

BLACK LIBERATION JOURNAL

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EDITOR

Roscoe Proctor

PRODUCTION MANAGER

J. Milton

STAFF

Debbie Brown

Ron Tyson

James Johnson

Cover photos: clockwise, starting at top—Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth.

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EDITORIAL

STOP THE ATROCITIES IN ATLANTA

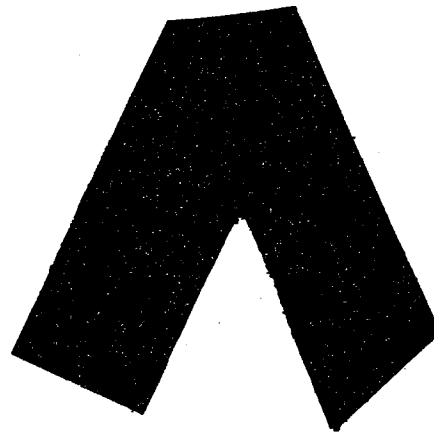
Nearly two years (over 21 months) have passed since the body of the first of twenty murdered children was found in Atlanta Georgia. As of this writing not a single person has been reported being brought in for questioning by the Atlanta police, the Georgia State police or the FBI. According to the press reports, there are not even any suspects. It seems incredible, it is incredible, that after more than 640 days of supposed intensive investigation by the most skilled detectives in Atlanta and big city "experts" from around the country, there is nothing!

The question arises, are the police really trying to find the guilty person or persons? Or is there a massive coverup or conspiracy to protect the guilty or those merely suspected of guilt?

Are such questions unreasonable after so many months of no tangible progress, as the body count rises? When one looks at the history of past police performance where murders or crimes against Black people are concerned, to put it very charitably, they have been less than enthusiastic in their efforts to find the culprit. When the suspect is white, they are obstructionist. Traditionally in the South it is the race hating terrorist groups, like the KKK, that are responsible for the kind of atrocities that are being committed in the shadow of Stone Mountain Georgia.

There is also a history of collusion between the police and the Klan to commit atrocities against Black People. Could this be the reason that no suspects have even been questioned in Atlanta?

Also law enforcement agencies in the South have been known to be run by the Klan or to be heavily staffed by Klansmen, to say nothing of their sympathizers. Can it be that some members of the Atlanta or Georgia State Police departments or some Sheriffs are Klansmen and are involved in the kidnappings and killings?



Is there a massive conspiracy involving the Federal Government and the FBI? Why is it that all the Regan Administration can do is to send some psychiatrist to Atlanta, to try to con the Black community into finding ways to live with this reign of terror? How many more Black children must die before there is some real action on the part of the federal law enforcement agencies?

The only thing that will bring an end to this charade and bring the murderers to justice is massive pressure from people and organizations, white and Black throughout the country, demanding that the full weight of the Federal government be brought to bear to solve these outrageous crimes. So far, the Atlanta police seem to be more concerned about searching for more dead children than finding the killers.

Get your organization, church, union to send messages to the President, demanding that he order the FBI into Atlanta and that they stay there until the murderers are caught. Write or wire your congressman to do the same. Wear the green ribbon, as thousands are doing, as a symbol of your demand that the kidnapping and killing of Black children be stopped and the guilty parties be punished to the full extent of the law.

EDITORIAL

REAGAN'S MAILED FIST

By Ted Bassett

President Ronald Reagan on behalf of the big banks and giant corporations is unleashing a no holds barred war against the working masses, the brunt of which is directed against the Afro-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican peoples and poor whites.

He and his ultra right cronies in the Congress have begun a blitzkrieg to carry out ruthless cuts in sorely needed social welfare programs wrested from state monopoly capitalism through mass struggle.

Reagan uses "supply side economics" to justify his budget cuts and states rights to put it over. [See "The New Black Conservatives" by Anthony Monteiro in this issue of *The Black Liberation Journal* (BLJ).]

On March 3 Reagan boasted before a group of mayors, "What once was a federal helping hand is quickly turning into a mailed fist." (*New York Times*, March 4, 1981.)

On jobs, the most sensitive front of the Black liberation struggle, Reagan, with the aid of Sen. Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) of the Labor Committee, is using the mailed fist to strike down affirmative action programs, to terminate CETA jobs by the next fiscal year, weaken if not destroy EEOC which Reagan and his aides see as a "purveyor of racism," end extended unemployed compensation and reduce compensation, terminate the \$122 minimum social security payments and replace the present social security system with a voluntary one.

He is using the mailed fist to strike down student loans, college-age student benefits and mass transit grants; reduce medicaid and food stamps, and slash child nutrition programs. He is a Robin Hood in reverse. He is taking from the poor but is adding more than \$41 billion for unneeded military arms. President Leonid Brezhnev of the Soviet Union has just urged a summit meeting to reduce arms.

Ultra right racists in the Congress, who are just

"rearing-to-go" to use the mailed fist to dismantle the civil rights laws including the Voting Rights Act, will get the blessing of Reagan. That he gave the opening speech of his election campaign on states rights in the heartland of the Ku Klux Klan was more than a symbolic signal to diehards. Already Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-South Carolina) has expressed his desire to restore the death penalty.

Black Americans very well know that throughout the history of the nation states rights has meant and continues to mean states wrongs.

Speaking of the recent period, *The Baltimore Afro-American*, a leading Black weekly, in an editorial on February 28th entitled "Reagan's Cruel Budget" aptly warned: "It is known from past history that the poor and near poor will lose their rightful share of funds sent to states or cities in the form of block grants without federal regulations." *The Baltimore Afro-American* added, "it is essential that the nation guard against getting itself into a worse fix by attempting to fix what ails it through questionable and brutal economic actions."

This is "supply side economics" in practice which for Black Americans and all working people means hunger plus intensified racism. Reagan's "supply side economics" will not ease the chronic economic problems which grip the nation. They are features of the present crisis. Far from easing the situation, Reagan's policies will aggravate it. Alleviation requires curbs on monopoly. Reagan is giving them free rein.

Can Reagan's blitz be halted and defeated? Yes, it can. The power of a unified movement of the masses, white and Black, will stop Reagan in his tracks. But it must be done quickly. He is trying to put it over before the people become aware that his benign smile hides a mailed fist. BLJ urges the people to reach out to workers in shops, trade unions, unemployment lines, in churches, colleges, and community organizations and rally them against Reagan's hunger policies.

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BLJ wishes to call your attention to the program of the Communist Party which calls for:

"....An avalanche of letters, telegrams and resolutions to flood Congress, state legislatures and city councils. Preparations must get underway now to fire all legislators who support the Reagan budget cuts.

A PEOPLE'S PROGRAM

"There is a way to resolve the unemployment-inflation crisis.

- Roll back and freeze prices of all mass consumption commodities, rents and utility charges.

- Tax monopoly profits. At least \$100 billion can be raised by closing tax loopholes.

- Slash the bloated military budget.

- Government programs ensuring jobs for all, with affirmative action enforcement to achieve real economic equality."



Reagan's Election, the Black Vote and the Struggle for Equality

HENRY WINSTON

Both the conduct and the aftermath of the 1980 elections demonstrate with unusual force how the question of Black equality is at the vortex of the social, economic and class storms brewing in our country. To know the essence of this question, to place it scientifically and soberly in proper perspective and to take a clear partisan position for its democratic resolution is now more imperative than ever. On the occasion of the celebration of Black History Month, 1981, we are pleased to present the following critical contribution by Henry Winston, national chairman of the CPUSA. It was prepared for a seminar on Black liberation, Jan. 17.—Eds.

It is easy to record facts. What is not easy is to probe deeply, analyze facts, draw from them proper conclusions, and then to project a mass line which corresponds to the needs, aims and correct path of struggle to realize them.

The conclusions that must be drawn from the 1980 elections are far reaching. The lessons that must be drawn are urgent and immediate. This is true for the progressive and democratic movement generally, for the multinational working class, and especially for the Black liberation movement.

On November 4 I listened to the CBS news feature "Spectrum" and heard Roger Wilkins' reaction to the Nov. 4 elections results. He said many things, but I was struck by these tidbits: "It is clear that if you really believe in democracy it is not the week to pre-judge—we have to be gracious. The Republican win was too big, too strategic, and too overwhelming for a person not to take his hat off as the Reagan parade sweeps by."

This is strange reasoning. Logic would suggest that one's belief in democracy would lead to a more serious kind of probing—a probing for the kind of approach that could lead to a defense and extension of democracy.

It is urgently necessary to abandon any form of naivete, and to oppose any efforts which threaten to undermine democracy. Taking off one's hat to the Reagan victory is not a contribution to this struggle.

Mr. Wilkins continued: "The votes made it clear

that they want something other than they are getting."

This general statement is, of course, true. But an objective analysis of what the vast majority really want would lead to conclusions radically different from what this statement implies.

State monopoly capitalism and its apologists have aims basically different from those of the vast majority of the people, and pursue policies inimical to the interests of the multinational working class, the oppressed national and racial minorities and all social strata interested in maintaining and extending democracy in our land, and thereby promoting the true national interests of the country. It is mandatory that every effort be made to draw the right kind of conclusions from November 4, 1980.

The real interests of the people differ from those of the military-industrial complex, now being vigorously pushed by the ultra-Right and the Pentagon. The peace majority in the U.S. and lovers of democracy differ from the Pentagon on such questions as "defense," "a better managed economy," "old cultural values" and U.S. image in the world."

It is necessary to be alert to how the ideologists of state monopoly capitalism distort and manipulate the desires of the people to serve the ends of monopoly.

The victory of Reagan, to Mr. Wilkins, was an "earthquake," and "changes my life-long way of looking at politics." This change, however, did

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not take Mr. Wilkins outside of the framework of the two parties of state monopoly capitalism.

He sees it this way:

The fact is that the campaign made painfully apparent what should have been quite evident for some time. The Democrats have spent all the New Deal's intellectual capital, and they haven't put anything new in the bank.

The intellectual leaders of the political discourse have been coming from the Right over the last few years, not from the Left. The old party has become flabby and complacent.

Quite an indictment. He continues:

If the emanating idea of American liberalism is government intervention with power and wealth to improve the lot of the weakest people in society, it must be updated and applied to current conditions.

It is not enough simply to say we must do more because it is right. More why, more what, more how, are the questions to be addressed.

If the Right and the elections have taught us anything, it is that ideas do help in America.

Well, the question "more" is being put both by Democrats and Republicans—more guns and less butter, etc. Mr. Wilkins leaves out a most important question, and that is—for whom? That is, are policies and programs to be for the people, or for the profiteers who thrive on preparation for nuclear war, neo-colonialism, exploitation and racist oppression?

If this question were seriously discussed it would be impossible to avoid the necessity of a popular movement anchored in the ranks of labor—Black and white, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Native American Indian, Asian. These are the forces which must be organized into coalition movements independently fighting against the barbaric policies of the monopolies.



Important is the *Annual Report of the Urban League* entitled "The State of Black America." In the introduction, Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., president of the National Urban League, said in part:

On the morning of Nov. 5, 1980, Black Americans had reason to ask themselves whether the

extraordinarily strong showing of conservative forces the day before represented the final nail in the coffin of the Second Reconstruction, begun so promisingly in the 1960's with landmark civil rights and social legislation, court decisions and executive orders, and then allowed or encouraged to languish in the 1970s.

Noting the victory of Reagan and the facts that 90 per cent of Black votes went to Carter, that Senate control had shifted to the Republicans and that Republican inroads were made in the House, Vernon Jordan continued:

It was evident that there had been a movement to the Right of the political spectrum and the satisfaction experienced by conservatives over this development was matched to a large degree in the Black community by the feeling that hard times were ahead.

"The reason for this" is rooted, as Mr. Jordan points out, "in the Black experience." For example, "conservatism is often viewed as a code word for the retention of the status quo at best, or for the retrenchment of civil, social and human rights at worst—neither of which can be construed as being in the best interests of Black people."

Mr. Jordan observed that "Conservatives may very well argue, and many of them with total sincerity, that their views are not necessarily anti-Black." Pointing out that this "is the perception of conservatism held in much of Black America, [and] this perception lay at the heart of the very real concern, and in some instances dismay, that many Blacks felt in the wake of the November elections."

There can be no doubt that this understanding of the Black people is absolutely sound. It would seem to me that Black people saw in the November elections something even more than conservatism in general. What actually was being said and practiced by Black people is of enormous value to all democrats, anti-fascists and all anti-monopoly forces in this country.

They saw in the advance of the ultra-Right new and menacing dangers which would actively support the revival of the Ku Klux Klan, develop an anti-labor and anti-Black offensive. They fully understood that the offensive against what is called "entitlements" finds its concrete expression in the

campaign against affirmative action.

"Entitlement" programs represent the fruit of bitter struggles against monopoly by labor and the democratic masses. The present cost of these "entitlement" programs is now 300 billion dollars. This sum covers, among other things, such items as social security, veteran's benefits, food stamps, disability, unemployment compensation, student loans, etc.

The greedy monopolies are undertaking to reduce by tens of billions these hard-won gains, and to use these billions for military spending. This is how they see balancing the budget.

A few days before Mr. Reagan was sworn in, Mr. Jordan—speaking about Black people—made this observation:

Whether this concern or dismay is warranted forms a question that cannot be answered at this point—there just has not been enough time....

The Reagan administration is just preparing to take over the national government...and it has not yet clearly defined how it proposes to deal with programs and policies of crucial importance to Blacks, other minorities, and the poor.

Mr. Jordan is right when he emphasizes that "what is clear, however, is that efforts over the next several years to maintain and enhance the status of Blacks will take place in an atmosphere that is markedly conservative and any strategies to ensure this end will have to take that factor into consideration."

He also takes note of the fact that there are some Black conservatives in the Republican Party who have gained "new prominence." He writes:

While the number of Blacks who would apply the label "conservative" to themselves has never been very large, those who have chosen to wear it have not been exorcised from the Black community and their views have been given a hearing. There is little doubt that the same process will continue to occur.

Such unity in the Black community must and will be found because of the "pressing need for jobs, the staggering dimensions of the problems of youth, the deplorable failure of the schools to educate adequately, and welfare reform."

On the search for unity of Black people in the new conditions of struggle, Mr. Jordan let it be known:

...that the Black community is not prepared to abandon certain positions it sees as crucial to its survival...such all important issues as affirmative action, the 10 percent set aside for minority contractors, busing, welfare reform, full employment, fair housing legislation, and the strict enforcement of all civil rights laws. On these there can be no compromise.

And on this note Jordan strongly urges that:

[Black conservatives] should be aware that their espousal of conservative ideas does not lessen their responsibility to combat racism or protect the best interests of the Black community. They should be ever mindful that racism continues to be a common burden shared by all Blacks regardless of political persuasion and/or economic status.

In his conclusion Mr. Jordan states: "We have declared 1980 as a year of 'storm warnings' and the word warning should be underlined. Warnings mean that there is still time to act."

