtue of displaying concretely how the majority of our citizens feel about twenty million black Americans as evidenced by vote after vote, poll after poll, by one school board squabble after another, one indignity after another, by every open and covert device of white America."

Serious or not, the advocates of separatism and/or "black colonies" are defaulting in the battle against racism and the white supremacist prejudices that permeate the ranks of ordinary white Americans. Their lack of action is thus a capitulation to racist resistance to integration, to freedom and equality for the Negro. What makes Mr. Ferry believe that the American Negro will accept a segregated black colony status, any more than do the Africans in racist South Africa? One can call this attitude nothing else but cowardice; a retreat before the onslaught of the racists.

#### *Others Claim Negro Like Immigrant of Yesterday*

In contrast to this stance, there are a number of white liberals who see important Negro advancement and maintain that the Negro faces today problems similar to those once faced by earlier immigrants.

This is the tune sung by Irving Kristol in an excerpt from a forthcoming book reprinted in *U.S. & World Report* (November 26, 1967), and in an earlier article entitled "The Negro Today is Like the Immigrant Yesterday" (*New York Times*, September 11, 1966).

Mr. Kristol maintains that tens of thousands of Negroes are moving out of poverty "every year"; that the "number of poor is decreasing"; that the "density of population in Negro slums" is declining, and in fact "is considerably less than it was for the Irish, Italian and Jewish immigrants when *they* lived in slums." Admitting that "the Negro migrants start under a more onerous handicap than their predecessors," it is also true that "they are receiving much more assistance than their predecessors." The "real tragedy" of the American Negro, Mr. Kristol insists, is that "he is a late-comer."

The chauvinist implications in these specious arguments are self-evident: Other immigrants fought their way out of the slums. If the Negro will have patience, try harder, reduce the size of his family, he will make it too. What's more, he has been offered a helping hand which other immigrants were denied.

It is pure gall to speak of the Negro as a "late-comer." What other ethnic group, with the exception of the American Indian, has as long a history in this country? Does 350 years in America make him a "late-comer?" To speak of the Negro as "another immigrant group" gives credence to the racist myth that the Negro is, in fact, an alien, not an American. Above all, it carries with it the racist connotation that the status of the Negro is the fault of the Negro himself.

It is no wonder that so many Negro militants have lost confidence in the white liberals who, removed from Negro life, complacent in their white suburban sanctuaries, condescendingly tell the Negro to work harder in order to "make it."

Even the latest report of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights *A Time to Listen . . . A Time to Act* (November 1967) which reproduces the heartrending testimony given at various hearings and open meetings on conditions in the ghetto, specifically rejects this spurious contention. In the introduction we read:

. . . Emerging from the testimony is a picture of ghetto life which affords possible answers to questions sometimes asked by white people about minority groups, i.e., What do they want? Why can't they, like early immigrant groups, simply better their conditions and move out of slum areas through personal effort? . . .

The Commission then places the question forthrightly:

It would be reassuring to conclude that the situation of Negroes

in the slums is not dissimilar to that of past generations of American immigrants who lived in ghettos but were able to leave. Many white Americans have drawn the conclusion and have expressed the belief that Negroes themselves are responsible for their condition and that all that is required to escape is personal effort. But the analogy is misleading and dangerous. Negroes are not recent immigrants to our shore but Americans of long standing. They were oppressed not by foreign governments but by a system of slavery supported by this government and its people. The legacy of slavery continues in the form of racial segregation (*de facto* if no longer legal), discrimination and prejudice. . . .

These factors—the demands of a technological society, and discrimination and prejudice, facilitated by the visibility of the Negroes' skin color—have been translated into barriers far more formidable than those which were faced by the Irish, the Italians, the Poles or the Jews in this country.

There is more sanity in these few paragraphs than in all the many pages Mr. Kristol has written.

*New Assault: Negro Family Instability Cause of Inequality*

An even more spurious assault on the dignity of the Negro people, couched in "liberal" demagoguery and empathy for the Negro's status in American society, is the 1965 Government Report *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*, written by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a true "friend" of the Negro people.

Here the *real* cause for the plight of the black people is not the special oppression, segregation, lack of political power and alienation from American society, but the instability of the Negro family. In contrast to the white family which has achieved "a high degree of stability," the family structure "of lower-class Negroes (*sic!*) is highly unstable, and in many urban centers is approaching complete breakdown." The "fundamental source of the weakness of the Negro community" is "the deterioration of the Negro family."

This thesis is argued and verified by innumerable charts to prove the large number of households without a father; the increase in the number of illegitimate children; the matriarchal structure of the Negro family in an essentially patriarchal society; the deleterious influence on the young who grow up in a fatherless home. All of this has the objective of stressing that no programs will change the situation until the nation helps to stabilize the Negro family. While not stating as much explicitly, the Moynihan thesis cannot but mean that the cause of Negro inequality today is the crumbling structure of the Negro family.

Again the onus is placed on the Negro and not on the racist structure of American society, feeding the already widespread racist myths that the Negro is irresponsible, immoral, promiscuous and, above all, is not concerned about keeping his family together as do other "decent" Americans.

This thesis is not made more palatable by showing that the root of the instability was the ruthless destruction of family life in the days of slavery.

Here are just a few excerpts from testimony given at hearings contained in the Report already referred to:

From a minister in the Hough area of Cleveland:

I find it very difficult when I talk to a man who is out of work who has been trying very hard to get work and who says to me, "I think I am going to leave my family so that they can get on ADC." I find it very difficult to advise him not to because it is life and death that we are talking about. . . .

From a mother in Cleveland:

This is how me and my husband got separated when he got out of his job and he went to relief to get help and they refused to help . . . this is one reason we separated and divorced. He couldn't see his kids go hungry so he just left. . . .

From another mother in Cleveland:

. . . because a man doesn't want to feel that he is going to take bread out of his child's mouth if he is really a man. This means that he leaves. If he is not able to support his family adequately, he usually leaves.

Contrary to the widespread opinion that all the Negro wants is a handout, that he is indolent and refuses to work and that is why he deserts his family, the Commission holds that "welfare programs have been devised and administered in a manner which tends to break up families and perpetuate dependency."

In dealing with the program to aid dependent children, the Report states:

The AFDC program not only fails to "maintain and strengthen family life," but often its administrative rules and procedures thwart efforts by recipients to become financially independent. Many mothers seek to supplement welfare payments by working. AFDC mothers in Cleveland testified, however, that relief checks for AFDC recipients who worked were stopped or reduced. Thus,

many women were prevented from supplementing their AFDC payments, even to the extent of earning enough to meet the State's own minimum health and decency standard.

This conclusion is drawn from talks with human beings and not by compiling dry statistics which fail to show the daily struggle conducted by every single family in the ghetto to keep life and limb together.

### *Racism Must Be Fought in Struggle to Win White Support*

The question does arise: Are racism and white chauvinist prejudices so pervasive in our society that white Americans cannot be drawn into the fight to achieve Negro equality, if only in their own self-interest? The Communist Party, from the day it was born in 1919, has maintained that this is not true. White chauvinism is the doctrine of the ruling class and is essentially alien to the interests of the overwhelming majority of our people. People are not born with racial antagonism. They are impregnated with them by the deliberate propaganda of the ruling class, its lackeys among the people, and the communication media. A relentless day-to-day struggle is needed to combat chauvinist prejudices in the home, in the neighborhood, in the unions and shops, in all organizations of the people. Once it is made clear that racism is against the self-interest of the working people, a blot on the very cause of democracy, it will be possible to engage substantial sectors of the white working people—and others—to do battle here.

One does not have to go back to the days of the abolitionists to show that there have been dedicated white men and women who have fought and died for the cause of Negro freedom.

Because the Communist Party was intolerant to every expression of chauvinism, it was able in the days of the depression in the thirties to organize Negro and white—in the North and the South—to battle together for relief, against evictions, for unemployment insurance. It succeeded in rallying considerable white support against the frameup of the Scottsboro youth and Angelo Herndon and against lynching, the poll tax, and for the right to vote. It was the Communists that set the example in the organization of Negro and white in the mass production industries into the CIO.

In the recent elections in Gary and Cleveland it was possible to win the necessary margins of votes in the white areas to assure the election of Negro mayors. There are other arenas in which similar examples can be cited.

But it must be clearly understood that the major responsibility

in the fight against racism and chauvinist ideas and practices rests with white Americans—a struggle which, above all, white Communists, white radicals and progressives—young and old—must wage with relentless determination. It is not the job of whites to prove their commitment to the freedom fight by working in Negro communities, helping to organize black people, or giving advice to their leaders. They must work where the problem is—among whites—in the communities and organizations where whites live and gather. Here the battle must be joined and become an everyday fight to enlist white support for the cause of Negro freedom.

Of primary importance is the need to carry the fight for equality into every shop and local union, not only to overcome discriminatory barriers to skilled jobs and positions of leadership, but to arouse the rank and file to press for the organization of the unorganized, for the initiation by labor of a day to day campaign to overcome the poverty in the ghetto. The organized labor movement—which consists of Negro and white workers—in its own self-interest, can no longer give lip-service to the freedom struggle. Words must be translated into deeds.