Mr. Jordan does not expose capitalism as the real enemy responsible for the denial of equality to Black people in the U.S. This should be done. He speaks in general to "America":

...we have only to look to our recent past when America moved to strike down the legal barriers that divided our people into first and second class citizens to realize that we are capable of acting wisely if we have the will. That is really the question for this decade.

If being "capable," "wise," and having the "will" to guarantee economic, political, social, cultural and legal equality of Black people depended on state monopoly capitalism—it would not happen, not only in this decade, but ever.

The present advances in the struggle for equality are due first of all to the determined unity of Black people, who united in this struggle with labor and all progressive and democratic-minded forces in the country. This unity was able to wrest concessions from the anti-democratic and racist forces of monopoly.

The Communist Party, USA believes that the key question of the moment, and the decade

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ahead, is a massive grassroots movement, which in today's world can not successfully advance the anti-monopoly fight except in so far as the struggle for full equality for Black people and other nationally and racially oppressed peoples is an integral part of it.



I recommend reading and studying "The State of Black America—1981" from cover to cover. It's rich and valuable material is useful for every active fighter in the movement for social progress. This publication is a distinct service for all.

Some facts by Dr. William D. Morris, director of research and policy studies at the Joint Center for Policy Studies are important. For instance:

In the presidential race Governor Reagan won 489 electoral votes compared to 49 for President Carter, and he won 51 percent of the popular vote to President Carter's 41 percent. This constitutes the largest margin of victory ever by a challenger over an incumbent President and only the second time that an incumbent Democratic President has been defeated in a bid for a second term.

Speaking in the same vein, in the December Central Committee meeting General Secretary Gus Hall said: "The result (of the elections) was a landslide, a mass rejection, a repudiation of the four miserable years of the Carter Administration. There was a popular determination to get rid of Carter."

Dr. Morris does not name the first Democratic incumbent to be defeated in a bid for a second term, but I believe the reference is to Grover Cleveland's defeat in 1888. It should be recalled that this was after the Northern betrayal and the consequent defeat of Reconstruction in 1877. How do things compare with that precedent of a century ago?

The Democratic Party was lily white and was the defender of white supremacy. It was the architect of the sharecropping system, and the author of "Grandfather clauses," "property taxes," "poll taxes" and "white primaries." These were supported by KKK terror and disfranchisement of Black voters. The Democratic Party ruled

ruthlessly with the rope and faggot, and lynch law—legal and extra-legal measures—were standard operating procedure.

The policies of the Democratic party were primarily dictated by the moguls of finance in the North, but also by the former slavemasters.

Efforts of the Grangers and the National Labor Union were not at first successful in gaining support among Blacks. Later, in response to the drive of the National Labor Union, the Colored National Labor Union was formed.

The membership of the latter union and of the Colored Farmers Alliance is estimated by historians as embracing hundreds of thousands of Black landowners, tenant farmers, but primarily sharecroppers. They actively supported the Populist Party, which in 1892 received 1 million votes. (This would have been higher except that masses of Black people could not register and vote at the polls.)

Historians will undoubtedly highly assess a development of this type in the deepest South, particularly since this was at a time when U.S. capitalism was on the ascendancy, and only a handful of years away from reaching the stage of imperialism.

The Reagan victory occurred at a moment when U.S. imperialism is under conditions of a deepening general crisis, and internally experiencing one economic crisis after the other.

If, in the most difficult period of the 1880s, a populist movement in the Black Belt, and the South generally, could emerge, there must be no doubt about the possibilities of an anti-monopoly movement developing in this stage of history in the country at large.

The facts are compelling. Dr. Morris writes about the Black vote: "The Black vote (1980) followed closely the pattern of 1976, with President Carter receiving approximately 89 percent compared to about 8 percent for Governor Reagan."

He continues:

Although Blacks voted overwhelmingly for President Carter they did not turn out to vote in overwhelming numbers. Preliminary analyses of the Joint Center's data shows that only about 60 percent of registered voters went to the polls ...By any measure this turn out rate by Blacks

is low especially in view of massive national registration and get out the vote drives by the Joint Center's Operation Big Vote and by other national and local organizations.

Noting that since 1964 Blacks have given 85-94 per cent of their votes to Democrats, Dr. Morris poses this significant question:

One such question is whether the interests of Blacks are threatened by the persistence of their high level of support for one party. Another concerns the steps that might be undertaken in the near future to rebuild old alliances and forge new ones that will help to protect the interests of Blacks, other minorities, and the disadvantaged in the society.

Eddie N. Williams, in an article in *FOCUS* (Oct.-Nov. 1980), the monthly newsletter of the Joint Center for Political Studies, was right when he wrote: "As the political debris settles and we prepare to face a somewhat uncertain future two things must be clear in our minds: We can neither be oblivious to the portents of the Nov. 4 elections, nor can we afford to falter in our continuing struggle for liberty and justice for all."

Mr. Williams makes a number of observations about the election results: "For the vast majority of Black voters, the other side won." "There is growing conservatism in the land." "Some influential conservatives unfortunately are right wing zealots." And, "Federal influence is likely to diminish in the distribution of public benefits and in assuring civil rights."

These dangers are real, and they are aggravated by the high military budget, being geared to nuclear war, and the offensive of state monopoly capitalism against democracy and the living standards of the people.

Unemployment, high prices, taxation, increased rents, higher utility rates, higher food prices and increased transportation costs affect first the working class, and the brunt is borne by Black people and other national and racial minorities.

Some publicists have summed up the mood of Black voters as containing four things—1. fear; 2. confusion; 3. frustration; 4. hope. All of these things are present. To this must be added anger, disgust, cynicism, mass alienation from the elec-

toral process, a clear determination to more vigorously fight to build grassroots movements and coalitions of all types, and to further the movement for independent political action to resist the offensive of the ultra-Right.

The "political post-mortems" continue. Mr. Williams concludes that the voters wanted Mr. Reagan to do several things: "1. Improve the economy; 2. Increase the nation's military power; and 3. Improve America's image in the eyes of the rest of the world." He then asserts that "Perhaps in these areas Mr. Reagan did receive a mandate."

If logic is stretched, this "mandate" came from the military-industrial complex. *Seventy five per cent of the voters did not vote for Reagan, and gave no mandate.*

In analyzing the elections, Gus Hall said:

...of the one half of the eligible voters who actually voted, only one-quarter of them voted for Reagan. This means that 75 per cent of the eligible voters, the majority of Americans did not vote for Reagan.

Mr. Williams finds that Black people agree with the alleged "mandate" given to Mr. Reagan. He states:

Therefore over the next four years, Blacks must insist on playing a vital role in defining this mandate and in charting the course to economic revitalization, national security, and international prestige. We must do this not only to protect the national interest, but to protect our own interests. Rather than this being a time for despair and withdrawal, it is a time for activism.

The appeal for activism and the admonition against despair and withdrawal are splendid. The question is, "activism" for what, and based upon what policies? In general it can be said that policies which do not serve the cause of democracy and peace can not defend the national interest in general, and certainly not the special interests of Black people. How is it possible to understand a national interest which forsakes the interests of Black people? What kind of national interests can there be which exists at the expense of other peoples?

Most people will think in the same way. But the Pentagon will not think this way. That is why I especially like the call for "activism" and help in

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For example, if "economic revitalization" is discussed, the Administration, with a few strokes of the pen, can decontrol crude oil prices and give an additional 6 billion dollars annually to the oil billionaires; they can lay off tens of tens of thousands of workers and at the same time loan a billion dollars to Chrysler, with more billions to go to other auto moguls.

Yet inflation and unemployment continue to grow. Is it necessary to mention speedup, a lower minimum wage for youth, etc.?

The question of "national security" is of course a matter of concern for Black people, as it is for all democrats interested in the true national interest. They correctly resist any attempt to distort, falsify and manipulate this concept into aims that have nothing in common with that of "national security."

For example, the military industrial complex also speaks about "national security." But this means to them an economic blockade against Cuba, occupying Guantanamo Bay, strengthening the Caribbean Task Force, support to fascist military regimes everywhere, military naval bases in Puerto Rico and all within the framework of a larger and larger military budget.

Such actions undermine and threaten the hard-won gains of the people of the U.S. and simultaneously dig the imperialist fangs into other peoples in other lands.

And to create an atmosphere in this country conducive to such policies they also sponsor anti-Black and anti-Semitic propaganda and all varieties of ultra-Rightism.

Their main weapons are anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism.

There can be no doubt that such policies are inimical to the best interests of our people and that the fight against them corresponds to our national interests.

"International prestige" means for the Pentagon a huge armament program, geared to nuclear weapons, rapid deployment task forces, military bases, Caribbean task forces and a first-strike capability. The Pentagon means by this a three-pronged attack against real socialism and communism, the maintenance of classical colonialism and/or neo-colonialism, and the undermining of

all democratic forces in the country, including labor and the Black liberation movement.

For Black people, all steps toward economic, political and social equality immeasurably increase their dignity as a people. Such acts immeasurably improve our "image," and at the same time inspire the movements fighting colonialism, old and new, for political and economic independence.

In *The State of Black America, 1981* Eddie N. Williams and Dr. Milton D. Morris, president and director of research and policy studies of the Joint Center for Policy Studies conclude an article entitled "The Black Vote in a Presidential Year" in this way:

The history of racial discrimination in this society and any efforts to combat it indicate that the federal government has been vital to the survival of Blacks.

Furthermore, while they are not the only, or even the principal beneficiaries of the major social programs of the past two decades geared to assist the low-income and otherwise disadvantaged, a large proportion of the Black population is especially dependent on them and thus highly vulnerable to any major cutbacks.

Anything but the most cautious moves toward reforming social programs, or further sharing resources and power with state and local governments, could be extremely detrimental to Blacks and require them to struggle relentlessly for their survival. If eternal vigilance is the price of liberty for all Americans, it is considerably more so for Black Americans as they approach the new administration.

This declaration is clear.

This is the richest capitalist country in the world. U.S. science and technology are at an advanced stage—and yet some 30 million people are not the beneficiaries of economic, political and social equality, nor engaged in using this science and technology to reach higher goals.

Their condition historically and in the present as well is that of fighting for "survival." The plight of Black people is symbolic of the barbarity of a system of exploitation and oppression of the majority of the people.

This "dependency" of Black people on major social programs goes a long way in explaining the Black vote in 1980.

STRATEGY FOR THE 1980's

BY JOHN PITTMAN

At the present stage of the struggle for equality, many Afro-American individuals and organizations, as well as individuals and organizations of other racially and nationally repressed and deprived segments of our population, are pondering what strategy and tactics should be pursued during this eighth decade of the twentieth century.

The need for such deliberations clearly emerged during the first year of the Carter Administration, which gave evidence of both its incapability and its unwillingness to act decisively against inflation, unemployment, racism, and escalating militarization. Now, with the seizure last November of positions of power by forces of the right, who openly declare their intention of turning back the clock on progress toward equality, the quest for correct policy acquires additional urgency.

In this quest, we Communists possess a distinct advantage. We do not need to start from scratch. As followers of the great pioneers and teachers of the struggle against inequality, as students of their teachings, the ideas and methods of Marxism-Leninism, we have at hand already the basic principles of strategy and tactics for our struggle.

Moreover, we cannot evaluate too highly the clarification given to our specific problems by the National Chairman of our Party, Comrade Henry Winston. His two books and many pamphlets and speeches dealing with the strategy and tactics of the Afro-American struggle for equality are an inexhaustible source of instruction and inspiration.

In addition, we have the resolution on the Afro-American struggle, *The Struggle For Afro-American Liberation*, adopted by our Party's 22nd National Convention in August, 1979. Since that time we discussed questions of the Afro-American struggle in the new stage last February, a year ago, at a national seminar organized by the Nationalities Department and the Black Liberation Commission.

All told, it would seem that we have a rich reservoir of experience and theory on which to draw at any given time. For example, the reservoir contains

a number of basic truths which underlie and condition our approach to problems. Let me list them in the form of propositions!

First proposition: socialism is the obligatory and indispensable precondition for the realization of full equality.

Second proposition: the obligatory and indispensable precondition for the construction of socialism is the capture of state power by the multi-racial, multinational working class and its allies among other layers of society which are ripped off by state-monopoly capital.

Third proposition: in order to capture state power the working class must become the acknowledged vanguard of all the anti-monopoly forces, unifying them in a broad anti-monopoly movement and leading them in struggles against all forms of oppression and exploitation.

Fourth proposition: in order to attain hegemony of anti-monopoly movement, the working class itself must achieve unity as a political force, conscious of its mission of self-liberation which entails the liberation of all other oppressed and exploited layers of the population.

Significance Of Industrial Concentration

On the basis of these fundamental truths, the Party forged its policy of industrial concentration. This policy has special significance for the Afro-American struggle.

In his work entitled *Class, Race and Black Liberation*, Comrade Winston stated the essence of this significance. Speaking of the basic industrial sector of the working class, the "front rankers" of the working class, Comrade Winston said: "...this sector is decisive in forging the unity of all the diverse segments of wage workers and in forming an alliance between the workers of hand and brain with all the exploited oppressed... the 'front rankers' occupy the central position within the system: they are the ones who, in the struggle for the division of value they produce, most directly confront the decisive sectors of monopoly... It is the development of the class consciousness of the 'front rankers' that will bring the new scientific, professional and service workers more and more into the orbit of the class struggle. It is the 'front rankers' who will provide the most consistent leadership in raising the struggle to higher levels, i.e., independent class political ac-

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tion and the formation of a broad people's anti-monopoly movement based on the unity of the multi-racial working class."

Then, addressing the specific conditions of Afro-Americans, Comrade Winston observed that "the approximately three million Black 'front rankers'...intensify the impact of the industrial nucleus...The revolutionary initiative of these specially exploited and oppressed workers—situated in proportionately greater numbers than non-Blacks in the most strategic sector of the class struggle—is becoming an ever more potent force for uniting the entire working class."(pp.231-232.)

Now Comrade Winston recorded these observations some four years ago, the publication date of his book. But I submit that they are as valid and relevant today as when he wrote them. And in searching today for strategy and tactics to cope with the new situation confronting us, we should examine how well we have understood and assimilated these basic principles. Furthermore, we should examine to what extent our white comrades have understood and assimilated them, and have acted to implement them. In my view, Comrades, neither we nor our white comrades have taken these truths to heart and devised policies and tactics to translate them into reality.

One of the implications we can draw from Comrade Winston's analysis is that it defines our specific function, as Afro-American comrades, our specific function in the development of the struggle to help unify the industrial workers and weld them into a political power in the country.

Now I wish to call your attention to a couple of ideological matters which constitute major obstacles to the unification of the working class. One concerns the alleged superseding of race by class in the determination of the position and conditions of Afro-Americans. The second concerns the current escalating attack on affirmative action.

Character of Racism

The claim that race is being superseded by class ignores the organic interconnection and interaction of racism and class. It disregards the reality of racism as one of the main instruments of exploitation, of the appropriation of superprofits. It disregards the character of racism, not only as part of the superstructure the institutions and ideology, the en-

tire body of law, the government, and the philosophical, religious, aesthetic ideas, political ideas of the ruling circles of our society—but more important it disregards the character of racism as an integral part of the economic structure, the economic basis of capitalist society in the United States of America.

Why do I say that racism is part of the economic basis of capitalism in the U.S.? Because, in the four hundred years of the formation of U.S. society, we have first the stage of primitive accumulation in which slavery was a basic part of the development of the economy of the United States. From the very beginning we have the use of slavery to drive down the price of labor power, which constituted one of its principal economic functions in a capitalist society. Slavery was never an independent economy, but always an integral part of developing capitalism in the United States. This relationship formed the basis of a division of labor, a social division of labor in which slaves were relegated to certain functions. After the Civil War, after rising monopoly capitalism took over the entire economy, it retained this division of labor, by and large. So that we have today the reality that, in almost every industry, Afro-Americans have the dirtiest jobs, the lowest paid jobs, the worst jobs. This situation is aggravated and magnified by the last-hired, first-fired syndrome.

The division of labor is a production relation. What is a production relation? Karl Marx defined it when he said that in the social production of their lives, of their existence, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will. I repeat, indispensable and independent of their will. The sum total of these relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which arises the legal, political and ideological superstructure.

Historically the social division of labor has been based on differences of sex, age, mental and physical labor, city and rural work, and skills and occupations. The socio-economic formation of slavery in the U.S. introduced another division of labor, one based on race. In a social division of labor based on race, racism becomes the major factor in the relation of production as it involves Afro-Americans, is embedded in the economic structure, the economic base, and therefore organically integrated in the system of exploitation. Actually the racist division of

labor intensifies exploitation into super-exploitation, as may be seen from the differentials it gives rise to in every sphere of life, and the super-profits accruing to the exploiters.

Considering the sum total of super-profits derived from racism, and considering that it is integrated in the economic structure as a production relation, any idea of race being replaced by class, of the racist division of labor being discarded by the exploiters, is sheer fantasy. Race and class are organically connected in the basis, organically connected in the whole business of the exploitation and the super-exploitation of members of society. Presently racism performs the same function as was performed in the period of slavery, that is, beating down the price of labor power. This depresses the real wages of the working class below the level of the value of their labor power. This means continuous pressure on the part of the ruling class to bring about the absolute deterioration of the conditions, the absolute impoverishment of the working class as a whole. Consequently, this determines the approach to be taken. We have to struggle for affirmative action in all areas of hiring, promotion and training. What we are doing is struggling against the fixed relations of production. We are struggling against the division of labor which is a major feature of the structure of U.S. state-monopoly capitalism. Short of replacing capitalist production relations by socialist production relations, there is but one way to ameliorate the consequences of the racist division of labor, and that is by a vigorous struggle for affirmative action in all areas of work and life; that is to say, in hiring, promotion, training and the elimination of wage differentials, and the elimination of differentials in housing, education, culture, trade unions and public office and so on.

The second problem concerns the present escalating attack on affirmative action. As we know, when the business of affirmative action was kicked off by President Lyndon Baines Johnson, he spoke about the years of deprivation to which Afro-Americans were subjected, and said this would have to be corrected. He observed that much of the "Negro community is buried under a blanket of history and circumstances." It would require a program of special assistance, of positive action to overcome "the heritage of centuries" and repair the profound damage done by "ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudices." That was the

official send-off of governmental programs of affirmative action.

From Comrade Winston's remarks today, and in view of the mission for which we are responsible, we can see that this is not the approach which is most important for us to use in the fighting for affirmative action. The approach is that the unification of the industrial workers, the "front rankers" of the working class, cannot be accomplished on a basis of existing inequalities of the oppressed national minority component of the working class. Unity requires a fight for affirmative action because only through affirmative action is it possible to begin, just to begin, the equalization of conditions which will permit the various components of the working class to come together in struggle and form a powerful political weapon against monopoly. This is the main argument that must be employed henceforth in the fight for affirmative action.

And here, we run up against Thomas Murphy, former chairman of board of General Motors, who thinks that we are coming with tandoor chiefs on our heads asking for "entitlements." But Mr. Murphy is off his rocker. What we want to express is that the working class of the United States cannot fulfill its historic mission of self-liberation except on the basis of the equality of its individual components. This means affirmative action—affirmative action in matters of seniority, matters of hiring and promotion, an end to this syndrome of first-fired, last-hired.

Professor Nathan Glazer, a Harvard man, has recently written a book called *Affirmative Discrimination: Ethnic Inequality and Public Policy*. He is opposed to racism in general. To give the man the benefit of a doubt, he actually may be opposed to it, despite the fact that he says so.

In his introduction, written in 1978, just two years ago, the author attacks "the justice and wisdom of shifting from individual rights to group rights in devising policies to overcome racial and ethnic-group discrimination and its heritage." In these first words, the author betrays a basic flaw in his thinking—a misreading of the country's history. The fact is that the denial of group rights as well as individual rights to certain ethnic and racial components of the population has been a constant feature of U.S. society since its inception on the North American continent. The needed "shift" to which the author alludes is not from individual to group rights, but from policies engendering racial and

ethnic-group to policies designed to overcome group discrimination. The author views the current polemic with bewilderment.

To cover up a conspicuous bewilderment, the author bemoans the current and ethnic backward fate today as a result of the passage of the Civil Rights Act, taken a giant step toward ethnic origin making."

Now the theoretical seem to plumb some readers' mind. The author is a simple man, colored with color, two hundred years of differences of color after the adoption of the

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ethnic-group discrimination and superexploitation to policies designed to overcome racial and ethnic group discrimination. That is the "shift" which the author views with apprehension and which his polemic would curb and reverse.

To cover up this aim of his work, the author takes a conspicuous stance on the side of the angels. He bewails the circumstance that "a person's color, race and ethnic background are as decisive for his or her fate today as they were in 1964, when with the passage of the Civil Rights Act we thought we had taken a giant step in eliminating color, race and ethnic origin from public and private decision-making."

Now the thought this sentence expresses would seem to plumb new depths of political naivete. And some readers may be taken in enough to believe the author is a simpleton who imagines a society obsessed with color, race and ethnic origin for more than two hundred years can change into a society blind to differences of color, race and ethnic origin a decade after the adoption in Congress of a piece of legisla-

tion! Further, the author seems to wish us to believe that this miraculous transformation of the mores of U.S. society did not occur because of affirmative public and private actions. It is as if everything that happened in this country since the coming of Europeans never occurred. As if efforts to "achieve a society in which men and women are judged on the basis of their abilities rather than on their color, race or ethnic origin" began only in 1964 with the Civil Rights Act. Because of a small, halting advance of affirmative actions since 1964, there is now "a steady march toward a society in which race and ethnicity, stamped on everyone's identity card, are simply taken as a matter-of-course basis for judgment."

This is a gross falsification of history. Even the Texas born-and-bred President Lyndon Baines Johnson, in promulgating his administration's civil rights legislation, presented a more truthful statement of the country's history in relation to matters of color, race and ethnic origin.

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IDEOLOGICAL CLARIFICATION

A NEVER-ENDING PROCESS

*A paper for the Afro-American Liberation Commission Conference
on the Afro-American Struggle for Equality in the 1980's, in New
York City, January 17-18, 1981.*

By Ted Bassett
Chairperson of the Afro-American Liberation
Commission

Why does our Party place such emphasis on the Afro-American struggle for full and unconditional economic, political and social equality? What do we mean by "the centrality of the struggle against racism? Does our emphasis on the struggle against racism diminish, distort or detract from our recognition of the primacy of the class struggle? Does it adversely affect the adoption and implementation of our strategic and tactical policies, which are based on the class struggle and our conviction that the working class is the primary force for social change? Does it constitute a revision of Marxism-Leninism, a form of American exceptionalism? Does it cause the liquidation of the Party and of the struggle for Afro-American equality?

Such questions may seem out of place at this seminar. They may seem particularly odd at this moment when the most reactionary and aggressive forces of world imperialism, headed by United States monopoly capital, invoking the tactic of linkage, are forbidding—on pain of economic and even military retaliation—existing socialism to aid the developing and newly emergent states in their struggle against neo-colonialist exploitation and oppression. Such questions may seem especially strange at this moment when the most reactionary and racist elements of U.S. society, declaring that Afro-Americans have already been given too much,

oppose further implementation of policies of genuine affirmative action aimed at attaining genuine equality of opportunity. In view of such regressive international and national trends, the answers to such questions may seem self-evident to us.

But, it would be wrong and dangerous to disregard such questions because we may think we know the answers. Considering how all living generations of our country's population have been subjected to falsehoods and distortions of our Party's history and practice, as well as to the all-pervading, inescapable racism that poisons every facet of our lives, it should not be surprising in the least if such views prevailed among honest people who are interested in our Party, but are uninformed concerning our history and policies, and are inattentive to social changes. Probably we shall encounter such questions from some who have recently joined our ranks. Moreover, not even all veteran Party members can be said to have attained full clarity on such questions.

For instance, one long-time Party member and consistent activist has directed such questions to the Party leadership in the form of accusations. His example alone suggests that the Party's ideological battle against racism and the class enemy's distortions of our policies is still unfinished business.

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The Comrade alleges that "the Communist Party U.S.A. is guilty of revisionism, that the class struggle has been liquidated by Black nationalism" and that "when the class struggle has been liquidated the struggle against racism also is liquidated and the Party is liquidated."

"It is class struggle that created the victory of the working class. It is class struggle that created the unity of Black and white workers, in spite of the divisiveness of racism. Making the struggle against racism the central issue in our Party makes the Party guilty of exceptionalism in this particular instance. We are the Party of class struggle, not national liberation struggles."

The Comrade cites as examples of revisionism statements of Communist Party, USA National Chairman, Henry Winston, and Nationalities Department Chair, Thomas Dennis at a seminar last year on "Black Liberation in the New Stage."

Winston told the seminar:

"It is important from the standpoint of understanding today's struggles, as well as those of that period, to probe the matter further. The question has to be posed: Can the class struggle by itself solve the problems of liberating the working class from exploitation, or, the problem of liberating the oppressed national minorities from a position which denied them equality? Not at all. Class struggle in and of itself cannot solve the cardinal problems of our class, of our people, and of our nation. But we can say with equal force that neither can the national struggle in and of itself solve the problem of liberating the oppressed Black masses in this country. This is fundamental to an understanding of Marxism-Leninism."

Such is Comrade Winston's view of the mutual dependence of the class struggle and the national struggle for equality.

The remarks of Comrade Thomas Dennis to which the Comrade objected were made at the same seminar on the theme, "Black Liberation in the New Stage." Dennis said: "The need is not for

white quarterbacks and braintrusters or for white experts on Black nationalism, but for front-line fighters against racism and oppression." The Comrade also protests the observation of Dennis that: "No successful campaign to organize the South can be made without an intensive fight against racism and racists. Success here will help immensely in unifying the class and tipping the balance of power heavily in favor of the forces struggling for equality, for anti-monopoly people's government and eventually for socialism."

How did the Comrade characterize these statements? Of Winston's statement he said: "In this quotation Winston liquidates the class struggle. But not only that. By liquidating the class struggle he also liquidates the struggle against racism and the Party as well."

He called the statements of Comrade Dennis "an exercise in Black nationalism, anarchism and separatism."

How should we characterize the Comrade's criticism and ideas? Bearing in mind that he is a long-time member of the Party, how can we explain his views?

First, it seems obvious that the Comrade, notwithstanding his many years in the Party, has never clearly understood either certain fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism or certain elementary principles and practices of the CPUSA. His conclusions reveal that he has no understanding of such Marxist-Leninist terms as "class struggle," "revisionism," and "nationalism." Moreover, he seems to misread and misinterpret what is plainly before his eyes, as is evidenced by his interpretation of Winston's statement as "liquidation of the class struggle," and the remarks of Dennis as "an exercise in Black nationalism." Such interpretations stand the meaning and logic of those statements upside down.

Consider, for instance, Comrade Winston's statement. It is altogether in conformity not only with Winston's many profound analyses of the correlation of class and national struggle, as developed in his two books and numerous articles and pamphlets; it also reiterates and deepens the statement of that correlation set forth in the program of our Party.

The New Program of the Communist Party, U.S.A. (New Outlook Publishers, 1970) says:

"What are the decisive forces in our U.S. society that can bring about its transformation? The Communist answer is that the working class is the primary force for basic social change in our society. And side by side with the working class—indeed, in its great majority, part of the working class—there stands another powerful dynamic agency for social change that has emerged out of the unique American social development—the Black people. *Only the combination of these forces possesses the power and self-interest necessary to transform our U.S. society. Any strategy for radical alternatives now or revolutionary change tomorrow that is not based on their combined strength in the struggle is impotent.*"(p.42.) [My emphasis T.B.]

People vs. Monopoly, Program of the Communist Party, U.S.A.—1980 Draft, (New Outlook Publishers, January, 1980,) now in process of final drafting and submission to the Party's membership for approval, is also explicit on the interdependence and interaction of the struggle against racism and the class struggle. It says:

"Without significant gains in the fight for equality there can be no prospect of working class or anti-monopoly victory...Because the economic roots of racism and of class oppression are both inherent in the system of capitalist exploitation, a special kind of link is formed between the two...Therefore the struggle against racism and national oppression is inextricably interlinked with the class struggle and is inseparable from anti-state-monopoly, and all other democratic struggles."(pp.30-32.)

The Struggle for Afro-American Liberation, (New Outlook Publishers, 1979) the resolution which was adopted in August, 1979 by the 22nd National Convention of the CPUSA, also spells out this correlation of the class struggle and the national liberation struggle. It declared:

"The nation's progress, as well as that of each of its nationality components—particularly so for the attainment of the freedom and equality liberation goals of the 30 million nationally and racially oppressed Black Americans—depends upon relating the struggle for true

national interests to the working class-led struggle against the monopolists. A historically necessary and just cause in itself, Afro-American liberation is a vital link in the common chain. The liberation cause of Black Americans is inherent in and crucial to the struggle for the democratic realization of the U.S. nation's progress to peace, to the democratic, national liberation and socialist goals of the world revolutionary process." (p.9.)

As may be seen, neither Comrade Winston's article nor Comrade Dennis' remarks nor these Party documents in any way minimized or derogated the class struggle, the struggle of the working class for liberation from exploitation. On the contrary each and all explicitly or implicitly assert the primacy of this struggle, in which the national liberation struggle is an integral part. However, on the other hand, neither do they relegate the national liberation struggle and the struggle against racism to the status of a simple class question, as was done by the Socialist Party during the post-Reconstruction quarter-century of development of industrial capitalism into monopoly. As Winston noted in his article, the leaders of these parties and the AFL did not understand that the "special problem of Black folk....required a special approach for eliminating inequality."