It is incumbent upon the labor movement to get off the dime and set the pace for all other progressive and democratic forces by giving flesh and blood to the many programs it has adopted over the past many years. Now is the time seriously to wage the struggle to abolish the income gap in the ghetto; to use the strength of labor to force through a massive job-training program for black youth; to put pressure on corporations to hire Negroes; to organize the unorganized; to support the fight for increased Negro representation on all levels of government. Only such a concerted drive will give meaning to the Negro-labor alliance—an alliance which is vital to preserve the labor movement and the economic welfare of the workers against the onslaughts of big business.

Communists recognize that complete freedom and equality is attainable only under socialism. Yet we hold that important progress toward equality can be attained even today. But this will not be realized unless white Americans recognize that racism is the ruling class weapon of "divide and rule." Since racism is man-imposed, man can also help to destroy it. The fight to wipe out the stench of racism must be waged in every arena of struggle—in the fight to end the war in Vietnam, in the fight to protect the economic security of all workers against the encroachments of automation, in the fight to win—once and for all—the right of the Negro to human dignity, equality and freedom.

# The Status of Black Liberation

We must understand and deal with the Negro question in its three fold complexity—as a class question, a racial question, and overall, a national question. We cannot discard any one of these three factors without falling into theoretical and practical confusion.

—William Z. Foster, *Political Affairs*, May, 1965

To conclude that the Negro people in the United States are not a nation is not to say that the Negro question in our country is not a national question. The question is, however, a national question of what type, with what distinguishing characteristics, calling for what strategic concept for its solution?

—Resolution on the Negro Question, 17th National Convention

It has been scarcely eight years since the question of what “type” of national question characterized black people was put before the Party. The reposing and reexamination of the question today arises for a number of reasons.

## *The National Aspect of the Struggle*

The most important reason for the reexamination is the appearance on the scene, in the context of the national black community, of a strong, determined and growing trend that has been characterized as “nationalist.” However, the question should arise for other reasons, equal to, if not more important than, the confrontation with an ill-defined, but challenging ideological force within the black community. For one thing, black people in the United States are at a new point of decision and crisis. This comes in the area of ideology, physical and economic survival and leadership

There is a tendency to treat this question as unimportant, as a side matter, not central to the formulation of strategy. This is a mistake. Why? Over the past several years when the question was asked, the usual answer was: what defines black people as a national entity is that they all suffer from discrimination and segregation. A notion took hold that the granting of legal equality and the end to discrimination and segregation would thus remove the common oppression. But the effect of discrimination and segregation is not the sum total of the national aspect of the struggle for black liberation.

The national aspect of the struggle lies in the common history, common oppression and *common destiny* of black people. Black people are welded together by the fact, and knowledge of the fact, that their situation demands they move together as a group. The granting of equal rights is no guarantee of that. The 17th Convention of the Party resolved:

There is no national task of greater moment for all the forces of social progress of our nation than that of joining in the struggle for securing the full and equal economic, political and social rights of the Negro people.

. . . All signs point to an early and triumphant resolution of the century-old battle of the Negro people for full and equal citizenship.

During the period preceeding the 17th Convention Comrade James Jackson wrote:

The Negro people in the United States suffer a special form of national oppression. It is national in the sense that all class strata of the Negro people are subject to a common yoke of oppression and exploitation and social ostracism, are victims of social, economic and political inequality. They are racially identified and set apart by racist laws and customs, social existence and by actual ethnic identification. (*Party Affairs*, February 1959.)

Why is it, then, that at this moment the nation confronts a crisis more serious than it has faced for many decades? The Party only recently warned that the Administration is threatening the black community with police terror and has embarked on an endeavor to close and seal the ghetto walls?

## *Equal Citizenship—a Bourgeois-Democratic Right*

The concept of “equal rights” and “equal citizenship” is, in essence, a bourgeois concept. It is the way the bourgeoisie defines relationships between people under capitalism. The granting of equal rights in bourgeois society has never meant the end of “exploitation and social ostracism” for a group. It has never guaranteed it for the individual.

The struggle for, and the winning of, bourgeois democratic norms is of utmost importance. The mistake that has characterized the immediate past period has been that the struggle for equal rights was viewed not only as an important part of the strategy for liberation but as the ultimate resolution of the question.

When the majority of black people remained in the South the concept of completing the bourgeois-democratic revolution was even more meaningful. The granting of full and equal citizenship rights in the area of majority should mean that people would have the ability to marshal the forces of government and regional resources to better their common lot.

A few years ago sociologist Daniel Patrick Moynihan, a leading liberal during the Kennedy years, saw clearly that we had come to the end of the period of struggle for equal rights. He was also aware that the plight of black masses had not improved appreciably. His response to the problem was a paternalism and militaristic scheme for directing the nation's attention to the "Negro family" from whence he said all problems flowed. The nation, led by Negro leadership, rejected his medicine.

Earlier this year there was renewed interest in the Moynihan report. The author declared that because his report had been rejected, the nation was in danger of returning to the state of affairs at the time of the Hayes-Tilden Compromise. Recently Moynihan seemed determined to make this a self-fulfilling prophecy. He told the board of the Americans for Democratic Action, of which he is a member, that the time had come for liberals "to see more clearly that their essential interest in the stability of the social order given the present threats to that stability, it is necessary to seek out and make much more effective alliances with political conservatives who share that concern, and who recognize that unyielding rigidity is just as much a threat to the continuity of things as is an anarchic desire for change." In case there's any question, he was speaking about the black urban rebellions.

Moynihan was the chief architect of the civil rights policy during the early days of the Johnson Administration. It was his thought (and some say his typewriter) that produced the President's Howard University speech wherein he told the nation "We Shall Overcome." His case should serve to illustrate that the granting of full citizenship rights in no way foreshadows the end of national oppression.

When the rebellions broke out in the ghettos of the nation many progressive people were severely disoriented. That disorientation remains. The immediate impulse was to look into each situation confident of finding blatant discrimination and segregation. The denial of equal rights was the obvious explanation of the events. Although, of course, those elements were involved, it soon became clear that they were not the determinants.

### *More than "Equal Rights" is Needed*

What then is the essential character of the black people's position in the U.S. today?

Black people are a historically and racially defined group, united by a common destiny and common oppression. They are not a nationality, having no territorial claim. Yet they are distinguished by far more than their status as a national minority. Their status is derived from their history. On one hand, the Negro people as a group came into existence as a special feature of colonialism, and thus acquired national characteristics. On the other hand, group identity was molded at the time of industrial expansion and black people were partially absorbed in the industrial workforce under conditions making possible their special and super-exploitation. While previously the former was dominant, today it is the latter.

The confusion and indecisiveness that confronts us today is the result of the reduction of the national aspects of the Negro question to one of "rights" and "equal citizenship." Indeed, our language is permeated with this problem. We continue to use the expression "jim crow" oblivious to the fact that no one else does.

Only a few years ago it was common to hear people remark that the reason for the new militancy in the black community and the sharpening of the struggle was related somehow to being on the verge of victory. Many were prepared to declare at the time of the March on Washington that the end of the journey was in sight. How many people were unprepared to understand what John Lewis was talking about when he stood on the stairs of the Lincoln Memorial and warned that it wasn't. Indeed, at that time, and for the immediate period thereafter, every week saw the toppling of a new bar to equal citizenship.

Today, there are few laws that the Congress could pass that would make the question of equal citizenship any clearer or more resolved. The court decision on intermarriage is perhaps the last one that can be expected dealing with equal rights.

What then beyond "equal rights" and "equal citizenship?"

One of the principal characteristics of arguments put forward by separatists today arrive out of an agrarian context. One of the reasons they immediately attract support and obvious empirical affirmation is that they are directed first at a section of the black population only recently removed from a rural situation. It is not uncommon for black separatists to say: The problem of black people is national liberation

and the liberation of a nation involves, first and foremost, land. For the ghetto youth, only one or two generations removed from the rural South, this is almost a self-evident argument. Perhaps never having worked in his life, the problem for both him and his immediate parent is that "they" own the land and "we" don't. Having never held a factory job, the argument that "they" own the means of production must certainly have an air of unreality about it.

### *Urbanization of the Black People*

The nonwhite male workforce (employed) in 1965 could be described as:

1. Farm workers, farm managers and farmers—9.9 per cent of the total nonwhite workforce.
2. Non-farm workers—73.4 per cent of total nonwhite workforce (blue collar—57.8 per cent and service workers 15.6 per cent).
3. White collar workers (including professionals, managers, officials, clerical workers and sales workers)—16.7 per cent of the total nonwhite workforce.

By adjusting figures taken from the white collar category it can be determined that approximately 81 per cent of all employed nonwhite men have nonfarm, nonprofessional jobs.

Clearly for millions of Negroes in the South today a relationship remains which has the principal aspects of an agrarian situation. But for the mass of black people, North and South—the principal relationship is to industrial capitalism.

But the massive move of black people into the working class has not transformed them into a position analogous to that of the European immigrants arriving here at the turn of the century. Color, the central factor of his oppression in the agrarian South, is still the central factor of present-day oppression.

Moving from an agrarian situation into an industrial one has not meant for black people what it has for people historically—a qualitative change in their economic, social situation. At points in history, Negroes moving into the cities were also moving into an expanding job market and were able to struggle their way in large numbers into industry. Their economic situation immediately improved. Those who were not absorbed into industry became service workers catering to the new prosperity. But always when the job market contracted they were the first to feel the effects. Today the expanding job market no longer exists, the cities are no longer lands of opportunity.

Today the extent of urbanization of the black population stands

just about where the national average stands, and higher than in many foreign countries, such as Canada and France. Yet, as urbanization proceeds at a rapid clip, absorption into the labor force declines. One might add that for the black man the absorption has never really been permanent. The Department of Labor recently commented, "Throughout the period since World War II, non-white unemployment rates have constantly exceeded the rates for white workers, but the gap varies with the business cycle."

May we not therefore conclude that the state of the economy is related to the attitude of the nation toward black people and consequently black people's attitude toward the nation? Here I think it wise to review Comrade Roscoe Procter's view that the rise of nationalism is related to the state of other mass movements. It is true that periods of great mass movement saw a decline in nationalism. However, I believe much more thought should be given to the economic roots of the trend.

### *Conditions Continue to Deteriorate*

The single most important thing that can be said about the black man in an urban setting today is that his condition worsens. Add to this the fact that he is once again being driven from the rural South—this time even more forcefully, being intentionally starved out in many areas to make way for farm mechanization. Add to this the additional factor of technological change in American industry coupled with a century of racist education which has prepared the Negro for little in the way of advanced skills. Once again migrants are converging on the cities and taking their place alongside a major section of a whole generation (already there) in a state of perpetual unemployment.

In 1965 over one half of all employed nonwhite men were blue collar workers (58 per cent) and over one-half of the employed nonwhite women were service workers. At the same time of those who at one time held blue collar jobs, 7.9 per cent were unemployed as were 7.2 per cent of those classified as service workers. Of the unemployed blue collar workers, 14.6 per cent were in construction.

The figures cited above differ very little from North to South (except that the number of service workers increases in the South while the number of clerical and sales personnel decreases). If only the largest urban areas are taken the unemployment rate increases considerably.

A person need not be a statistician to comprehend that these factors

present a gloomy picture. As Comrade Procter noted (*Political Affairs*, March 1967):

1. The Negro has born the brunt of the deterioration of the services and facilities of the city—employment, housing, transportation, health, education, police protection.

Unskilled labor declined from 36 per cent of the workforce in 1910 to 20 per cent in 1950 and then dropped suddenly to 5 per cent in 1960. This trend affects Negroes more than any other group, and the job situation among Negroes is likely to go on deteriorating.

3. The median income of the Negro family is only 50 per cent of the white, and in the last ten years the Negro's position relative to white has declined. Thus, the Negro masses today are in worse economic shape and live in worse slums and attend more highly segregated schools than in 1954.

4. More Negroes are unemployed today than in 1954. Among young men—18-25—the national rate is five times as high for Negroes as for whites, and among Negro young women the rise is even more startling.

This situation has led many black leaders to assert that the basic question before black people is one of survival. Black people, they say, have become surplus population. White America has decided, they contend, to confine and restrict black people into even more rigid ghettos where they will sink into even greater poverty. If they protest, the argument goes, they will be destroyed. Events over the past two years appear to confirm this contention. After a decade of concessions and reforms, allowable in post-war prosperity, the door is clanging shut again as far as the ruling class representatives in Washington are concerned. Police repression is increasingly the response to black protests.

### *Black Power and the Struggle for Survival*

The most important task now before the progressive forces in the nation and the black liberation movement is to prevent the masses of black people from being locked out of the nation's economy and to wage a struggle to force those economic measures (not merely poverty programs) which will open the economic life of the country to new black workers and let them in, *en mass*.

Tied intrinsically to the struggle for black, survival and the advancement of black people, is the question of power. As a people, blacks do not derive their strength from their possession of, or tenure on,

land. They wield strength only partly from their ability to sell or withhold their labor power. Comprising slightly more than 10 per cent of the population they can draw important but limited strength from their numbers as a political force. Their strength as controllers of capital is negligible. Their strength as consumers is marginal. Yet, taken all together, black peoples' strength as farmers and sharecroppers, workers, voters, entrepreneurs and buyers can be enormous. Add to this, the strength flowing from their importance internationally, their allies in the "third" and socialist worlds; their great concentration in urban centers and their ability to disrupt and the strength becomes even more impressive. "Black power" is an attempt to marshal all those resources to meet a critical situation. It has also meant the psychological mobilization of black masses through the reassertion of the essential *national* aspect of the question.

Does black power add anything new to the struggle? Yes, it adds something missing as an ingredient in the past—a demand for basic democratic change. Black power is a slogan that sweeps aside the reformism of token advancement. It demands that the nation deal with black people as a group. When black power seeks to assert itself, it does not confront a void. It moves into a situation of existing power relations having their basis in class relationships. It must seek a restructuring of those relationships and a reallocation of power. It is not a separatist slogan; it does not demand to be left alone—to go off somewhere—but to share national weight and decision making. Its realization, as Lenin has pointed out, should not leave "the power of the ruling class intact." It should not be "merely a concession that leaves its power unimpaired." It should be a force that "undermines the foundations of power."

It is, however, a political truism that the criterion of the policy of a social movement lies not primarily in its stated aims but rather in the social makeup of its leadership and consequently in its practical activities. It is not guaranteed that those directing the liberation movement will see the enemy clearly and realize the nature of the power to be displaced.

### *Working Class Leadership is Key*

The liberation movement could fall exclusively under the direction of the black bourgeoisie and seek to replace one form of exploitation with another, it could get diverted into falling for various financial schemes or take the dangerous path of anti-Semitism. It could fall

under the total direction of an agrarian orientation and swing to a search for "land" somewhere. It could be drawn off into senseless violence. It could give way to political metaphysics or quasi-religious mysticism.

How can the dangers cited be avoided? In the same way as it has been avoided by liberation movements and nations since the beginning of capitalism—through its principled adherence to the needs and demands of its working class component. The movement must in a major way pass leadership to members of the working class. It must have as a major component a force reflecting ideology rooted in the experience of that class.

During the period of the civil rights "revolution," coalition was possible over a wide range of class lines. The demands of the movement were not class demands. The politics of the movement were liberal and reformist. White elements of the coalition were mainly committed to the goal of winning legal equality and horizontal integration. Many of these elements continually balked when demands came forward that could not be met without considerably altering existing power relationships—particularly the hegemony of the Democratic party. That coalition is now mostly a thing of the past. The demands of black people today are closer to class demands and the fulfillment of them will require some basic changes in the power constellation.

Space does not permit a full discussion of the Party's role, but a few comments are called for:

1. The role of the Communist Party is the role of the vanguard. Among, other things, this means the ability to advance programs and goals that unite the working class and all anti-monopoly forces. It must speak to and for the exploited and oppressed of all groups and sections. It must point the way to revolutionary struggle and to the advantages of socialism.

2. The character and magnitude of what must be done to meet the immediate crisis in this country must be of Reconstruction proportions and of similar radical notions. A Communist program that is meaningful must embody this. The calling for an end of terror and for massive spending, while important, is not sufficient.

3. Unity of the people is still one if the most important questions before us today. But what kind of unity? How is it to be built? One of the reasons "black and white unity" has such a hollow ring is that it fails to define what the nature of that unity can be and around what it must be built.

4. Black people are not the only people in this country with class

grievances. If there is to be a new unity it must be built primarily on the basis of class, people of the same class struggling together for common aims. While it is important to build relationships of joint struggle between the poor, this is not the crucial area. The key to laying the groundwork for future united struggle is work among the lowest strata of the working class, among the millions of farm workers, service workers, laborers and the semi-skilled and unskilled in industry. This is where most black people are located and where the most people—black and white—remain unorganized.

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(Continued from page 47)

of labor. Certain union newspapers, notably those in Packing, Steel and UE, have carried many significant articles on the freedom fight which can also be utilized in all unions.

These are some of the strengths from which, and with which, we Communists can work. In the fight against racism in the labor movement, the economic self-interest of white workers must be stressed in addition to the moral issues involved. Experience has proved that white workers will respond to the moral issues but when this is combined with emphasis that their own economic interests are intimately bound up with advancing the just cause of the Negro people, then alliance and mass action will be natural and inevitable.

An important element in the struggle against racism is the need to expose the ultra-Right. The whole labor movement—not excluding Meany—is alert to the danger from the ultra-Right, which is not only the most vicious racist force in the country, but is anti-union. By showing that the enemy of the workers is also the enemy of the Negro people, many white workers can be won in the fight against racism.

## The Afro-American in the Arts

The characteristic perception of the Afro-American in the arts today is his realization that he is on the eve of a great fertile and revolutionary period. This awareness permeates every section of the arts where blacks are creating. It is the subject of numerous conversations, debates, meetings and conferences. At least, in the case of black writers, the most articulate body in the arts, a conscious character and direction is being developed for a new and powerful Afro-American renaissance. It is the content of that immanent renaissance, and how we may help to influence it, that should be of special concern.