These leaders relied on the class struggle to automatically create the unity of Black and white workers, and, as the Comrade expressed it, "in spite of the divisiveness of racism." What happened? Did the white workers spontaneously and automatically unite in common struggle against the bosses with Black workers? No, they did not. History records that in every section of the country and in a majority of cases, the white workers sided with bosses against the Black workers and against their own self-interest. With few and notable exceptions, the leaders of the two parties and the AFL sat on their hands when the newly freed Afro-American people encountered bitter oppression. This was class collaboration, opportunism and racism combined, and the result was one of the most shameful periods in the history of the U.S. labor movement.

Recording events of that period, William Z. Foster assembled the data of the institutionalization of an ethnic and racist division of labor, adapted from the social division of labor of U.S. chattel slavery, in the economic basis of U.S. capitalism.

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"Briefly stated," Foster wrote, "the employers program for him [the Afro-American worker] was to bar him from the more skilled trades, to pay him less wages than whites for equal work, to use his lower wage rates to batter down the higher wage rates of the whites, to keep him out of unions, to employ him as a strikebreaker, and to utilize him generally to break the unity of the workers and weaken their organized strength. In harmony with true working class interests, the proletarian trend of the Negro industrial workers, however, was to fight against these reactionary policies, to strike up unity with the white workers in trade union, and to hold up his end of the class struggle. This was his line in his pioneer organization—the Colored National Labor Union and in general during succeeding decades. Unfortunately, however, there were white chauvinist prejudices among the white workers and their leaders to bar the Negro from the unions, to keep him out of the skilled trades, and to force him into the role of strikebreaker if he wanted to work in industry—all of which errors dovetailed neatly with the employers' plans for the Negro in industry. Early American history is replete with the tragic experience of white workers striking to bar Negroes from skilled jobs and unions." (*Negro People in American History*, New York: International Publishers, 1954. page 367.)

And, of course, white workers, the working class as a whole, paid a high price for these errors. They paid the cost of intensified exploitation and oppression, of exclusion from a decisive role in the electoral process and political life of the country, in lost opportunities for alliances, for organizational growth, and for unity.

Such is the record of a half-century's "creation" of Black-white unity by class struggle alone.

The Communists avoided this pitfall of making an absolute of the class struggle. Even before the Communists developed a special approach to the special problems of the Afro-Americans, they and their predecessors, the Marxists of the First International, placed special emphasis on the inclusion of Afro-Americans in the organizations of labor. Yet now the Comrade would have us scrap these lessons from history and experience and make an absolute

of the class struggle! Not only is his idea revisionist, it is downright reactionary. It is a sure formula for sectarianism, self-isolation and liquidation of the Party.

Evidently the Comrade does not see that the two struggles are interconnected and mutually conditioned, that they are an instance of the correlation of the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism, wherein the struggle for democracy prepares the way for socialism by organizing and disciplining the class forces required for the capture of state power and socialist transformations.

The Comrade also does not see that the CPUSA, the Party of a multi-national, multi-racial, male-female working class, must necessarily be a Party of both class struggle and national liberation. The working class cannot be unified so long as its national components are subjected to inequalities caused by national oppression. And a working class divided and torn by such oppression cannot mobilize the power it requires for a showdown with the massive forces of state-monopoly capital. Hence, the Party of the U.S. working class must be both a Party of class struggle and a Party of national liberation, a Party of struggle against racism. Hence the centrality of the struggle for Afro-American Liberation.

The Comrade and others who may have similar questions about our Party's policy, mistakenly see the class struggle and the struggle against racism and national oppression as contradictory processes. But the founders of the science of social transformations, drawing on the experience of the working class movement, drew no such conclusions. They saw the two processes as inextricably linked with the class struggle as primary, of course, but, joined with the national struggle, and the two processes as mutually dependent and supportive. Our Party's experience and our country's history confirm the validity—and the present day relevance—of their conclusions.

Well known is the conclusion of Karl Marx, after studying events of the Civil War period, that the liberation of Afro-American slaves had been obligatory for the self-interest of the working class.

"In the United States of America," he wrote, "every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black

it is branded. Out of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the eight hours' agitation that ran with the seven leagued boots of the locomotive from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California." (*Capital*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, Vol. 1. p. 284)

Moreover, when the war ended, Marx sounded a warning which the leaders of the emerging labor movement failed to heed. He appealed to the U.S. white workers to act from *motives of basic self-interest* and include the freed former slaves in their activities and plans for the future. In Marx's address to the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association (First International), congratulating the workers on the victory over the slave-owners' counter-revolution, he said:

"An injustice to a section of your people produces such direful results, let that cease. Let your citizens of today be declared free and equal, without reserve. If you fail to give them citizens' rights, while you demand citizens' duties, there will yet remain a struggle for the future which may again stain your country with your people's blood....We warn you then, as brothers in the common cause, to remove every shackle from freedom's limb, and your victory will be complete."

It is also well known that Lenin elaborated the international as well as the national implications of the interconnecting and mutually conditioning links between the working class and national liberation struggles. He wrote that the world revolutionary process is heterogeneous, and that the working class struggle for liberation from exploitation and class oppression is joined, in the imperialist period, by the struggle of the peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies for liberation from national oppression.

Lenin's views on the responsibilities of the working class for the development of these links are particularly instructive for us. Especially pertinent in relation to the questions raised by the Comrade and for the ongoing struggle to defend and expand genuine affirmative actions in the struggle for equality are Lenin's statements pertaining to the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. He wrote as follows:

"...internationalism on the part of oppressors... must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation...that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anyone who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view....In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concession, it is necessary to compensate for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and insults to which they have been subjected by the government of the 'dominant' nation.

"...for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; 'offended' nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest—to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency toward national minorities. That is why in this case the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the class question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed (or small) nation toward the oppressor (or great) nation." (*The Question of Nationalities or "Automisation"*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971, *Selected Works*, Vol. 3. pp. 751-752.)

Since practice is the test of theory, our Party has sought to implement the principles discovered by Marx and Frederick Engels, his close co-worker, further developed by Lenin in the epoch of imperialism and confirmed by our own experience. We have also worked to promote their acceptance, understanding and practical implementation by every member of our Party. Those efforts now need to be redoubled. In view of the presisting class collaborationist pressures, the resurgence of racist ideology in old as well as new forms, and the increase of racist practices throughout U.S. society, our explanation of these principles must be repeated.

ON THE NEW CON

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ON THE NEW BLACK CONSERVATIVES

By Anthony Monteiro

As part of state monopoly capitalism's attack upon the quality of life of the working people there is being mounted an ideological offensive under the banners of "supply side economics," "the declining significance of race" and the need for the people to sacrifice as an "incentive" to the corporate monopolies.

Supply side economics is heralded by its supporters as the answer to inflation and recession, a cure for low productivity and as a means to balance the budget. Its principal emphasis in terms of governmental policy is the Kemp-Roth tax cut proposal. In substance this bill, and the fiscal policies of the Reagan Administration, are based upon enormous tax give-aways to the large monopolies and super rich, coupled with vicious cuts into social programs. Although the supply siders and their supporters in the Congress and the Administration, urge across the board tax cuts of 10 percent a year, there will actually be tax increases for the working people. The real beneficiaries will be the corporations and the super rich who virtually pay no taxes and have innumerable tax shelters. The calls to "deregulate" and "cut the federal bureaucracy" are directed at ending regulations that protect workers, unemployed, youth and the environment from the inhuman drive of the monopolies for profit. Recently the Reagan transition team report accused the Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (EEOC) of being the main purveyor of racism in the U.S. and called for its emasculation. The Reagan Administration has also called for the disbanding of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). This call to deregulate should be read, "let big business do its thing." In this vein, President Reagan, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* said, "a web of laws and regulations, coupled with tax policies (have) inhibited capital formation," and "contributed significantly to the erosion of U.S. productivity." Capital formation and the production

of a higher rate of profit is the message the supply side economists are sending to the monopolist. Paul Robert Craig writes, addressing the genuine intent of the Reagan tax policy says: "A supply side tax cut aims at increasing the incentive to produce new income [to be read a higher rate of profit] by lowering the rate at which it is taxed, *not at returning dollars to the pockets of the tax payer.*" [My emphasis A.M.] As an illustration, the supply siders favor eliminating all controls on the prices of domestically produced gas and oil, a cut in the taxes the oil corporations pay as well as an increased depreciation allowance. The Reagan Administration's de-control of domestic oil will result in a ten to twenty cent increase per gallon on home heating and fuel oil as well as increases in food, clothing, rent, etc. Not only will dollars not be returned to the tax payers' pockets, with this policy they will more rapidly be leaving the tax payers' pockets. Though the working people will pay actually more taxes, the social programs upon which they depend will be severely cut in the interest of "balancing the budget", supporting the war budget, and transferring billions of dollars to the monopolies.

The Green Carpet Treatment



The supply side economists claim as the authority for their policies Jean Baptiste Say, the 18th century political economist. Say's law states that "supply creates its own demand." According to this theory there can never be a serious and continuing shortage of purchasing power in an economy because production automatically returns to producers the wherewithall to buy the goods that are produced. If goods are left unsold according to the early capitalist political economists, prices would fall to the level where all the items would be eventually purchased. The contemporary supply siders argue that the corporations should be unregulated in order to appropriate the entire surplus value created. Capital must not be fettered by trade unions, government regulations, considerations of the environment, the health of the people or whatever in its drive to maximize profits.

Keynsian economics, also a form of bourgeois economic management, views things from the other side of the street. It holds that demand stimulates production. To stimulate demand and thereby preserve the vitality of the market, government regulation must be taken. Unemployment benefits, social security payments, welfare and so on are part of entitlement programs won by the working class that maintain the workers' purchasing power, even in periods of economic recessions. However, the heart of Keynsian "demand side" economics consists in large government transfers to big business through out the military budget, financial bailouts and tax benefits. Moreover, Keynsians view tax, monetary and budgetary policies as necessary regulatory measures taken by the government in the interest of the largest monopolies as a group. In fact, the government regulatory policies are a form of reappropriation of the surplus among the monopolies. Keynes himself saw his proposals as short run holding that, "In the long run we'll all be dead."

Say's law, even in the 18th century was a superficial understanding of capitalist production and the contradictions inherent in it. It expressed the optimism of a class that in the 18th century was seizing the reins of history. As well, it expressed the naivete of this class, its onesidedness and class blindness. Like Adam Smith, Say had unbridled confidence in the capacity of the capitalist market to resolve the contradictions of capitalism. Certainly, Reagan and his gang of big business economists should allow Smith and Say to rest in peace and leave the 18th

century optimism in the 18th century. One is reminded of Marx' correction of Hegel's formulation that history repeats itself. Marx' reply was that when it does, it is first as tragedy and then as farce. Big tax breaks, historic rates of profit for the corporations and a declining standard of life for the people will be the 20th century outcome of policies based on 18th century theory. Workers will be asked to sacrifice to "save their jobs." The sacrifice that the Chrysler workers are being called upon to make provides a case in point. As an "incentive" to Chrysler, the workers are asked to give away the increases in their wages and benefits.

This bankrupt chorus has added to its ranks such Professors as Thomas Sowell, William Julius Wilson, Walter E. Williams, Martin Kilson and others. These are the vanguard of the new "Black conservatism." They have been drawn to Reagan, to use the words of the *Philadelphia Tribune* "like flies to a garbage can." Williams speaking in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* says he is "a true believer in individual freedom and liberty and the Bill of Rights." In pursuance of "individual freedom and liberty" Williams and his colleagues have called for the elimination of the minimum wage, rent control, affirmative action, trade unions, busing, medical aid and all civil rights and social programs presently existing or proposed for the future which would assist Afro-Americans in overcoming the legacy of centuries of racist discrimination. In place of these programs Williams offers the following: "Those people who went through the sweatshops, those are the solid middle class of the country. The people whom we have protected from the sweatshop are the very people having a difficult time entering the economic ladder, namely Blacks and Hispanics." Apparently supply side economics has blown Williams' mind. He has so taken leave of his senses that he has totally forgotten three centuries of slavery, the massive entry of Afro-Americans into basic industry after World War I and the ongoing proletarianization of Afro-Americans over the last 40 years. Today Afro-Americans are the most highly working class of any nationality in the U.S. Black people not only "went through the sweat shop" they have been front rankers in the fight to eliminate the sweat shops and to unionize them. Furthermore, Williams has forgotten the centuries old colonialism of Puerto Rico, 'first by Spain and then the United States' and that many of the early inhabitants of Puerto Rico were

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The reasoning he gives to justify his opposition to the minimum wage and support for the "reindustrialization" of the ghettos and barrios as economic zones where Black, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Native American Indian and white youth can go through the sweatshops to prepare them to be "the solid middle class of the country," reduces reality to its most absurd form. For him racism and its relationship to the capitalist mode of production no longer exists. Sowell renders Williams more profound when he says, "Not only history, but also economics argues against the widespread assumption that group income differences [to be read the income differential between whites and Blacks] are largely a function of discrimination." To prove his point and as a "contribution" to Afro-American progress Sowell also calls for an end to the minimum wage. He agrees with Milton Friedman that the minimum wage legislation is "*the most anti-Black legislation.*" Sowell states, "The minimum wage, like many other governmental programs, severely limits the freedom of Blacks to make decisions about what wage they will accept."

Friedman goes so far as to argue that the minimum wage "discriminates against persons with low productivity." His logic is that to end discrimination the minimum wage must be eliminated. Then when wages reach their lowest level there will be work enough for everyone. In fact what Sowell and Friedman propose is a permanently fluctuating minimum wage with no floor. It is then possible to return to the sweatshop and all of its criminal conditions.

These economists would also be satisfied to see the emergence of a form of industrial slavery in the ghettos and barrios. Friedman's "freedom of choice doctrine" is a naked glorification of the "freedom" of the slaveholders to turn human beings into chattel, of the capitalist class to transform workers into wage slaves, only a step above chattel slaves, not to mention the "freedom" of Kennecott, ITT, the CIA and Anaconda to assist Chilean counter-revolutionaries in overthrowing the legally elected government of Salvador Allende. This "freedom" which is supported by Williams and Sowell is the "freedom" of the multinational corporations to support apartheid in South Africa and the most vicious

racist drive this country has seen since slavery. Like Daniel P. Moynihan, Williams and Sowell argue that the source of the inequality that Black people live under in the United States is the Black community itself. Arguing that racism is no longer an obstacle to Black progress Sowell says, "Race is only one of many sorting devices used because of the costliness of individual knowledge."

Moynihanism (the theory that Afro-Americans, that is the victims of racism, are the source of inequality) merges with the outlook of William Julius Wilson as the other pillar of the "new Black conservatism." Wilson begins by postulating that racism and capitalism in the United States are separable. This is so, according to Wilson, especially in the economic base. The scientific and technological revolution that U.S. capitalism has undergone since World War II has tended to eliminate racism as the basis of economic inequality. He speaks of this period as "the period of progressive transition from racial inequalities to class inequalities." Blacks, therefore, enter the labor force discriminated against not on the basis of racism, but of class differentiation. However, Wilson's definition of class far from clarifying, obscures the real nature of things. He divorces class from relations of production, using an eclectic hodge podge of factors. These include wage and salary level, manual or intellectual work, white collar or blue collar work, etc. What Wilson calls class ends up being strata within the ranks of waged and salaried workers. Moreover, he fails to realize that the scientific and technological revolution, far from "crystalizing a class structure" in the Black community, has differentiated the forms of labor Blacks are involved in. Nor has the scientific and technological revolution ended the racist division of labor that begun during slavery and maintains Blacks in the hottest, dirtiest, heaviest and most hazardous categories of labor. Blacks remain the first to be fired and the last hired. Wilson's protestations notwithstanding, Blacks still experience an unemployment rate almost three times that of whites, and a family income a little more than 50 percent that of whites.

Wilson also misunderstands the scientific and technological revolution under capitalism. He, like John Kenneth Galbraith, Daniel Bell, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Roger Garaudy, is a "technological determinist." He divorces technology from class and class struggle. He fails to understand that in the

hands of an exploiting class technology and science become, as do other productive forces, part of the system of exploitation. Its main purpose being to increase the rate of exploitation. Thus, technology does not bring about a "progressive transition from racial inequalities to class inequalities," but under state monopoly capitalism intensifies both. Galbraith, in *The New Industrial State* crystallizes the view point of the technological determinists. He states, "In examining the intricate complex of economic change, *technology has an initiative of its own* [my emphasis A.M.], is the logical point at which to break in." Technology is, then, to him a thing in itself, operating independent of class and social forces. Furthermore, this view (which is inherent in Wilson's position) sees technology as operating in and of itself for the general good and being able to resolve social contradictions independent of the class struggle. It is therefore natural for Wilson and his colleagues among the Black conservatives to advise Blacks that the struggle ended with the attainment of formal or legal equality. They contend that the positive forces of the economy, driven by technology are now the crucial forces for change.

This optimism concerning the power of technology rests finally upon a confidence in capitalism as a system able to resolve its fundamental class contradictions in this its final stage. What Wilson terms the "modern industrial stage" or what Zbigniew Brzezinski calls the "technotronic era." Class "withers away" for these bourgeois thinkers. Society is now being managed by scientists and technocrats. For Wilson this is interpreted as a "progressive era" where skill (and for Wilson skill is the key element of class) not race becomes the crucial factor determining Black progress. For Wilson the struggle against racism and national oppression is now obsolete in the same way that Roger Garaudy has discovered the class struggle to have become obsolete as a result of the scientific and technological revolution.

Because class for Wilson is "a slippery concept" the nature of Black oppression remains a mystery. In separating class exploitation from racism (which he is able to do only in his mind) he fails to see the threefold nature of Black oppression in the U.S. He does not understand that Afro-Americans are

exploited and oppressed on the basis of class (almost 95 percent of Afro-Americans being of the working class) race and nationality. The high working class composition of Blacks objectively determines the fact that the Afro-American struggle must take on that class of monopolist who benefit from the super-exploitation of Black labor. Nor is Wilson able to understand the point that John Pittman makes that racism is a material force and part and parcel of the capitalist relations of production. Therefore, racism is inseparable from class exploitation and the racist division of labor in the U.S.

Certainly, monopoly will rely in the coming period more and more upon the ideological struggle to disorient the focus of mass struggle. The "new Black conservatives" supply side economists and certain reformist elements will find a point of unity behind the objectives of the corporate monopolies. In this regard they will provide a new force opposing the people's struggle for economic justice, peace and social progress.



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WHAT REINDUSTRIALIZATION REALLY MEANS AND THE GROWING FIGHTBACK IN DETROIT

By Geoffrey Jacques

One of the main aspects of the big business reindustrialization program is the way in which "reindustrializing" is being used. It is not being used only for union busting and lowering wages and living standards, but, in Detroit, it is also being used to disrupt working class unity along racial lines and to destabilize the gains in political power won by the Afro-American population.

The east side of Detroit and the city of Hamtramck, a suburb which sits in the middle of Detroit, is the focus of this move. General Motors Corporation (GM) plans to build a new auto plant in this area which will replace two west side Detroit plants. The new plant will employ 3,800 workers. The two old plants employed, at their peak, some 15,000.

All plants in question are in areas where many white working class families live. While it is true that, during the late 1960's and early 1970's, Detroit, like many other cities, faced the phenomenon of "white flight" (that is, white moving from the city to the suburbs,) the southwest side of the city and Hamtramck both maintained relatively stable white working class neighborhoods.

In many ways, the people of these neighborhoods expressed not only a willingness to stay in the city, but refused to be used as an opposition against the coming to political office of representatives of the Afro-American community, many of whom were well respected activists and leaders of the working class movement of the city and state.

When the Nazis attempted to open up a headquarters in the southwest side of Detroit, the community, led by white community leaders and trade unionists, created a movement which drove out the fascists.

THE RACIST OFFENSIVE

The monopoly offensive's racist edge can be seen in Detroit in a number of ways; from the staggering unemployment statistics for Black people and Black youth in particular (official statistics put Black youth unemployment at 60 percent, general Black unemployment at 27.5 percent) to the number of Blacks on social services and other forms of public assistance (about 150,000 Detroiters are on public assistance); to the living and health conditions of Black people here.

In this period of economic crisis, there is the attempt by the monopolies and the federal government, especially the big three auto monopolies, to deprive Afro-Americans, and working people generally, of rights won through generations of struggle.

It is in this light that the situations at Chrysler must be seen. In Detroit, Chrysler is the biggest employer, and, at most of its area plants, the bulk of its workforce is Afro-American and Arab.

It is this high concentration of Black and Arab workers which exposes the racist edge of the company's takeaway bargaining with the union. Begin-



ning with the closing of the Dodge Main plant, the company's attack was aimed at dismembering one of the sources of deepest militancy among the auto workers, which is concentrated in the ranks of the Black workers.

Workers at the Dodge Main plant were well known for their struggles against racist, sexist and other arbitrary management practices. Their struggles helped win victories in the areas of entry into the skilled trades, against company harassment of women workers, promotions to supervisory positions, as well as winning a more democratic voice in the affairs of the union. The struggles of these and other Afro-American Chrysler workers helped win them respect throughout the ranks of the auto workers as some of the most militant fighters in the UAW. Dodge Main workers had even closed the plant down once to protest racism on the job.

It is no accident then, that monopoly's drive to roll back wages and benefits won through a generation of struggle in the auto industry would begin with auto workers at the company where Afro-American workers have played such a militant role.

Chrysler's success in its takeaway drive has given rise to fears which one worker called the "Chrysler concept" will spread like wildfire. This sentiment is shared by many auto workers and, as Joe Gaston, Black president of UAW Local 15 (a GM local) has said, "it's like opening up a Pandora's box."

Ford Motor Company has also indicated that it wants contract concessions and has threatened the jobs of some 5200 workers, many of whom are Black and Arab, with the closing of the Michigan Casting Center in the opening gun of its drive to lower the living standards of all its employees.

These attacks are not being met without resistance. At Chrysler plants in Detroit and at UAW Local 600 in Dearborn, which represents the Michigan Casting Center workers, Black and white workers, under multiracial leadership are beginning to struggle against takeaways. The leadership of UAW Local 600 has threatened Ford with a lawsuit to stop the closing of the casting center, citing the company's racism in the closing which will violate federal equal opportunity law.

ATTACK ON UNITY

Another of the major aspects of monopoly's offensive against the Afro-American community today is

shown in how it carries out the whole concept of reindustrialization. In this case, the concept is being used in an attempt to divide Black and white workers.

In Detroit, the election of a Black-led city administration has been accompanied by a rising level of unity between Black and white both in the community and in the labor movement.

The progressive, Black-white leadership of the city council, along with the white leadership of many city departments in a Black-led administration, are some examples of this unity.

Also, the active participation of the city's political leaders in a coalition against the Nazis, led and initiated by white workers is another example.

Today, the General Motors Corporation is attempting to undermine this growing unity. In their attempt to destabilize the city administration they are trying to focus the blame for destroying an integrated community on the city administration.

At issue is the building of a new auto plant on the city's east side. The new Cadillac plant is intended to assume the assembly operations of two west side plants and employ only about 30 percent of the workers who formerly worked at the older facilities.

The new plant is to be built in an integrated community which includes a large number of people of Polish decent, as well as large numbers of Blacks, Arabs from Yemen, Albanians and others.

Seizing on the community's resistance to its destruction by the auto giant, the monopoly-controlled news media has dubbed the community "Poletown," and depicted the struggle as one between a Polish working class community and the Coleman Young administration.

This distortion of the true picture can be seen as part of monopoly's efforts, through the news media it controls, to pit the white community, and white workers in particular, against a Black city administration whose leadership grew out of the trade union and people's movement.

General Motors is also destroying another working class community adjacent to where the new plant is being built, moving out the working class population from large area in the center of the city and repopulating it with a mainly white professional and managerial population which will serve as a buffer against Black and working class ascension to political office.

These developments occur at the same time as

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the incidence of rising attacks on Black political leadership in the Democratic Party, where, at a recent meeting of that party's state central committee, an open attack on Coleman Young and other Black Democrats was made by the state party chair and other white officers in an attempt to deny any strengthening of Black representation on that party's national committee.

Another recent struggle exposes how the state's Republican administration has joined in these attacks. Due to undercounting in the census, Detroit is threatened with the loss of a congressional seat. Attempts are currently underway to limit the power of city administration by creating a county executive for Wayne County, which houses Detroit, which will assume many of the powers currently held by the mayor.

The state government's hand in increasing the impoverishment of the Afro-American population is not limited to these actions. In the recently announced state budget, Michigan Governor William Milliken announced a 10 percent slash in payments to the state's 300,000 - plus residents on public assistance, a \$120 million cut in aid to education, and a \$20 million cut in aid to cities, including \$1.2 million cut in revenue sharing funds of Detroit. Fifteen years ago Michigan ranked 7th in state aid to education. Today it ranks 26th in the country.

Such a situation has driven the living standards of thousands in Detroit down. As a result of the deterioration of the fiscal condition of the city, hundreds of thousands have been deprived of the city's only public hospital, and in a city that is majority Afro-American with thousands on unemployment and running out of all health care benefits won through their union, this situation is disastrous.

Before going into some specifics about the fightback against the crisis in the Afro-American community, note must be taken of the situation of our community's leadership and how it responds to the situation.

The city administration and key positions in the trade union movement are held by Blacks. The chair of the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO is Black, as well as are many officers and international representatives of the UAW, including both Detroit regional directors and an international Vice-President of the UAW.

In addition, such personalities as Erma Henderson, President of the City Council, and Horace

Sheffield, Administrative Assistant to UAW President Douglas Fraser, lead community organizations that are independent of the Democratic Party machine.

Many of the major political figures operate from an organized base that is independent of the Democratic Party as well. This includes Mayor Young, whose election campaign committee is composed of workers who live in the city's neighborhoods and aren't necessarily active in regular party politics.

UAW Vice President Marc Stepp and regional director Buddy Battles run the UAW political organization in the area, the Community Action Program, and have major influence on the composition of various political offices in Detroit.

The organization headed by Erma Henderson, the Women's Conference of Concerns, is a mass organization of working class and professional women with deep ties to the churches and community organizations. It meets once a year in a 2000 or more strong conference to discuss the basic issues of the day. This organization consistently takes advanced positions on such issues as unemployment, peace, housing, and other matters which affect the Afro-American community.

With such strength in political office and at the grass roots, Black labor and political leaders have been able to make some inroads in the struggle for affirmative action and civil rights. They have been able to wage a limited mass fight against some of the attempts to disenfranchise Afro-American voters. They have been able to put a limit on the repressive actions of the police. They have also been able to fight for some funds for Detroit.

While these leaders have been able to wage a principled fight for some gains in democratic rights, at the same time their willingness to use this power and influence to launch a fightback on the economic questions has been limited.

One problem has been that, for the most part, the grass roots base of these leaders remains demobilized except at election time. While, by and large, experience proves that, given masses in motion, these leaders have been willing to join such a fightback, their willingness to initiate or to mobilize their own base for such action is limited.

One example of the willingness of this leadership to join with such masses already in motion is in the developing movement for jobs. At a recent rally organized by a coalition of trade unions based on a

solid Black-white leadership, Tom Turner, chair of the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, gave a principled, militant speech pinpointing the need for workers to apply continuing pressure on political leaders for jobs. Also speaking at the rally were Congressman John Conyers, City Council leaders Erma Henderson and Maryann Mahaffey, UAW regional Director Bard Young, among others.

Another example is the growing movement to introduce and pass a city ordinance against genocide. In light of the recent light sentences given a group of Ku Klux Klan members for shooting up a Black Detroit resident's home, the running on the Republican Party ticket of an admitted nazis in suburban Livonia, and other incidents of racist harassment and violence, such an ordinance is gaining wide support. Many City Council members will respond to the mass pressure to pass such an ordinance.

Brief mention has already been made of the role of Afro-American women in the struggle for equality in Detroit. The Women's Conference of Concerns, has wide influence, and it's deliberations are part of the agenda of every politician of importance in the southeast portion of the state.

In the current crisis Afro-American women are special victims. Among the last to be hired into the auto plants as a result of sharp affirmative action struggles a few years ago, they are now facing the heaviest layoffs. At Chrysler's Jefferson Avenue Assembly Plant, on Detroit's East Side, the latest round of layoffs, have just about eliminated women from the plant. In several of the recent struggles against the crisis, such as the struggle to save Detroit's public hospital, Afro-American women, particularly trade union women, have played the leading role, and women also play a leading role in the civic affairs of Detroit.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

In these and other developments and struggles our Party has been an active participant. We were the first to bring out the racist character of the latest round of plant shutdowns and layoffs. We were the most consistent opponents of and advocates of the outlawing of racist organizations. We have helped mobilize whites for unity with Black and other workers on the economic front and in defense of

Black political and trade union leadership. We continue to participate in these movements with the object of bringing the greatest degree of multiracial, multinational unity for the advance of the class as a whole.

At the same time, we must be mindful of the pressures which seek to relegate the struggle against racism and for Afro-American liberation to the back burner.

These ideas include the concept that the economic crisis affects the whole class, and that in order to unite the whole class to win concessions, the struggle against racism shouldn't be singled out as a special problem.

Another idea along these same lines is that bringing up the issue of the struggle against racism only divides workers who would otherwise be won to unite on the economic front, since white workers are said to be too racist and backward to consider the needs of Blacks or to see how racism is used as a hammer against all workers.

These ideas are constantly disproven as white workers unite in Detroit with Black workers and other segments of the population in the struggle against racism, as in the struggle against the nazis on the city's southwest side. They are also disproven as white workers continue to benefit from affirmative action programs, which open the doors to employment and advancement for them as well.

There is a need to develop a heightened sensitivity on the issue among white workers generally and among white progressives and Communists particularly. Only in this way can the Party increase and keep its Black membership and influence in the Black community.

It is necessary, in order to unite the whole class in the fightback against the monopolies, for white workers to go among other white workers to win them to fight for affirmative action programs in training and upgrading in the interests of expanding such programs for all workers.