Just to refresh our memories, there have been two great periods, in the development of the black artist in the United States. One was during the Negro literary renaissance period of the 1920's when white patrons helped bring forth giants like Countee Cullen, Claude McKay, Jean Toomer, Alain Locke, Langston Hughes, Arna Bontemps, to name a few. This renaissance was centered in Harlem and concentrated on the thrust of the "New Negro," on historical themes, on the interest in Africa, on some symbolism and racial pride. "Black But Beautiful" was a main theme. In their poetry and novels the writers of this period broke with the polite mannerisms of past pioneers like Charles Chestnutt and expressed themselves in earthy and realistic tones.

The second surge forward came, after a short fallow period, during the days of the depression when the government acted as an art patron through WPA. It was from this period, leading into the forties, that writers like Richard Wright, and again Langston Hughes, Willard Motley, Chester Himes, Roi Ottley, the young Lofton Mitchell, Alice Childress and others came forth. Though centered in New York and Chicago, this development was on a national scale. The content of many of the works then changed from an emphasis on Africa, or "Black But Beautiful," to a *new* interest in the history of the Negro people and a portrayal of their social and economic problems.

During the witchhunts of the Communists in the fifties, every level of society was affected and the arts-for-arts-sake fad which pushed forward during that time, with few exceptions, also influenced black writers and artists. Ralph Ellison—and his thinly veiled anti-Communist novel *The Invisible Man*—was the Negro literary lion of the

hour. Many formerly outspoken black writers and artists kept silent or busied themselves with teaching or compiling anthologies.

### *The Freedom Struggle and the Negro Artist*

The Negro liberation struggle in the South soon burst forth upon the consciousness of the nation. It swept up many of the writers and artists who first spoke out during the beginning of the fifties like John O. Killens, Lofton Mitchell, William Branch, John A. Williams, Ossie Davis, and others who came later, like Lerone Bennett Jr., William Denby, Lorraine Hansberry and James Baldwin. A whole new school of young writers emerged during this time of struggle in the North and South—a time which also witnessed the rising freedom struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Artists like Douglass Turner Ward, William Melvin Kelly, Le Roi Jones, Ron Milner, Rosa Guy, Calvin Hernton, Lennox Raphael, Tom Dent and John O'Neal of the Free Southern Theater, emerged on the scene.

In the main these writers, like the mainstream of Afro-American art today, stand opposed to the war in Vietnam and their thinking coincides with the world revolutionary impulse. To paraphrase John O. Killens: there is the general recognition among them that the Afro-American revolt is part and parcel of the world-wide freedom struggle. Like Killens, I too reached this same conclusion based upon an examination of the deliberations of the many national conferences of Afro-American writers and artists held during the past three years in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Cleveland, in California and at Fiske University.

The majority of the writers who attend these conferences, or who can be reached at local gatherings, are concerned with depicting life as non-whites know it: a continuous battle against exploitation, misery, hunger and color prejudice. They are conscious of race, that "It's Beautiful to be Black," and are seeking a new esthetic by delving into the past of the Negro people. They embrace their African roots in an attempt to understand the present and build for the future. They are fired with the determination to create a full-fledged black hero who can break through the white myths and chauvinism that hide the black man from himself.

Like the folktale tellers of the past, they aim to create a John Henry type hero who will tackle automation like John Henry tackled the steam drill in his day. They are concerned with the fractures that make the Afro-American different culturally and otherwise—but yet still an American. Their outlook on present-day society is critical. They

are turned off by the vast senseless social order which degrades blacks and dehumanizes whites, producing conditions which distort and destroy human relationships. They deplore anti-Communism. They are concerned with changing the concepts of language and question why there are 60 negative connotations to the word "black" in Roget's *Thesaurus* and about four for "whites."

Here is an example of the thinking of a group of Afro-American artists from Chicago who formed themselves into the Chicago Organization for Black American Culture. Dozens of similarly oriented organizations have mushroomed throughout the nation.

"Our aim," they said, "is to invest our works with the essence of our unique experience, calling upon our past history, from the shores of Africa to the West Indies, and in this hostile land. We are dedicated to arousing the energies of black people to an appreciation of themselves and their human possibilities. We will work toward the ultimate goal of bringing the black community indigenous art forms which reflect and clarify the black experience in America. To reflect the richness, depth and variety of black history, its achievements and its possibilities for creativity, we must find a new esthetic that corresponds to our lives. It must have elements based on the man in the gutter and it must speak to him."

#### *Reflecting the Spirit of the Times*

But there is a need, Langston Hughes once said, to do this in a balanced way. And Saunders Redding said that it was necessary "to discover the human condition without the preoccupation of repossessing a heritage that can distort reality, nor make heroes out of heels." John Clarke of *Freedomways* says, "We must draw upon the universal values in the Negroes' experiences just as Sean O'Casey and Sholem Aleichem draw upon the universal values in the experiences of the Irish and Jews. The next stage of Negro writing must not be a celebration of oppression but a celebration of survival in spite of it."

Africa I have kept your memory Africa  
 You are inside me  
 Like the splinter in the wound  
 Like a guardian fetish in the center of the village  
 Make me the stone in your sling  
 Make my mouth the lips of your wound  
 Make my knees the broken pillars of your abasement  
 And yet

I want to be of your race alone workers  
 peasants of all lands  
 uncountable nation in capitalist slavery  
 destiny ranges us shoulder to shoulder  
 repudiating the ancient maledictions of blood taboos

As the contradiction among features  
 Creates the harmony of the face  
 We proclaim the oneness of the suffering  
 and the revolt  
 of all peoples on all the face of the earth  
 And we mix the mortar of the age of brotherhood  
 Out of the dust of idols.

This was said by Jacques Roumain, a French-speaking black. The words of Richard Wright are still true for today when he said: "This dramatic Marxist vision when consciously grasped endows the writer with a sense of dignity which no other vision can give. Ultimately, it restores to the writer his lost heritage, that is, his role as a creator of the world in which he lives, and as a creator of himself." I'm indicating that the new trend among Afro-American artists to lock black arms hurts neither a black nor a white. Joseph Papp has been a pioneer in welcoming Afro-Americans in his New York Shakespeare Festival, casting them in all sorts of roles. But Broadway hasn't followed suit.

Seeking to get around these difficulties, Harry Belafonte is expanding his production company. He plans to produce plays on and off Broadway, based on Afro-American life. He is also setting up a foundation to give grants to Afro-American writers. Sidney Poitier is also planning to start a company. Bill Cosby, of the television program *I Spy*, has started a motion picture production company. Tom Dent's Free Southern Theater has performed throughout the South. But the most interesting development for Afro-American actors and playwrights was the Ford Foundation grant, rumored at \$1.8 million, awarded Doug Turner and Bobby Hook's Negro Ensemble Theater. The theater will train and provide a home for Afro-American theatrical talents on all levels. There are other developments, such as Roger Furman's Harlem-based New Heritage Theater, the opening of a play in Harlem's New Lafayette Theater by Ron Milner and the announcement by the Greenwich Theater, which has always been hospitable to black playwrights, that it will present two plays by the Nigerian dramatist Wole Soyinka.

Needless to say, the problem facing many Afro-American playwrights is that of content, how best to reflect the spirit of these times,

whether to concentrate on Negro themes or venture, like Lorraine Hansberry in *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window*, to help illuminate the human condition. Some of the more advanced-thinking playwrights believe that both should be done.

### *The Status of the Black Artist*

Cropping up at discussions of black artists is whether or not to accept government funding of projected theater ensembles, writers' groups or jazz workshops. Alice Childress and others say, definitely, yes. William Melvin Kelly warns that a man will then not be able to tell it like it is. Nevertheless, there is a growing trend to accept such funds with the determination to keep the relationship between government and artist similar to that between the British government and British writers. There is virtually no censorship of government-funded creative works by Britons. American artists will have to fight for a similar relationship.

In the dance world, Afro-Americans are making a fantastic mark. True, just a few, like Arthur Mitchell, are dancing in major classical ballet. But others like Alvin Ailey, Donald McQuale, Carmen De Lavallade and others have created a completely new dance based on African, jazz and modern themes.

Some good things are happening in opera. In the cinema, Afro-Americans are receiving better roles and receiving Oscars, although the screen is dominated by Sidney Poitier. And no black woman has yet to overcome Hollywood's siren roles.

Perhaps the Afro-American's most vital and oppressed art form today is jazz. In many international circles jazz is known as North America's only original contribution to world culture. Yet, New York City, the reputed cultural capital of the West, is glutted with unemployed black jazz musicians. Part of the reason is that in these searing sixties, the general mood has caused a revolution in the concept of jazz playing. Many of the younger jazzmen, political in their thinking, assert that their new sound is an expression which approximates the experience of blacks in the city ghettos. Their music is marked by an emphasis on improvisations, contrasts of rhythms and sound, rather than on melodic invention. And it reflects, they say, the full emotional range of blacks fighting for their freedom today. It also reflects an interest in the rhythms of Africa—the roots from which this music springs.

A few of these musicians are conservatory-trained, like Cecil Taylor, Archie Shepp and Charlie Mingus. Their music reflects not only

the souls of black folk but the influence of internationalist classicists like Sergei Prokofiev, Bela Bartok and Igor Stravinsky. Several musicians have banded into guilds, like the now defunct Jazz Composers' Guild, which attempted to break through the walls built by the critics, the night-club and recording establishments, to keep this new sound out.