It is also necessary for progressive white political leaders to go in the white communities and win white masses to the concept of backing Black political leadership. It is necessary to convince white people that a successful struggle for jobs can be conducted only if they recognize the special needs of the doubly oppressed and exploited Afro-American and other oppressed nationalities.

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OHIO COMMUNISTS AND AFRO-AMERICAN LIBERATION

By JUDY GALLO

During the recent period our Party has improved its work on the Afro-American liberation front. We have been involved in the fight against the Klan, for affirmative action in steel, for school desegregation, in the electoral arena and in a number of other areas. However, we are still not satisfied.

This improvement is the result of a determined effort to overcome serious weaknesses in the struggle for Afro-American liberation which had led to deterioration of our roots in the Black community, and justified feelings of frustration among Afro-American comrades. At the same time the lack of active struggles on this front growing out of expression of chauvinism in the Party and tendencies of Black members to drift away, greatly reducing their role in the leadership. However, it should be noted that the Young Workers Liberation League (YWLL) does have a number of Afro-American youth in leadership roles.

Playing a central role in the progress that is being made overcoming these problems is the attention being given to greatly expanding concrete struggles during the course of which we combat expressions of chauvinism as they arise.

We would like to analyze our participation in this mass work briefly, as well as to raise some general question for discussion.

For some time the Klan and the neo-Nazis have sought to exploit the sharp economic crisis afflicting Ohio. They have focused primarily on the steel centers—Youngstown, Steubenville, Middletown and Lorain—which have been hardest hit by massive lay-offs and plant shutdowns. This confirms our Party's analysis that racist groups are becoming more active in order to divide the working class and divert it from struggle against the economic crisis. In each of these areas we have been instrumental in

helping to build broad mass movements against the Klan.

In 1979 the Klan held a massive demonstration of 1200 in Middletown, one of the largest actions staged anywhere in the North for many years. The Klan called for an even bigger rally in 1980. This time, however, comrades were present and active, and together with others, successfully rallied a broad coalition which aroused the community to the dangers of the Klan. A far-reaching injunction was obtained barring the Klan from wearing masks, carrying weapons or making racist statements. The result was that only 30 Klan members showed up together with about 100 onlookers, while a peaceful counter-demonstration of about 350 people took place in another part of the city.

A fight had to be waged against the phoney left, which up to the last minute sought a physical confrontation with the Klan, which had stashed automatic weapons in a nearby bar. The Middletown City Council is now exploring an ordinance to prevent any future demonstration by the Klan in their city. It should be noted that in the course of this struggle the Klan shot up homes of a number of the leaders of the movement.

Recently the Klan also shot up the house of a Black family in Lorain.

A number of progressive steel workers succeeded in having a resolution denouncing this attack adopted and publicized by their union. As well, the NAACP agreed to hold a conference on the Klan. The club in Lorain has scheduled an open educational meeting on the Klan for February and has plans for a public forum with non-Party progressive forces.

Lorain has also been a center of the struggle for affirmative action in apprenticeship programs in

steel. The work of progressive rank-and-filers resulted in one of the best implementations of the Consent Decree at the U.S. Steel mill in Lorain. The struggle continues to the present, with the company using complicated testing schemes to eliminate minority apprentices. The rank and file committees have waged a consistent fight against this, involving the union leadership and the EEOC.

In Cleveland we played an important role in helping to defuse tensions surrounding the court ordered school desegregation process. Despite massive efforts by organized racist forces, who often enjoyed open support from public officials, including former Mayor Kucinich, system-wide busing has been achieved in the course of the past three years without a single serious incident. This is mainly due to the work of a group known as WELCOME, a coalition of Black and white community activists, workers, church and other forces. They are united in the determination that, whatever one's views of busing, the court orders must be implemented peacefully.

THE PARTY'S ROLE

The Party is establishing a public record as a vocal opponent of racism in the political arena. Our position on the racist weaknesses of Kucinich and the various unprincipled attacks on the City Council president, who is Black, have been widely publicized and have had considerable impact.

During the recent election campaign, the Communist candidates were the only candidates who spoke out for equality and affirmative action, for outlawing racism and the Klan. These positions were very much welcomed by leaders of the Afro-American community. The campaign opened many doors in the Afro-American community, and we are now on a better footing for launching our 1981 electoral work in the mayoral and City Council races.

We are active in fighting police brutality. We are struggling for Afro-American and Puerto Rican representation. Afro-American comrades have also been involved in the development of some new initiatives in the Afro-American community.

In assessing all of this work we can point to important initiatives and achievements of individual comrades, clubs and the district as a whole. However, we feel that the work still suffers from lack of an overall coordinated approach, consistency and full

involvement of the membership. We are dealing with this problem to some degree through a series of proposals in the area of Afro-American liberation in our 1981 plan of work. One of these is the establishment of a district Afro-American Liberation Commission.

At the same time we recognize that the Party has objective limitations, and we wish to raise for discussion the question of whether a new mass form, involving Black and white, is needed, dedicated to the fight for equality in every sphere and for greater unity and working together of both.



On what level should our participation be with mass organizations with large Black constituencies?

Are new forms needed in the Afro-American community? And if so, what type?

We believe that we are now in a period where the economic issues are central to the fight for Afro-American liberation. We believe that there exists a widespread sentiment among whites as well as Blacks, for equality but that this sentiment is by-and-large unorganized. Is there a need for an organization which links the class and national struggles—one which could address the problems of jobs, affirmative action, layoffs of city workers and cuts in city services problems of housing and school



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discrimination, police brutality, the growing attacks on and murders of Black people, the rise of the Klan and the Nazis? Such an organization would have an orientation to helping to move the labor movement to play a leading role in the struggle against racism and for working class unity.

CURRENTS IN THE AFRO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY OF CLEVELAND

The economic conditions of Black people are the starting point. Black people are suffering sharply from the economic crisis. They face severe unemployment due to layoffs and plant closings aggravated by "last-hired, first-fired" patterns. Unemployment among Black youth is reportedly as high as 75 percent. Black people are especially concerned about threats to lay off city workers and cut services.

Conditions are ripe for mass struggle, but leadership and organization are weak. Traditional organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League make some positive contributions, but do not organize and mobilize the masses of Black people. Nor does the trade union leadership, in the main. CBTU does not have a strong and active base here. Cleveland has its share of conservative Black political figures, tied to the Republican or Democratic parties.

The 21st Congressional Caucus and Congressman Louis Stokes are an independent force. They take many anti-monopoly positions and seek to educate a mass base. They take part in mass struggles (such as the WELCOME marches).

There is a growing mass sentiment for political independence, and deep concern about the intentions of the Reagan Administration.

Some new forms are beginning to develop in the Afro-American community, dealing with such concerns as political independence, economic problems, police brutality, and solidarity with the struggle for African liberation.

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The new stage in the struggle for political independence

"The organizational consolidation of this ideological independence is what is on the agenda of the struggle for political independence."

By Anthony Monteiro

The last three presidential elections and numerous state and local elections have demonstrated a growing drive for political independence in the Afro-American community. Afro-Americans generally vote for the most advanced and viable alternatives available in the electoral arena, while at the same time bloc voting against the most racist and reactionary choices. Moreover, they constitute the most united political bloc in the nation.

Afro-Americans have consolidated their political strength in many areas where they hold the majority and have sought alliances with other democratic forces, resulting in dramatic leaps in their political representation in the past 15 years.

Last year was a turning point in this process. The utter bankruptcy and anarchy of the process dominated by the two parties of monopoly confirmed for millions of voters, particularly Afro-Americans, the immediate need to find an independent and people's alternative to the Democratic and Republican Parties.

Afro-Americans are in the forefront of this movement, and consequently, as a people, are moving at this time more rapidly towards that objective. For instance, despite the success of the ultraright in hitting deeply into the ranks of the liberals, Blacks increased their Congressional representation as well as their representation at the state and local levels.

Afro-Americans, though not wholeheartedly embracing Carter, did see more clearly than most voters the racist and reactionary danger of Reagan. Afro-Americans therefore united ranks against him.

As well, the political struggle in the big cities like Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, Birmingham and Atlanta have seen the emergence of an advanced front of Afro-Americans. The elections of three independent and generally anti-monopoly Congresspeople from Chicago, the victory of the outstanding jurist and fighter for the people in Detroit, Judge George Crockett, and Ronald Dellums' reelection despite efforts to defeat him have shown a

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Rep. Ronald

clear militant tendency in the face of reaction.

The consolidation of the political strength of Afro-Americans in the forms of caucuses of elected officials, independent parties, ward and precinct organizations, etc., has been a basic element of the new state of the Afro-American liberation struggle.

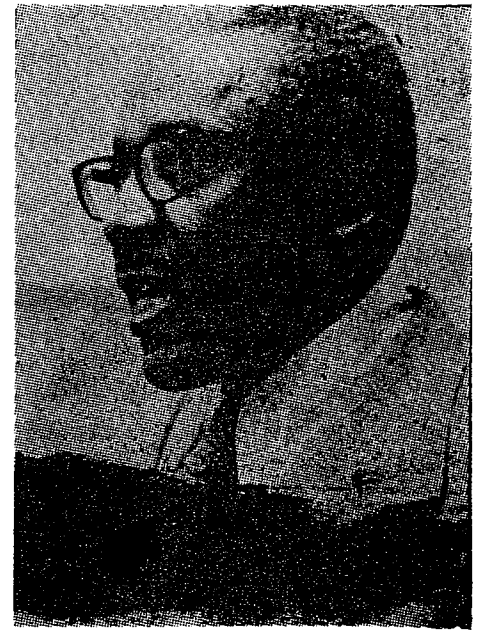
Another example was the 1979 mayoral election in Philadelphia, where Blacks challenged, first through Charles Bowser, then through labor leader Lucien Blackwell, the financial and political power of monopoly in quest of the highest office in the city. This independence carried over into the three-to-one rejection by Black voters of Carter in the April 1980 primaries.

The election of a Black mayor in Birmingham, Alabama, was a significant move forward for the South and the nation.

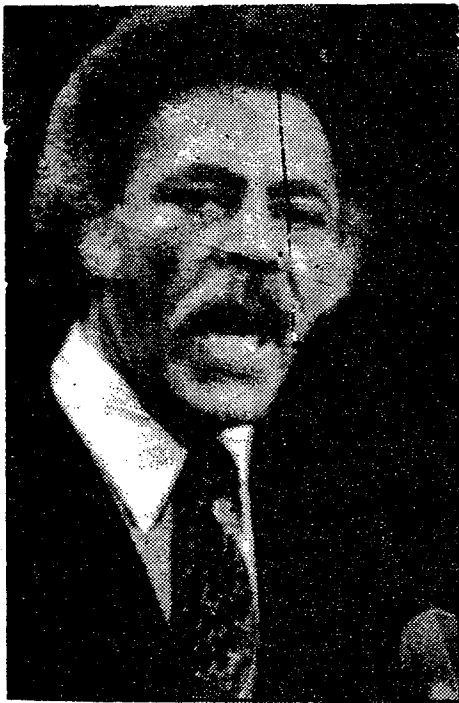
Furthermore, Afro-Americans have stood out as the most advanced force in supporting the right to the ballot of independent parties, particularly the Communist Party.

Although the process of political independence is more developed among Afro-Americans, they are not alone. Labor, which includes Black, white, Puerto Rican, Chicano, and other Latin Americans,

Asian and Native Americans, has begun to move in this direction. Broad sections of women and elderly are seeking independence as are the youth, who reflect deep anti-establishment views.



Judge George Crockett



Rep. Ronald Dellums

What we are witnessing are the first *real* stages of a massive breakaway from the two monopoly dominated bourgeois parties. Already millions have ideologically broken with the Democrats and Republicans. This is not only indicated by the 52% of all eligible voters who didn't vote out of dissatisfaction and disgust, but by the over seven million voters who voted for candidates outside the Democratic or Republican parties, including a growing number who voted for Communist Party and other non-monopoly parties.

The organizational consolidation of this ideological independence is what is on the agenda of the struggle for political independence.

The organizational form will not be realized easily. Pressure from the monopolies, and the pressure of habit, will create big difficulties. It will not just be local developments that will suddenly transform themselves into a national coalition, nor will it come about merely by prominent figures calling a national conference. Labor will not spontaneously be in the leadership; this role will have to be fought for.

The process will be uneven, reflecting differing levels of consciousness, and there will be many transitional forms moving in the direction of a party of the people, anti-monopoly and anti-imperialist in content, able to challenge the government power of state monopoly capitalism. This process will occur under circumstances when reaction will be using all means to consolidate its political position.

In the wake of Reagan's presidential victory and the demonstrated racist content of the election platforms of both parties, a mass convention was held in Philadelphia on November 21-23. Its stated, though yet unrealized, objective was to found a Black independent political party.

Nearly 1,500 people from over 27 states regis-

tered as delegates. Like the founding of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and the Black Political Convention of 1972, this convention reflected the effort of Black Americans to intervene on their own behalf and on behalf of the nation as a whole in the electoral process, to block the initiative of the most reactionary sections of monopoly capital. It represented a further step in the process of institutionalizing an independent alternative to the bourgeois parties.

The political maturation of Black masses has most certainly been and will continue to be an uneven process. Certainly, history has proven that the working class among Black people is the most radicalized and most politically independent. This working class majority among Black people significantly influences all developments among Black

people. This was the situation held in November of forces that National Black radicalized academy petty bourgeois nationally reflected the people.

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people. This was the case with the founding convention held in November. Though called at the initiative of forces that had assumed leadership in the National Black Political Assembly, mainly radicalized academicians and certain sections of petty bourgeois nationalists, the convention objectively reflected the general aspirations of the people.

From the very beginning of the convention, sharp contradictions were expressed between the leadership and the majority of delegates. The main contradiction was between the broad anti-monopoly aspirations of the majority of delegates and the narrow petty bourgeois ambitions of a good part of the leadership. For this reason, the draft of the party charter, which manifested a narrow petty bourgeois outlook, rather than a broad approach to struggle, was not adopted.

In addition, the majority of delegates demanded, and partially won, a broadening of the leadership.

Furthermore, the delegates called for a nationwide discussion on the principles and program of the party and for a congress to be held in August to formally adopt a charter, program and leadership.

It would be incorrect and totally absurd to view this development as a thing in itself. It is part of the overall radicalization of the working class and growing politicalization of the class struggle and will increasingly depend for its success upon establishing a united front of struggle with all anti-monopoly, anti-racist forces.

In capitalist society, generally, the appearance of new mass party forms results from a new correlation of class forces, the political maturation of broad sectors of the working people, and the growing inability of the monopoly capitalists politically and administratively to contain the class struggle. Thus, the past decade has seen the failure of the policy of liberal paternalism from above. The monopolies have substituted in its place a policy of social partnership with concessions to a small elite and repression and hardship for the masses.

The inability of the Democratic and Republican parties to modify the form of their class rule in this period of crisis has pushed millions of Blacks to seek an immediate alternative.