Black photographers face a similar situation. Mostly social conscious, they find scant markets for their works and have formed several photography guilds to force breakthroughs. Some work in the anti-poverty program. Black painters and graphic artists are faring better these days due to the power of the guilds they have formed.

Though there has been some improvement in the classical symphonic field, and there are blacks in a number of the major orchestras of the nation, it is still token. This is not just because blacks can't get into the conservatories easily. The number of black conductors can be counted on one hand. Dean Dixon, a veteran in the same rank as George Szell, Leonard Bernstein and Eric Leinsdorf, is still an expatriate, who leads the major orchestras of Europe. Happily, there is one young Negro conductor from California. He is actually employed as an assistant. But from time to time, if you can afford the ticket, you may see him leading the full orchestra.

A similar situation exists in the case of instrumental soloists. One would think that Andre Watts is the only leading black instrumentalist in the nation. But this is not at all so. Discrimination forces many black musicians out of this field. One such musician is the pianist Cecil Taylor, who returned to the bosom of jazz and has produced such original works that he has been called a genius. Yet, he can only find work in Europe.

A deplorable situation exists in advertising and television, despite the presence of Bill Cosby, Bobby Hooks and the three black newscasters who appear on the screen. In the height of the civil rights agitation more black faces could be seen peering from beneath the pages of the *New York Times'* advertising sections. But pick up that paper now and learn the truth.

### *Need for Conference of all Afro-American Artists*

The overall character of the trend in art by Afro-Americans today is social consciousness and consciousness of blackness. The debates indicate that concurrent with this new awareness there is a tendency toward an exclusiveness, of nationalism, if you will. But it is a ten-

dency in flux that could, in swift time, be directed toward the nationwide fight for freedom and peace.

One of the ways to get this ball rolling, in my opinion, is to convince leading black artists like Ossie Davis, John O. Killens, Ruby Dee and others, to call for a National Conference of Afro-American Artists. Such a conference could concern itself with the financial and social problems black artists face in the nation. It could attempt to indicate an approach in the arts to the social and economic problems that Afro-American as well as white artists face. It could call for greater ties with African artists and organize an exchange of shows, writings, ensembles, etc. It could call for a WPA-type program to bring the arts into ghetto communities, for the establishment of cultural centers and complexes in the Harlems of the nation, which would serve as a training ground for Afro-Americans to emerge in the mainstream of American culture. At the same time it would be a program to serve as an employment, dramatic and teaching center for unemployed Afro-American artists. Literary collections, like the Schomburg Library in Harlem, which is in danger of being shut down, could be absorbed by such a project and its library expanded to contain a complete music library of Negro and African music.

I believe that a National Conference of Afro-American Artists could begin to set the wheels in motion that will inaugurate some of the changes that so many black artists agree is necessary NOW!

The false and underlying premise of tokenism is racism: the concept that the great mass of Negroes are inferior, fit only for capitalist super-exploitation, and that only those individual Negroes who rise above the inferior norm of their people deserve equal rights. Carried to its logical conclusion, this position holds either that nothing at all can be done about the "inferior" Negro mass, or that they may some day achieve equal status, as each of the 20 million Negroes disproves his alleged inferiority. In this regard, tokenism is of the same stripe as gradualism.

BENJAMIN J. DAVIS, *Political Affairs*, February 1963.

## IDEAS IN OUR TIME

HERBERT APTHEKER

### DuBois on "Africa and World Peace": An Unpublished Essay

The greatness of Du Bois lies in the fact that he centered the nearly ten decades of his life upon the fundamental questions of his time—and of our time: racism, colonialism, imperialism, war, illiteracy, poverty, hunger, exploitation; and that he did this with astonishing persistence, absolute integrity and historic effectiveness.

In this month, marking the 100th anniversary of his birth, it is especially fitting to bring readers of *Political Affairs* a characteristic example of his thinking and writing on many of these basic problems; this particular essay has remained largely unpublished. It was finished by Dr. Du Bois on December 27, 1959; only one-third of it has hitherto been published, and that in a rather ephemeral source.\*

Persons who today are rightly worried about the future of civilization should give their attention to Africa for it is the failure to do this for so many years in the past that has been a prime cause of the present critical situation.

I remember vividly when I was in high school in western Massachusetts, between the ages of twelve and sixteen, of being puzzled about Africa. I was visibly of African descent and in my family African music and culture patterns had persisted, although we had lived in this New England valley for two hundred years or more. Yet for me information about Africa was difficult to obtain. I could draw a map of the United States with all the States and their capital cities, with its rivers, lakes and ocean borders. I knew the kings of England and the British political system and I knew the English tongue; I knew the kings of France, but I could hardly get hold of any information

\* Actually the original manuscript is dated, in the Doctor's hand, December 27, 1960, but this was a slip and there is no doubt that 1959 was correct. The final third was published in the June, 1960 number of the *Bulletin of the World Council of Peace* (Vienna). It is through the courtesy of the Secretariat of that Council that I obtained this manuscript. A few additional corrections were made in the manuscript. All footnotes are by me.

of Africa in any detail. Apparently no history of Africa existed and the attitude of my teachers toward Africa and its peoples was a little discouraging. My textbooks mentioned some details about the ancient history of Egypt, but it was implied if not actually said, that Egypt was no part of Africa. In college at Fisk and Harvard there were no courses of study which touched Africa except again ancient Egypt.

During my study in Germany there was no more mention of Africa and some literature, but my time was given to studies of European society and they were seldom based on Asia or Africa; thus, I had no time for study outside the white world. I came, therefore, to be in America a teacher of economics and history and talked to my colored students of a future work that the peoples of Africa and their descendants would undoubtedly do, but I said little or nothing of the great African past because of this I was quite ignorant. Then in 1906, Franz Boas, the great anthropologist, came to Atlanta University where I was head of the Department of Economics and History, and told the graduating class of American Negroes of certain things that they ought to know about their black ancestors. He mentioned Ghana, Melle and the Hausa. He related the travels of Ibn Batuta and the reign of Askia Mohammed. I sought him out after his talk and begged him to tell me the sources of his information. It was then that I began to seek out and read the sources of African history and in 1915 I wrote my first book on Africa in the Home University library.\*

I immediately met a great deal of concealed and open opposition. Students and authorities doubted many of my conclusions. Fundamentally most American intelligentsia and a large number of Europeans did not believe that Negroes were human beings in the same sense that other peoples were. They did not always say this nor were they themselves often aware how subtly and widely this idea had arisen and spread. Yet America was built on the Negro. It was his toil and service, his culture patterns, his singing and dancing, his whole attitude toward life which laid the foundation on which Europeans built much of their new world. The Negro was at first an integral part of this new world, and then because the slave trade made his labor cheaper and

\*This book is: *The Negro*; it was published by Henry Holt in New York and Williams & Norgate in London in 1915 and was No. 91 in the Home University Library of Modern Knowledge, edited by Herbert Fisher, Gilbert Murray, J. Arthur Thomson and William T. Brewster. In it readers will find elucidated the references to peoples and personalities in this paragraph. Prof. Boas was brought to Atlanta at Du Bois' suggestion; his speech was published by that University as *Commencement Address*, Atlanta University Leaflet, No. 19 (1906).

more abundant than white European labor or red Indian, he became the exploited class on the theft of which slavery crops like cotton and sugar were distributed over the world and service and pleasure furnished.

Seeking to excuse this black slavery, a deeply religious fifteenth and sixteenth centuries began to rationalize this wise: Negroes were natural slaves and never had a civilization of their own. They were well suited for the hard toil which the development of America needed. They were therefore made slaves not simply for the advantage of white European immigrants but for the salvation of their souls. Then as the Negroes followed the bidding of the missionaries and became converts of Christianity, another line of reasoning was adopted: their souls and bodies were not as valuable as those of white people because they were fundamentally incapable of modern civilization. The inferior peoples of the world, the blacks especially, the browns and the yellows in large part, were adapted to work and obedience in order to help the more gifted whites develop modern civilization. By the seventeenth century and later this theory of the inferiority of black people took larger and larger hold of the belief of religionists, scientists and statesmen until by my century, the nineteenth, a book like mine which assumed that Negroes were normal people was not recognized as authentic scholarship.

I tried in this first book to work out a history of black folk in Africa, of their descent into the valley of the Nile and the raising of a new civilization allied with Asia; of the development along the Niger on the west coast and in the Congo valley; of a new art and technique; of work in iron, copper and bronze; of irrigation and building. I opposed the prevalent idea that every sign of civilization in Africa at Benin and Zimbabwe and on the east coast were due to imported European or Asiatic cultures. I said then:

The time has not yet come for a complete history of the Negro peoples. Archaeological research in Africa has just begun, and many sources of information in Arabian, Portuguese, and other tongues are not fully at our command; and, too, it must frankly be confessed, racial prejudice against darker peoples is still too strong in so-called civilized centers for judicial appraisal of the peoples of Africa. Much intensive monographic work in history and science is needed to clear mooted points and quiet the controversialist who mistakes present personal desire for scientific proof. [From cited work, preface, dated February 1, 1915—H.A.]