In light of this, the conference in November and the activities following upon it must be viewed in the most positive light. Whether a genuine party will emerge out of these events is not certain. What

is certain, however, is that a new stage of struggle for political independence has now been reached. This stage both reflects and propels the crisis of monopoly capitalist rule in the country.



Reprinted from World Magazine—Feb. 26, 1981

CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLACK COMMUNISTS TO THE U.S. LABOR MOVEMENT

By PHIL BART

The malignant influence of racism, which penetrated the labor movement, served as a barrier in its effectiveness to organizing the unorganized. As long as this condition prevailed it served as a block to a successful organization drive. For this is an enemy ideology serving the interests of the employers, whereby workingclass division creates even greater profits from those who are most exploited.

Black workers have held a singular position in the U.S. labor movement. This is so despite the fact that besides facing all problems of workers, they bear the additional obstacle of limited access to jobs, confront discriminatory seniority practices, to which must be added the racial restrictions in reaching leading positions in labor organizations.

In earlier decades the Left and progressive forces succeeded in making slight cracks in this barrier, consequently Black workers won limited rights to a union job. The initiation of the CIO drive in the mass production industries, in the 1930s, created the first major break with racism. But the organization drive faced the challenge of attracting those workers who had experienced long periods of discrimination. The barrier of racism was and is now a serious obstacle, and a challenge in breaking the anti-union grip of the huge corporations. Here the earlier experiences of the Left was helpful, but foremost was the initiative and leadership of the Communist Party. Since its formation it was uncompromising in its struggle against racism. The Party's entry into the lynch-ridden South, its efforts to organize the textile workers in Gastonia, N.C. (1929), and its cadre of experienced Black and white organizers was most essential to the organization drive.

The Party's form of organization which directs its attention to shop clubs, whereby all members in a particular plant belong to the same club, was instrumental in reaching workers in basic industries. The Party maintained direct ties with Black workers on the job. When the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) launched its drive, it sought out Communists as union organizers, and Communists responded with a recognition that success is possible only by the unity of Black and white workers. While Philip Murray, head of the SWOC, later instituted a red-baiting drive, he had initially asked them to become organizers, and praised their work.

Below are brief biographies of four Afro-Americans who were leaders. They have left an indelible mark on their union organizations. They are representative of others who have made illustrious contributions to the American labor movement.

MORANDA SMITH

The tobacco industry held a strong grip on the economic and political life in the South, primarily in Virginia and North Carolina. Winston-Salem, third largest city in N.C., was under the rule of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. It was here that the new CIO union, Food, Tobacco and Allied Workers Union, sought to organize the tobacco workers. The Communist Party had been active, over some years, in various parts of the industry.

Wages were low (40 cents an hour) and the work was back-breaking. Black workers held the hardest jobs. Stemming, stripping of tobacco leaves, was primarily confined to Black workers. This was the area selected for organization. The union formed Local 22, which attracted to its leadership, some of the outstanding women trade union leaders in the country. They were Moranda Smith, Velma Hopkins and Viola Brown. Ms. Smith became the Southern Regional Director of the union. And "as a member of the union's national executive board," writes the labor historian, Philip S. Foner, "occupied the highest position any Black woman had held to that time in the labor movement."

The leadership represented by Moranda Smith and others inspired Paul Robeson, the great artist and worker's leader to say at a strike rally of tobacco workers: "Negro womanhood today is giving us many inspiring examples of steadfast devotion, cool courage under fire, and brilliant leadership in our

people's struggle for new strength every level."

Moranda Smith Party.

BEN CARRI

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Moranda Smith was a member of the Communist Party.

BEN CARREATHERS

It was not accidental for the Party to devote such great attention to steel workers. Here was a basic section of the workingclass whose initiative would help break the grip of monopoly resistance to trade unions. It was therefore a natural for the Communist Party to respond with all its energies to the drive launched in the early 1930s to organize the industry. A key factor to the drive was the response of Black workers. In a union which was to count a million members by 1944, they comprised 10 per- cent of the work force.

How to reach the Black workers? Here, too, the Party had a history of close ties won through years of struggle. No one could think of the 1930s and ignore the Party's entry in the lynch-ridden South, and fight for full equality. Consequently, when the steel drive was started, Communist Party members were invited to participate as organizers. Philip Murray, Chairman of the SWOC, turned to such brilliant organizers as Ben Carreathers to join in the drive.

Under Carreathers' leadership a national conference of Black people's organizations was convened in Pittsburgh, Pa., February 6, 1937, to spur the steel drive. It was attended by 186 delegates representing 110 organizations. Ben Carreathers, personally, signed up close to 2,000 workers. His leadership was recognized by Murray, because it was his initiative which was responsible for unionizing the Jones and Laughlin steel mill at Aliquippa, the largest in the area.

JOE COOK

A pronounced feature of Communist leadership in shops and trade unions has always been its close ties with and in defense of workers' interests. Furthermore, communist leadership has sought to associate labor's ties with the community. Joe Cook who lived and worked in South Chicago, was the embodiment of these qualities.

Cook was employed in the Valley Mould plant, and was elected as first President of Local 1029, United Steel Workers of America. This devoted

Communist and trade unionist was active in the organizing drive of the SWOC, and won the support of a majority of his white fellow workers. His local took on his name as a tribute to their late President

But his energies extended beyond his shop and local union. He was concerned with the needs and welfare of his community, which was composed largely of steel workers.

George Powers, a steel workers himself and a friend of Cook's wrote in a brochure, published by the union, that he knew him since the mid-1930's. He recalls how Cook started action to build a new library for the community. This helped create jobs for the unemployed building trade workers, and created cultural facilities for the community.

Mrs. Evelyn M. Stanley, Chief Librarian at the South Chicago Library recalled "Mr. Cook invariably chaired the annual February meeting of the Forum, when the lectures were dedicated to some phase of Black history and culture. It was his suggestion to encourage students from the South Chicago Public Schools to write competitive essays dealing with the heritage of Black Americans. This able and dedicated steel union leader was certainly ahead of his time. He seemed firmly convinced that unionism, community and educational services go hand-in-hand."

Joe Cook was a member of the highest body of the Communist Party - the Central Committee.

FERDINAND SMITH

In the war against Nazi aggression, our country's merchant seamen, performed a most honorable role. Their jobs took them to the front lines of battle. They were involved in delivering war goods and faced loss of life from enemy submarines. An outstanding leader in the National Maritime Union (NMU) was Ferdinand Smith its National Secretary. Understanding the reason for the war, he was tireless in his effort to win it, and no less responsive to the problems facing the union membership during and following the end of the war.

In his report to the 6th Convention of his union, in 1947, he recalled an earlier convention, in 1943, which had taken "note of the long struggle carried on by NMU members as 'premature anti-fascists' in the struggle against Nazi-Fascist attacks" which were appeased by imperialist powers. The seamen were fighting on two fronts, and the devotion and



King Kong returns to New York.

activities of Ferdinand Smith, contributed toward victory in this great task.

He was among the first Black members to be elected to one of the highest posts in an International Union, that of National Secretary, and consequently to the Executive Board of the CIO. Smith's attention reached beyond the immediate tasks in the union, to which he gave consistent service. In a period of rising revolutionary movement in Africa, he became associated with the Council of African Affairs. Today, when the racist N.Y. Mayor Koch closes Sydenham Hospital, we recall Ferdinand Smith, as a member of the Board of Trustees of that institution. His convention report urged his union to continue its support to Sydenham because, "I am particularly interested in insuring the success of its inter-racial program."

During the cold war, anti-Communist hysteria, Ferdinand Smith, a Jamaican, was deported.

Black trade union leaders have often been denied leading posts in International Unions, and at AFL-CIO conventions. A pretense is made that when a "suitable" candidate comes forth, a Black will be elected. In practice this serves outright racism. The Communist Party opposes this erroneous concept.

White Communists, in concrete situations, declined nomination to assure that a Black worker was nominated and elected. This was a precedent they set, and it resulted in advances being made in the National Maritime Union, when the NMU was under progressive leadership, as well as other CIO unions.

The need today, after decades of experience in struggle, requires the greatest attention to this crucial question. A rapid advance of the labor movement in the economic and political fronts, is possible only by the unity of Black and white workers and their organizations, joined by all other oppressed national minorities.

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of this document was that minority domination was support to the South African, Rhodesian and Portuguese regimes and that the genuine liberation movements of the oppressed people should be isolated.

The liberation of Angola and Mozambique and the escalation of the struggles in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, relegated Memo 39 to the dustbin of history. However, the fact that imperialism suffered major setbacks in Southern Africa and was unable to impose its will by traditional methods does not mean that it has given up its global policy of domination and exploitation. It now has to seek other ways to achieve this. In the last few years there have been increased efforts in Southern Africa to seek such new methods to slow down, halt or even reverse the revolutionary gains achieved by the people.

Imperialism is now loudly campaigning for "human rights", and has pledged its "support for self-determination, majority rule, equal rights and human dignity for the peoples of Southern Africa" (Kissinger speaking in Lusaka, April, 76). However this is to be achieved by "peaceful" and "non-violent" means. At the same time a mass hysterical campaign of anti-Sovietism and anti-Cubanism is being generated in a calculated attempt to isolate the oppressed people and their organisations from their natural allies, i.e., the socialist countries, the non-aligned countries and progressive and democratic forces in the capitalist countries. One aspect of this new strategy has been the orchestrated campaign to rehabilitate the South African regime, bring it in out of the cold and project it as a bastion of anti-communism.

P. W. Botha, Prime Minister, now presented as a "reasonable" man and his "new vision" is hailed as a step in the right direction. Systematically a myth is being created that apartheid is being dismantled. Subterfuges like the Wiehahn and Riekert reports are made to appear as reforms. The reality is that "under the guise of reformism" the ruling class is engaged in far-reaching maneuvers to intensify race oppression and exploitation. The decade of the 80's is the target date for achieving the "final solution" (CC statement Nov. 79). The message is clear: apartheid is not changing nor can the ruling class change it voluntarily. This can only come about by a people's revolutionary struggle. The militant mass actions of

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Excerpts from - THE PEOPLE RISE UP!
by INQULAB

"We the people of South Africa know that there is no power that can withstand our organised force.

"Despite the most savage repression, we have demonstrated in action our inexhaustible capacity to develop new forms of mass struggle, uniting more and more people and extending mass actions and resistance to all fronts.

"Wherever we are, at all levels and in all fields - at our work places in the urban and rural areas where we live, in the schools, universities, churches, in cultural and sports clubs - we must mobilise ourselves and confront the enemy as never before.

"We must support every act of resistance and draw it into the main stream of resistance."

This incisive call made to the South African people from the augmented meeting of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party in November 1979 ushered in the new decade of the 1980's. Coming long before the recent mass upsurges, it is a remarkable testimony to the accuracy of the SACP's scientific analysis of the objective and subjective conditions and clear guidance for the further advance of the struggle for national and social emancipation.

The 1970's were characterised by imperialism's arrogant belief that Southern Africa would remain within its sphere of influence. The infamous Memo 39, which was the cornerstone of United States policy in Southern Africa, clearly outlined imperialist strategy to control and direct the process of liberation in the sub-continent. The basic premise

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hundreds and thousands of oppressed people in South Africa have shattered any illusions of stability in SA.

Already in 1973 the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress reviewing the situation, stated:

"The present historical moment in the struggle for the forcible seizure of power by the Black majority in our country is characterised by an accelerated revolutionary upsurge of mass-based activity which has given a new impetus to the polarisation of forces."

It went on to say:

"Our revolutionary movement as the vanguard of the revolution must step up its activities inside the country, teaching the oppressed masses new and revolutionary methods of struggle."

For years the organizations of the people, the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress, have been banned and have had to work under conditions of fascist terror and repression. In the course of the struggle the liberatory organisations have suffered many setbacks but with a single-minded determination they have continued to carry out legal, semi-legal and illegal work. The objective has been the mobilisation and organisation of the masses, the general raising of political consciousness and the intensification of mass activities through strikes, protests, demonstrations and all other forms of militant mass activity—all this to lay the basis for the unfolding of a people's war. Armed with this correct strategy and tactics all-round resistance in South Africa continues to grow, involving ever growing numbers of people from all sections of the oppressed people. Today the main feature of the current political situation in SA is the indisputable fact that strategically the initiative has shifted into the hands of the oppressed

A few months after the massacres of June 1976 Premier Vorster warned that "the storm has not struck yet. We are only experiencing the whirlwinds that go before it." Events since then have proved him right. We have experienced a growing escalation in the confrontation between the oppressor and the oppressed. The beginning of the decade of the 1980's has been characterized by some of the most magnificent acts of militant mass resistance ever experienced in SA. The very foundations of the apartheid regime are being shaken and the

alarm bells are also beginning to ring in the boardrooms of multi-national companies in Washington, London, Bonn, Paris, Tokyo and Israel.

The struggles in the decade of the 1970's, the seizure of power in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and the experience gained by our people in the heat of battle have provided us with a new striking power.

WORKING CLASS POWER

The Black working class, the leading force in the revolution, has been involved in repeated waves of industrial action and strikes in the recent period. With their living standards eroded by inflation and mass unemployment reaching record levels (between 2 and 3 million), it is desperate poverty which is driving the workers to take action.

Most African workers receive wages which are far below the breadline, and more and more of them are turning to direct action to relieve their plight.

Today the regime is facing a sustained attack on its most vulnerable point. Anticipating this development, the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party stated in December 1972:

"...Despite the barrier of repressive legislation which has illegalised strikes and denied the African workers the right to form trade unions more and more workers are taking matters into their own hands. The strike movement is growing in spite of punitive action by the State and employers. The workers are becoming more confident of their strength and more experienced in struggle; organising under the very noses of the repressive forces and maintaining their unity and solidarity in open struggle."

The oppressed toilers of South Africa are responding magnificently to the call of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) to make 1980 "The Year for the Mobilisation of the Workers."

It is conservatively estimated that between 1973 and 1976 there were over 800 strikes involving hundreds of thousands of workers. The three general strikes in 1976 involving over 750,000 workers was a further development in the strike movement. In recent months the strikes of Fattis and Monis, Volkswagen, Sea Harvest, Goodyear Tyre, Frame, Coca-Cola, the red meat industry, the Johannes-

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burg municipality, Sasolburg etc. are just some of the scores of actions by workers that are affecting production in all parts of the country. In June 1980 Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape was "crippled by strikes", with at one stage more than 9 major factories brought to a standstill — Volkswagen, Goodyear, SKF Bearings, Link Construction, National Standard Wire, Gubb and Inggs, Cape of Good Hope Woolcombers, Civic Construction and Gastro Industries.

A notable feature of many of these stoppages has been their duration and the fact that the demands of the workers have gone beyond "pure" trade union demands for higher wages and better working conditions. Strikes have been linked with the wider issues of trade union recognition and apartheid, demonstrating the dialectical interconnection between national and class oppression.

The strikes have also demonstrated the developing class consciousness and militance of the workers, and the solid support the strikers have received from the community. New trade unions have been formed in many industries and the workers are showing growing confidence in the face of all forms of repression devised by the bosses and the state.