Nearly a quarter of a century later I attempted again a study of the

history and development of black folk, but I was unable even then to get the financial backing or the scholarly support which would enable me to do the kind of work which I wanted to do. On the other hand, Lord Hailey, with an Empire back of him and the wealth of Carnegie assisting, edited an *African Survey* which brought wide acclaim. French and Belgian scholars wrote books and monographs and many governments established museums and institutions. My book\* could only emphasize certain facts which most of these studies minimized or forgot and that was that the African past had been the history of real and gifted peoples, showed a cultural unity and was worth modern study. I said frankly in my preface:

But we face a curious situation in the world attitude toward the Negro race today. On the one hand there is increasing curiosity as to the place of black men in future social development; in their relation to work, art and democracy; and judgment as to the future must depend upon the past. Yet this past lies shrouded not simply by widespread lack of knowledge but by a certain irritating silence. Few today are interested in Negro history because they feel the matter already settled: the Negro has no history. . . .

For instance, I am no Egyptologist. That goes without saying. And yet I have written something in this volume on the Negro in Egypt, because in recent years, despite the work of exploration and interpretation in Egypt and Ethiopia, almost nothing is said of the Negro Race.

There were groups of educated Negroes in my own United States, in the various islands of the West Indies and in Africa. I met some of these in the great Races Conference which met in London in 1911 and which would have marked an era if it had not been followed so closely by the First World War. After that War, I called four Pan-African Congresses into meeting and we discussed Negro political power, culture recognition and education for a future. My movement met opposition from the colonial powers like Britain, France and Belgium; and finally a world depression and Second World War stopped that movement.

\*W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Folk, Then and Now: An Essay in the History and Sociology of the Negro Race*, N. Y., 1939, Henry Holt & Co. The preface to this volume, from which Dr. Du Bois quotes above, is dated May, 1939. This book appeared in October, 1945 in its fourth (and final) printing. The Hailey volume referred to above is: William M. Hailey, *An African Survey; A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of the Sahara*. It was published in 1938 (in a volume of almost 2,000 pages, by Oxford University Press, under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs).

Then after the Second World War along with efforts of the laboring people in Europe, America and Africa, there came out of the Trade Union Congress in Paris in 1945 a demand of the black workers for a Fifth Pan-African Congress. This met in Manchester, England in 1945. I presided. There met with us Kwame Nkrumah who later made the British Colony of the Gold Coast an independent Ghana; Jomo Kenyatta, later accused of helping the Mau-Mau in Kenya; Peter Abrahams, the African writer; George Padmore, the black historian of Britain in Africa, and two hundred other Negroes from all over the world. It resulted ultimately in a Sixth Pan-African Congress called the "All-African Conference" at Accra in 1958.

In 1919 and in 1924 these Congresses made these declarations:

1919

To the World: The absolute equality of races, physical, political and social is the founding stone of world and human advancement. No one denies great differences of gift, capacity and attainment among individuals of all races, but the voice of Science, Religion and practical politics is one in denying the God-appointed existence of super-races or of races naturally and inevitably and eternally inferior.

That in the vast range of time, one group should in its industrial technique, or social organization, or spiritual vision, lag a few hundred years behind another, or forge fitfully ahead, or come to differ decidedly in thought, deed, and ideal, is proof of the essential richness and variety of human nature, rather than proof of the co-existence of demigods and apes in human form. The doctrine of racial equality does not interfere with individual liberty; rather it fulfills it. And of all the various criteria of which masses of men have in the past been prejudged and classified, that of the color of the skin and texture of the hair, is surely the most adventitious and idiotic. . . .

The beginning of wisdom in interracial contact is the establishment of political institutions among suppressed peoples. The habit of democracy must be made to encircle the earth. Despite the attempts to prove that its practice is the secret and divine gift of the few, no habit is more natural or more widely spread among primitive people, or more easily capable of development among masses. Local self-government with a minimum of help and overnight can be established tomorrow in Asia, in Africa, America and the isles of the sea. It will in many instances need general control and guidance, but it will fail only when that guidance seeks ignorantly and consciously its own selfish ends and not the people's liberty and good.

Surely in the twentieth century of the Prince of Peace, in the millenium of Mohammed, and in the mightiest Age of Human Reason, there can be found in the civilized world enough of altruism, learning, and benevolence to develop native institutions, whose one aim is not profit and power for the few. . . . What then do these demand who see these evils of the color line and racial discrimination, and who believe in the divine right of suppressed and backward people to learn and aspire and be free? The Negro race through their thinking intelligentsia demand:

1. The recognition of civilized men as civilized despite their race or color.

2. Local self-government for backward groups deliberately rising as experience and knowledge grow to complete self-government under the limitation of a self-governed world.

3. Education in self-knowledge, in scientific truth, and in industrial technique, undivorced from the art of beauty.

4. Freedom in their own religion and social custom and with the right to be different and non-conformist.

5. Cooperation with the rest of the world in government, industry, and art on the bases of Justice, Freedom and Peace.

6. The return to Negroes of their land and its natural fruits and defense against the unrestrained greed of invested capital.

7. The establishment of an international institution for study of the Negro problem under the League of Nations.

8. The establishment of an international section of the Labor Bureau of the League of Nations, charged with the protection of native labor. . . .

In some such words and thoughts as these we seek to express our will and ideal, and the end of our untiring effort. To our aid we call all men of the earth who love justice and mercy. Out of the depths we have cried unto the deaf and dumb masters of the world. Out of the depths we cry to our own sleeping souls. The answer is written in the stars.

The Third Pan-African Congress, 1924, demanded for Africans:

1. A voice in their own government.
2. The right of access to the land and its resources.
3. Trial by juries of their peers under established forms of law.
4. Free elementary education for all; broad training in modern industrial techniques; and higher training of selected talent.
5. The development of Africa for the benefit of Africans, and not merely for the profit of Europeans.
6. The abolition of the slave trade and of the liquor traffic.
7. World disarmament and the abolition of war; but failing this, and as long as white folk bear arms against black folk, the right of

blacks to bear arms in their own defense.

8. The organization of commerce and industry so as to make the main objects of capital and labor the welfare of the many rather than the enriching of the few. . . .

In fine, we ask in all the world, that black folk be treated as men. We can see no other road to Peace and Progress. What more paradoxical figure today fronts the world than the official head of a great South African state striving blindly to build Peace and Good Will in Europe by standing on the necks and hearts of millions of black Africans?\*

I had published in 1947 my last book on the Negro, *The World and Africa, An Inquiry into the Part Which Africa Has Played in World History*.\*\* The Conference at Accra built in part on the Pan-African Conferences previously held and on the knowledge assembled in this book, and other world influences, brought a new era for the African people and this era the present world must understand. They must realize that the peace movement in the world before the Second World War did not envisage peace in Africa or between the imperial rulers of the world and other peoples regarded as inferior.

The history of the world between Napoleon and the first World War has been sometimes called an era of peace and so-called because the wars during that time were not with the leading nations but between European powers and the peoples of Asia and Africa and designed to reduce the colored world to exploitation by the white world and subservience to Anglo-Saxon civilization. Consequently the peace movement largely ignored colonial wars, regarding them as efforts to establish and uplift civilization, while wars between France, England, Germany and Italy were attacks on civilization.

With, however, the second half of the twentieth century, science developed by history, anthropology and ethnology, by chemistry and archaeology, has begun to prove the tremendous value of what peoples of Asia and Africa have done in the past. That knowledge is being realized by the darker peoples and as a result with sudden impact Africa has literally burst upon the attention of modern peoples. We

\* This reference is to Jan Christian Smuts of South Africa; from 1917-18 he was a member of the Imperial War Cabinet in London, and from 1919 to 1924 was Prime Minister and Minister for Native Affairs of the Union of South Africa.

\*\*This book, originally copyrighted in 1946, was published by Viking Press. A new edition was published in 1965 by International Publishers; it contains about 80 additional pages consisting of certain of the writings by Du Bois on Africa between the years 1955 and 1961.

must realize that there can be no world peace which is not peace for and in Africa; that the reason that modern European civilization descended so disastrously into the hell of war in the twentieth century was because of the determined and continuous war in Asia and Africa, the theft of raw materials which belonged to other peoples and the exploitation and enslavement of colored human labor. In a world effort to stop this method of forwarding modern culture, to realize liberty, equality and brotherhood, the peace movement has begun and is showing itself most effectively in the upsurge of nationalism in Asia and Africa.

If one wishes to realize the momentous change that this has brought compare a map of Africa, not of a thousand years ago, but of ten years ago and today see the new black nations that have arisen and are arising and those that are in embryo. Realize too the difficulties of ancient culture patterns struggling with the new technology, of present greed and theft in great civilized nations striving to beat Freedom, Socialism and Communism and to maintain itself in control of the world by a way of life based on profit derived out of theft of material and slavery of labor. The struggle and good will of the best of mankind is needed to solve this contradiction and basic rivalry, and here the battle of world peace must be fought.

This rise of determined African nationalism is a main threat of World War, because leading nations of Western Europe and North America, are still firm in their plan to preserve the essence of Colonialism under some changes of method and name. Britain, France Holland, Portugal, Belgium and the United States have long based their standard of living and their cultural progress on colonial labor so cheap as barely to keep this labor alive; and on raw materials virtually stolen from colonies and sold at prices giving white manufacturers and traders fabulous profits.

Freedom from foreign dictation, equality of status with foreigners settled in their own homes; and autonomy in their own government is the growing demand of colonial peoples while Britain insists on its right to cheap labor and materials in all the land which it still dominates, yielding only as it must in certain lands like Ghana and Nigeria. Holland still clings to colonial rights in Indonesia. France clings to cheap land and labor in North Africa, and the United States through investment contracts and the bribery of native allies for the purpose of directing native labor, is today the greatest of colonial exploiters. This means war and particularly in and about Africa. Most of Asia has escaped the grip of colonial imperialism,

but Africa is still writhing in its grip and that will mean war among tribes, or between tribes and colonial masters, or between Europeans over loot of this wretched continent. Let no man dream of world peace so long as leaders of world civilization are determined to cling to Negroes as cheap workers.

Colonial powers are yielding but slowly when at all; and after apparent surrender are turning to every device to regain cheap labor and materials. Political control of most of Asia has been lost to the West, but Africa is still a center of fierce rivalry and contention. Colonial power yields but slowly and with every kind of delay and deception. Britain holds powerful place in India by investment capital and in alliance with Indian capital still exploits land and labor. British, Portuguese, French and American capital in Africa exploits labor, monopolizes land and seizes raw material. In order to control land and labor in the future these foreign capitalists are eagerly seeking Negro capitalists in Africa, and ambitious Negroes in America to become partners with them in African exploitation. Thus World War is encouraged, by inter-tribal strife, by revolts of blacks against whites and by wars of whites with each other for a larger share of the loot which comes from gold, diamonds, copper, uranium, vegetable and mineral oil, coffee, cocoa, spices, and a thousand other commodities, raised on monopolized land by labor paid less than the minimum demands of decency.

Here lies the great threat of World War.

It is American capital, grown to monopoly proportions and imperialistic in character, determined to make this its century, that dictates the racist policies of government as well as the amount of rights labor, the youth and the aged will enjoy. When the struggle now led by Negro Americans is seen in this context and scope, then the question of whom to fight will take priority, and the question of how to fight and who are natural allies, despite their confusion and the fact that they have succumbed to the myths of white superiority will fall in place. When there is clarity as to who is the main enemy, the how-to-fight question will be answered by *his* strength and position.

—WILLIAM L. PATTERSON, "The Battle for America" in  
*Negro Liberation: A Goal for All Americans*, p. 48.

JOHN PITTMAN

## Toward Eradication of Colonialism

Before his death by cancer at the age of 36, Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) put into writing many observations and conclusions derived from extensive study and reading, and from his practice as a psychiatrist in the Antilles, France and Algeria, and his activities as a revolutionary with the National Liberation Front (F.L.N.) during several years of Algeria's war for independence (1954-1962). In addition to two full length works he wrote numerous newspaper and magazine articles and addresses, a number of which have been collected in two volumes. These four volumes have now been translated into English from the French.\*

### *The Background of Frantz Fanon*

How Fanon spent his life illumines the essence of what he

\**Black Skin, White Masks*, Grove Press, Inc., 1967. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann. \$5.00.

*A Dying Colonialism*, Grove Press, Inc., New York, 1967. Translated by Haakon Chevalier. \$1.95.

*The Wretched of the Earth*, Grove Press, Inc., 1966. Translated by Constance Farrington. \$1.95.

*Toward The African Revolution*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1967. Translated by Haakon Chevalier. \$6.50.

wrote. He is the middle class intellectual of a colonized people who chooses to join the fighting ranks of the most oppressed and exploited. This choice involves a continuous struggle with the myths and values of the colonized middle class and the colonizing country, as well as with the ideas and methods of his profession. The struggle is manifest in his writing.

In the beginning he tries to reconcile the beliefs and ideas absorbed during his childhood with those assimilated in the university life of France. His first work, *Black Skin, White Masks*, mixes psychoanalysis, existentialism and dialectical materialism. And one is sometimes able to discern the point and emphasis of what he meant only in the context of how he lived. But there is a progression in his writings and clarity grows as Fanon resolves his conflicts through action. Whatever may have been the hesitations, doubts and conflicts he endured, his example is unequivocal: he took the path of revolutionary struggle.

A descendant of the African slaves brought to replace the exterminated Caribs, Frantz Fanon was born in the French West In-

dies colony of Martinique. French imperialism uses the term "overseas department," but Martinique, together with French Guiana and Guadeloupe, are still remnants in this hemisphere of France's one-time vast colonial empire. Since 1635 its people, now numbering more than 300,000 have struggled for freedom. They fought the Vichy French in the first elections after France's liberation elected two Communist deputies out of three.

This was the locale of Fanon's childhood. Here began his preoccupation with the problem of racism, his studies and analyses of the colonizer and the colonized. After completing medical studies in France he practiced as a specialist in psychiatry in the Antilles and France, but at his own request in 1953 took a post as medical director of a hospital near Algiers. Three years there, during which he tried to treat both the tortured and the torturers, spurred his resolution of the "unpardonable debates" in his conscience. He resigned, joined the Algerian revolutionists and served with them until his death.

Fanon's writings range over too many fields to be treated in a single review. Besides, to be meaningful, comment on his observations regarding the neuroses inflicted by imperialism on colonizer and colonized alike should be informed by specialized knowledge. Most relevant in respect of the burning issues of today and tomorrow are his conclusions of the ways of eradicating colonialism

and racism, and on the relations between the underdeveloped countries, imperialism, socialism, and the working masses of the colonialist countries.

### *The International Context*

The period in which Fanon set down his ideas witnessed the achievement of political independence by nearly two billion people. In 1960 alone more than 17 African peoples set up independent national states. Fanon understood why this was possible. "Strengthened by the unconditional support of the socialist countries, the colonized peoples fling themselves with whatever arms they have against the impregnable citadel of colonialism. If this citadel is invulnerable to knives and naked fists, it is no longer so when we decide to take into account the context of the cold war." (*The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 62.)

Nor was Fanon confused by distortions of the role of peaceful coexistence. Unlike some others who professed to see it as a Soviet effort to restrain the national liberation movement, Fanon recognized that the policy of preventing a third world war causes a sharpening of all imperialist contradictions, including that of the colonized versus the colonizer. He wrote: "Again, within the framework of peaceful coexistence, all colonies are destined to disappear, and in the long run neutralism is destined to be respected by capitalism . . . Today, peaceful coexistence between the

two blocs provokes and feeds violence in the colonial countries." (Ibid., pp. 62-63.)

Fanon also recognized that political independence is attainable through different forms of struggle (of the approximately 50 states that emerged in the post-war years while he lived, most achieved independence by peaceful means). But Fanon considered armed struggle to be the most effective and salutary for colonized peoples. "Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon" are the words with which he begins *The Wretched of the Earth*, the work which summarizes his conclusions and which he finished in the last months of his life. "The colonized man finds his freedom in and through violence." (Ibid., p. 67.) "At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect." (Ibid., p. 73.)

And at the national level: "The armed struggle mobilizes the people; that is to say, it throws them in one way and in one direction. The mobilization of the masses, when it arises out of the war of liberation, introduces into each man's consciousness the ideas of a common cause, of a national destiny and of a collective history. In the same way the second phase, that of the building-up of the nation, is helped on by the existence of this cement which has been mixed with blood and anger." (Ibid., p. 73.)

But the colonial revolutionist who seeks guidance from Fanon as to the preparations for an uprising, the pre-conditions necessary for success, the time and place to begin, and the tactics suited to the peculiarities of his country and people, will be disappointed. Fanon saw the uprising beginning spontaneously as a counter-blow against the growing repression and atrocities of the colonizer. He conceived of this spontaneous fight-back developing through guerrilla warfare into the mobilization and organization of revolutionary armies. He focussed his attention on this later period.

Thus, the collection of his writings, *A Dying Colonialism*, which examines aspects of the Algerian revolution, emphasizes the necessity of the revolutionary forces controlling their communications and system of medical care, and countering the colonialists' tortures, terror, empty concessions, bribes, seductions and efforts to pit elements of the colonized people against one another.

#### *The Socialist Path*

Indeed, it is what happens after political independence is achieved that most concerns Fanon. He deals mainly with the neo-colonialist counter-revolution and how to defeat it. At no time does he refer to a class struggle in the newly independent countries, but his rejection of the concept of negritude, that fig-leaf for African exceptionalism and capitulation to imperialism, is implicit in his analysis of the element of African so-

ciety and the necessary conflict between them.

To defeat neo-colonialism and root out the baneful remnants of colonialism, Fanon offered a specific many-sided program. Its foundation, he believed, should be the socialist path.

Of course we know that the capitalist regime, in so far as it is a way of life, cannot leave us free to perform our work at home, nor our duty in the world. Capitalist exploitation and cartels and monopolies are the enemies of underdeveloped countries. On the other hand the choice of a socialist regime, a regime which is completely oriented towards the people as a whole and based on the principle that man is the most precious of all possessions will allow us to go forward more quickly and more harmoniously, and thus make impossible that caricature of society where all economic and political power is held in the hands of a few who regard the nation as a whole with scorn and contempt. (*The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 78.)

In order to launch the newly independent country on this path it is necessary to by-pass the bourgeois phase, for this phase is "impossibly arid" because the national bourgeoisie is "good for nothing." "In other words, the combined effort of the masses led by a party and of intellectuals who are highly conscious and armed with revolutionary principles ought to bar the way to this useless and harmful middle-class . . . Closing the road to the national bourgeoisie is, certainly,

the means whereby the vicissitudes of new-found independence may be avoided, and with them the decline of morals, the installing of corruption within the country, economic regression, and the immediate disaster of an anti-democratic regime depending on force and intimidation. But it is also the only means towards progress." (Ibid., pp. 141-143.)

Among Fanon's other proposals are these:

Nationalization of the middleman's trading sector "in the first few hours" by organizing wholesale and retail cooperatives on a democratic basis;

Building a "trustworthy political party," not the tool of a leader "but decentralized in the extreme" with "give-and-take from the bottom to the top and from the top to the bottom," dedicated to educating the masses politically and drawing them into public life, with full equality for women in the school, factory and parliament, and with the objective of de-tribalizing and unifying the nation;

Making the back-country, the villages and countryside, "the most privileged part of the country," and setting up regional organizations and officials "who have full authority to do everything in their power to awaken such a region, to bring life to it and to hasten the growth of consciousness in it . . .";

Nationalization of the army, educating it politically, eliminating professional soldiers and reducing permanent officers to a minimum,

and simultaneously increasing the socio-economic peculiarities of different countries. Fanon's is no exception. Yet one African commentator considers his "analysis of the nature of the task of achieving complete national independence rests on solid foundations," and that if Africa's patriot resolutely follow Fanon's advice with regard to the necessity for extreme vigilance, for organizing and educating the masses, and for advancing steadily toward socialism, "there is little that can impede our continent's movement towards a bright independent future." (A. Langa, *The African Communist*, 2nd Quarter, 1966, pp. 80-85.)

Promulgation of an economic program "which has been worked out by revolutionary leaders and taken up with full understanding and enthusiasm by the masses."

#### "Positive Neutralism"

Fanon proposed a flexible and diversified foreign policy, for the newly independent countries. He believed that in their initial phase they should adopt a policy of "positive neutralism" vis-a-vis the socialist-versus-imperialism struggle, but at a later stage should take the world strategy of coalition into account by confronting the imperialist camp with a third neutral coalition in alliance with the socialist countries. "The wolves must no longer find isolated lambs to prey upon. Imperialism must be blocked in all its attempts to strengthen itself." (*Toward the African Revolution*, p. 126.)

He urged solidarity with all national liberation struggles, and the struggle for African unity with volunteer African military forces aiding all African countries in need of such aid. African unity he defined as "a principle on the basis of which it is proposed to achieve the United States of Africa without passing through the middle-class, chauvinistic national phase with its procession of wars and death-toll." (*Ibid.*, p. 187.)

No comprehensive program for liberation from colonialism and neo-colonialism should be expected to cover all the historical and

#### *Redistribution of Wealth*

Fanon gave utterance, not to

racism, but to a denunciation of imperialism when he condemned the "ostentatious," "scandalous" opulence of Europe confronting the inhuman poverty and shrunken bellies of the under-developed regions.

The well-being and the progress of Europe have been built up with the sweat and the dead bodies of Negroes, Arabs, Indians and the yellow races . . . What counts today, the question which is looming on the horizon is the need for a redistribution of wealth. Humanity must reply to this question, or be shaken to pieces by it . . . The health of the imperial countries is our wealth too . . . Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which was stolen from the under-developed countries . . . So when we hear the head of a European state declare with his hand on his heart that he must come to the help of the poor under-developed peoples, we do not tremble with gratitude. Quite the contrary we say, "It's a just reparation which will be paid to us." (*The Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 76-81.)

This "just reparation," this redistribution of wealth, this genuine aid in the form of capital of all kinds, technicians, engineers, skilled mechanics which the underdeveloped countries need so desperately, is not to come through race war, but with the aid of the European masses.

The Third World does not mean to organize a great crusade of hunger against the whole of Eu-

rope. What it expects from those who for centuries have kept it in slavery is that they will help to rehabilitate mankind, and make man victorious everywhere, once and for all . . . This huge task . . . will be carried out with the indispensable help of the European peoples, who themselves must first realize that in the past they have often joined the ranks of our common masters where colonial questions were concerned. To achieve this, the European peoples must first decide to wake up and shake themselves, use their brains, and stop playing the stupid game of Sleeping Beauty. (*Ibid.*, p. 83.)

#### *Analysis of Racism*

Fanon's first work analyzing racism, finished at the age of 28 and initially intended as a thesis for his medical degree, forthrightly declares: "The Negro problem does not resolve itself into the problem of Negroes living among white men but rather of Negroes exploited, enslaved, despised by a colonialist, capitalist society that is only accidentally white." (*Black Skin, White Masks*, p. 202.) This the root-idea of his definitions of racism, which he saw as "only one element of a vaster whole: that of the systematized oppression of a people." Its objective is "no longer the individual man but a certain form of existing . . . Race prejudice in fact obeys a flawless logic. A country that lives, draws its substance from the exploitation of other peoples, makes these people inferior. Race prejudice applied to those peoples is normal."

(*Toward the African Revolution*, pp. 32-41.) Therefore, Western Europe, South Africa, the United States of America, "every colonialist group is racist."

Moreover, "anti-Jewish prejudice is no different from anti-Negro prejudice. A society has race prejudice or it has not. There are no degrees of prejudice." And Fanon is as merciless in his condemnation of black men who preach hatred of Arabs, Jews, Asians and white men in general, as against Arabs who despise black men and Jews, or white men and Jews who hate Arabs and black men.

In his writings on the Algerian revolution he tells how the overwhelming majority of Algerian Jews fought alongside the Arabs against the French, how many French settlers performed deeds of heroism on behalf of the Algerian revolutionists, how many French intellectuals, students, Communists, democrats suffered torture and prison as members of or sympathizers with the rebellion. It is the spread of racism among the French masses that distressed him most, and he lamented what he saw as mistakes and weaknesses of the French Communist party.

Later, in *The Wretched of the Earth*, he castigates the Senegalese who persecute the Sudanese, the Ghanians who attacked Nigerians, the propagation by the African bourgeoisie of racist ideas. His solution to the problems of racism and the neuroses it has inflicted on exploited and ex-

ploiter alike, is the "restructuring" of racist societies, the ending of exploitative social systems.

Another misconception of Fanon's work manifests itself in the attempt in some circles to apply it uncritically to the national liberation struggles in the United States of America. Among a number of young black men and women, Fanon is accorded a reverence shared only by Malcolm X. For much of his experience and studies finds instant comprehension and empathy among this country's oppressed and exploited people of African descent. Many of the examples and anecdotes of his case-histories are to be found in replica in Mississippi or Georgia and the ghettos of the West and North. He considered the growing tendency of African-descended peoples to unravel the long-suppressed background of African cultures, and to adopt their history and bring to light the heroism and humaneness of African cultures, and to adopt Africanisms in dress and gesture, a necessary subjective experience in preparation for the battles to transform society, a spur to pride and confidence and militancy.

#### *Views on U.S.A.*

But Fanon recognized that the solution of our problems is not the same as that of the problems of the African peoples. "The test cases whereby both whites and blacks in America try to drive back racial discrimination have very little in common in their principles and objectives with the

heroic fight of the Angolan people against the detestable Portuguese colonialism." (*The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 174.) He expressed more optimism concerning the final outcome of this joint struggle of whites and blacks in America than is currently voiced by people who think the solution will come through racial conflict.

In *Black Skin, White Masks* (pp. 221-222) he considered that "the American Negro is cast in a different play. There are laws that, little by little, are invalidated under the Constitution. There are other laws that forbid certain forms of discrimination . . . There is war, there are defeats, truces, victories . . . a monument is slowly being built that promises to be majestic. And at the top of this monument, I can already see a white man and a black man hand in hand."

Unmistakably, if sections of his work are not lifted out of context but are considered in the totality of his outlook, Fanon believed the solution of the problems of national liberation in the United States would be achieved, not through separatist racial confrontations, but by the united action of whites and blacks in forging a new social system cleansed of racism, stripped of colonial possessions, and freed of the institutions that breed selfishness and the exploitation of man by man.

\* \* \*

Fanon was profoundly influenced by Marx, and Marxists find basic agreement with many of his observations and conclusions.

There are, however, wide gaps in his reading—he gives no indication of acquaintance with Lenin's works, or with the experience of the socialist countries in solving the problems of national liberation and the liquidation of colonialism, or with the many contemporary works on these matters in Marxist literature. Marxists will object to a number of his formulations. Exception must be taken particularly to his underestimation of the revolutionary potential and role of both the African and the European working classes, without which the prospects of Africa's liberation would be bleak indeed. Moreover, in so far as the working class' revolutionary role and influence is concerned, he quite overlooked the growing might of the socialist countries as a source of guidance and assistance to those under-developed regions where the working class has been stunted by colonialism. His thinking was bedeviled by eclecticism and his ideas about race and nation were never rid of psychoanalytical and idealist concepts.

Yet, Fanon's reputation and influence are growing throughout the colonialist countries as well as in the Third World. His life and thought were directed against imperialism and racism at a time when these manifestations of inhumanity are under attack by the overwhelming majority of mankind. His example and much of his thought are recognized as contributions to the emancipatory struggle of all peoples.

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