The militant strike action by the workers had a snowballing effect. Soon after the outbreak of the Ford Strike in the Eastern Cape, workers at other factories followed their example. Another interesting feature is that once strikes started an increasing number of workers joined the union. But support for the workers grew and unprecedented support came from all sections of the community. A "Save the Workers Fund" was started and a "Dismissed Workers' Committee" established. Donations were received from all parts of the country.

As solidarity of the workers and the general community grew it became more difficult for the bosses to find replacements for the strikers, and not all employers are enthusiastic about the tactic of deporting striking workers to the "homelands", the standard treatment in the past. This explains the rapidity with which many of the strikes were settled before they could spread wider, whilst even in cases where bosses at first adopted an intransigent attitude and the strike became long-drawn-out, workers' unity and community backing eventually forced the bosses to accept settlements favourable to the workers.

Other significant features of many strikes were

the growth of:

1. Unity of action between workers and boycotting students;
2. Unity of action between migrant contract workers and workers living "permanently" in the towns;
3. Unity of action between African, Coloured and Indian workers.

On the other hand, the anti-black stance of many white workers was a negative feature in some of the strikes.

Another important lesson from the strikes is that the workers are insisting on their right to elect their own representatives, and are refusing to operate the machinery foisted on them by the bosses and the government. The workers wanted non-racial committees and they also objected to the fact that management nominees served on the liaison committees. The union involved, the Western Province General Workers' Union, has not only refused to bow down to government control by registering but has also been in the forefront of the battle for free trade union organisation and recognition.

The government's reaction to the strikes is that they are all subversive and that the workers are being manipulated by agitators. After the strike wave of 1973 the Minister of Labour stated:

"These strikes in Natal are following a pattern which indicates that they are not purely connected with higher wages...they are planned actions and the strikes are being used to achieve more than just an increase of wages...the conduct of the workers shows the agitation for trade union rights offers no solution and is only a smokescreen behind which are other motives..."

In June of 1980 the head of the security police announced that the politicised workers were influenced by overseas and exile organisations including the World Federation of Trade Unions. This was the argument used by the government to justify the invoking of the Fund Raising Act of 1979 to prevent the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) from receiving funds from abroad or from internal sources—an action which was aimed at limiting the unions' ability to give the workers some strike pay. But unity of action of all black workers has this year reached new levels. Africans, Coloureds and Indians have fought shoulder to shoulder, and on occasions members of unregistered unions have co-ordinated action with blacks in

registered unions or TUCSA-affiliated unions.

Workers' unity has created a favourable situation for intensified efforts to unionise greater numbers of black workers, and to weaken the influence of the TUCSA leadership over the rank and file. It is estimated that of TUCSA's membership of 252,734, Africans number 22,122, Coloureds and Indians 171,747 and that only 59,865 are whites. The black trade unionists within Trade Union Council of South Africa (TUCSA) must be won over to the side of genuine non-racial trade unionism and refuse to be fobbed off with the "parallelism" practised by TUCSA.

The strikes have once again exposed the close links between the bosses and the state. They have also exposed the government's so-called labour reforms as a complete sham. At almost all strikes the police and riot control units were called in. State representatives and police were present at almost all "negotiations". On several occasions the police used brutal force against the workers resulting in loss of life and many injuries. Many leading activists were victimised, arrested or forced to flee the country. After June 13 all meetings were banned and this seriously affected mobilisation and planning of collective strategy. Many workers, mainly trade unionists and shop stewards, were endorsed out of the urban area. Propaganda material of strikers was banned and cadres distributing material were arrested or harassed.

YOUTH AND STUDENTS

At another level our youth and students continue to confront the apartheid system and new organisational forms and tactics are being developed to meet the challenge of today. Clearly the mass bannings of 19 legal organisations in 1977 have not had the desired effects. Today in every part of our country several youth and student organisations such as AZAPO, AZASO, COSAS, etc., are emerging. Many of them espouse a democratic anti-racist and anti-imperialist perspective and therefore objectively form part of the genuine forces of liberation.

The current boycott activities of our youth and students are a bold manifestation of the uncompromising and militant spirit of our people. A motto of the boycott was "Not only must we speak of freedom, but we must also be prepared to act for freedom." Hundreds of thousands of youth and stu-

dents representing all sections of the oppressed people — Africans, Coloureds and Indians and including a growing number of democratic whites — are unequivocally demonstrating their rejection of the whole apartheid system. The current wave of action is not new or spontaneous but is a continuation of the events of 1976. Moreover it must be seen in the context of the deepening crisis of the apartheid regime and the all-round confrontation between the oppressed and the regime.

Marais Steyn, Minister of Coloured Relations and Indian Affairs, predictably proclaimed: "Agitators are using problems that do not exist for their own political purposes." From the Cape Province, from Transvaal, the OFS, from the so-called homelands, the message defiantly proclaimed by the people is "APARTHEID NO! FREEDOM YES!" Obviously Steyn's "thought processes are slow" and he is unable to see that the cause of the problem is the oppressive and exploitative system of apartheid, of which education is one aspect. This is clearly defined in various leaflets and pamphlets produced in the course of frequent struggles.

Hundreds of institutions throughout the country have been affected by the boycott and schools, teachers' training colleges and all 5 Black universities were closed. Almost all major schools and colleges in the Cape Peninsula, Eastern Cape and Johannesburg have been affected. Despite the negative role played by Buthelezi over 10,000 students boycotted classes in KwaMashu. In the Transkei several schools were affected and in the wake of the spreading boycott in June 1980 the Transkei government called up the civil defence force to reinforce permanent defence servicemen and the police to carry out security patrol duties in Umtata. Their duties entailed daily protecting of government buildings, administration offices, ministerial complexes, banks and other strategic points. This coincided with a declaration of a state of emergency, during which a strict dusk to dawn curfew was enforced.

Within a week of the boycott campaign mass rallies involving thousands of students, workers and parents were organised throughout the country.

The institutions have been daubed with posters and slogans such as "Down with gutter education", "Don't force us to supply cheap labour for capitalism."

Even some white schools were affected, for

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example at the white Parktown High School in Johannesburg the walls were daubed with slogans such as—"ANC-SWAPO"; "Equal ANC equal education"; "boycott classes for non-racial education—ANC."

Committees were established to co-ordinate activities and give collective leadership. All decisions regarding the boycott were taken at such co-ordinating meetings after full discussions.

From the beginning the students linked their campaign with the struggle of the community as a whole and strong links were forged with the workers and parents.

Having digested the experiences of 1976 the students evolved new tactics. Marches were discouraged unless agreed upon by the collectives. Students were asked to go to schools but not to participate in "normal" classes. Arrangements were made to organise comprehensive alternative lecture programmes consisting of talks on politics, economics, education, sport etc. The students learned freedom songs and a great ideal of new protest songs and poetry was composed. Inequality of education, white privilege, hope for the future and the strength to be derived from unity were recurrent themes.

Despite all their attempts to keep their actions non-violent and the taking of all measures to ensure that the enemy was not given any pretext to unleash terror reprisals, the students were subjected to vicious and brutal attacks by the police. They used dogs, sneeze machines, batons, guns, etc. and hundreds were injured.

On June 17, at the height of the boycott and at the end of a two-day general strike which is estimated to have had an 80 percent success in the Cape, the trigger-happy police, freed from restraint by their chiefs "shoot to kill" order, callously opened fire on unarmed demonstrators in the Cape.

The people's anger erupted and in at least 9 different places police had to cordon off the areas and close down roads. Firemen were unable to get to the scene of more than 20 fires because of the angry and hostile mood of the masses. Several police vehicles were damaged and many police injured.

In response to the massive international and national outcry against this latest act of murder, the "moderate" and "reasonable" P.W. Botha warned that the time had now come for the State and the police to put their foot down and that if they were forced to do so people would be hurt very much

more. He concluded that all further racial "unrest" would be ruthlessly "crushed".

"MODERATES" EXPOSED

The boycotts also exposed the opportunist and reactionary elements within the oppressed community. In general, while the major teachers' associations supported the students, certain principals and teachers actively worked against the boycott. Individuals working in dummy institutions found themselves opposing the students. Buthelezi and Inkatha played a major role in trying to smash the boycott in Natal. Buthelezi, condemning the boycotts, said that it was criminal to give children false hopes that there were any prospects of a Frelimo-type takeover in SA. Speaking at the 6th annual conference of Inkatha, Buthelezi called for the setting up of training camps in which imps would be trained to keep order in Black society. He went on to say that Inkatha would not tolerate continued boycotts or the disruption of schools. He also threatened to close down the university of Zululand and to set up a new university which would reflect Inkatha's aims and aspirations.

Buthelezi introduced a new and dangerous element in the conflict when he made the accusation that "certain Black lawyers were behind the boycott of classes in KwaMashu and that the lawyers were receiving overseas funds for defending people in cases that arose from incidents such as the school boycott. The 3 lawyers L. Skweyiya, J. Poswa and G. Mxenge were accused of being foreign "Xhosa agitators".

In a similar vein the Black alliance (in which Buthelezi plays a leading role) echoed the government's line by warning:

"Students should guard against being manipulated by opportunists who exploit their legitimate grievance to achieve their own political ends by pitting parents against children and children against parents."

It is difficult to find any substantial difference between such statements and those made by the enemy. Following the earlier threats by Buthelezi, Y.S. Chinsamy (chairman of the South African Indian Council and leader of the Reform Party, a member of the Black Alliance) said that he and others would have no alternative but to resort to measures to stop "agitators" intimidating students wanting to return to school. Subsequent events

proved that these were no empty threats. People involved in boycott campaign were terrorised by gangs of thugs. Students were forcibly taken to "meet" with Kwazulu representatives. In early June clashes occurred in KwaMashu between Inkatha supporters and boycotting children. Parents supporting the boycott were viciously beaten up. According to a Durban attorney: "The violence has reached endemic proportions. There are crowds of people hunting in vigilante groups." He went on to say that for their own safety children had to leave their homes and sleep in the veld. Despite this negative and counter-revolutionary role of Inkatha it is estimated that over 10,000 children in KwaMashu were involved in boycott actions and they received the support of many parents and workers.

The recent past has seen the politicisation of a new generation. New leaders have emerged from the people and the oppressed communities have never been as united as today. As the overall confrontation sharpens there is no doubt that an increasing number of youth and students will join the underground movement and Umkhonto we Sizwe. Through its "total war strategy" the regime has hastened the process of militarisation of the entire SA society and new and more repressive measures are being introduced. This desperation on the part of the regime is a reflection of their growing realisation that they are facing a "total onslaught" from the people. Today the liberation movement, spearheaded by the ANC, is emerging as the only genuine alternative to the regime.

The nationwide "Free Mandela" campaign is one manifestation of this. To the oppressed people Mandela's name is synonymous with their aspirations for a non-racial democratic society based on the Freedom Charter. The campaign is being supported by the broadest spectrum of political, religious, cultural, community, sporting, youth and student organisations. The extent of this is reflected by the fact that the annual meeting of the Afrikaanse Skrywersgilde called for the release of all political prisoners. Professor Andre Brink, the chairman, said that this was connected with the Mandela campaign. Even the South African Foundation has called for Mandela's release.

Broadly based Free Mandela committees have been established in many areas. Mass meetings have been attended by crowds of 3000-4000. The

campaign has been linked to the campaign for the release of all political prisoners and to the concept of a future South Africa based on the ideals enshrined in the Freedom Charter, blown-up versions of which have been exhibited at meetings and rallies. Hundreds of leaflets have been distributed and thousands have signed the petition demanding his release.

The regime has adopted various tactics to smash the campaign. Many activists connected with the campaign have been arrested, and those caught distributing leaflets and petitions have been charged under various laws. Journals and leaflets dealing with the issue have been banned. The regime's fears are reflected in the reasons given to the Institute of Race Relations for the banning of the April issue of their journal. The regime wrote: "To plead for the release of Mandela is to propagate the aims of the banned ANC". The article on Mandela was considered to be prejudicial to the safety of the State, peace and goodwill.

When Mandela was sentenced, in his statement from the dock he defiantly said: "I will still be moved by my dislike of the race discrimination against my people when I come out from serving my sentence to take up again, as best as I can, the struggle for the removal of those injustices until they are finally abolished once and for all."

It is this spirit of no compromise and no surrender which inspired generations and today inspires the campaign for the release of Mandela and all other political prisoners. Mandela has been a beacon of inspiration even from within prison.

Prisons Minister Le Grange recently told Parliament that Mandela "will never be released because he has not changed his views. He still has liason with his banned organisation." In Mandela's message to the South African people smuggled out of Robben Island and published earlier this year he confidently proclaimed: "We face the future with confidence. For the guns that serve apartheid cannot render it unconquerable. Those who live by the gun will perish by the gun."

These militant mass activities developing at all levels are given a further impetus by the fact that the organisational and combat capacity of our underground movement and its People's Army MK is steadily being consolidated and strengthened. Today, more than at any other time since the launching of the armed struggle in 1961, the liberation

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movement is not only able to sustain the enemy's onslaught but is hitting back politically and militarily. In January 1977, the then Minister of Police Kruger, waving a Kalashnikov, elatedly told Parliament that "urban terrorism is totally finished." Within 5 months he was forced to admit that "today our enemies are no longer far away but on our doorstep." He went on to warn that "it would be the utmost of self delusion to maintain that all is well and that there is no reason to warn our people that difficult times lie ahead..."

THE UNDERGROUND IN ACTION

Since then in various parts of South Africa underground units of the liberation movement are carrying out an increasing number of activities, both armed and non-armed. The majority of these have not been reported. However the extent of this activity is reflected by the regime's admission that they have not been able to destroy the SACP and the ANC and that they are working "around the clock" to arrest underground units that are carrying out attacks against enemy installations and personnel.

In June 1978 Zeitsman (then head of the security police) announced that an "estimated 4000 Blacks (mostly members of the ANC) are currently undergoing military training" and that "South Africa was in a state of war." He also revealed that several clashes had taken place between the security forces and ANC guerrillas in the Eastern Transvaal and other border areas, and that a number of trained and highly equipped ANC guerrillas were returning to the country. "The ANC is everywhere," complained the Minister of Police.

Since 1979 there has been an increase in armed clashes. In February 1979 a police patrol was ambushed and two policemen gunned down; in August 1979 an MK unit confronted the enemy's elite task force and counter-insurgency unit which was also assisted by the Bophuthatswana police. The battle took place near Rustering, 75 miles from Pretoria, and lasted for several hours. In October 1979 another "major clash" occurred in the area between Vryburg and Mafeking. The recent attacks on 2 Soweto police stations and the rocket attack on the Booyens police station in a white suburb of Johannesburg have opened a new chapter of the armed onslaught against enemy installations and personnel.

In this period there has also been a growing escalation in the number of sabotage attacks and accord-

ing to newspaper reports the guerrillas are showing a "high level of training and sophistication." The brilliant and daring attacks carried out earlier this year against SA's major oil from coal plants once again highlighted this.

The increasing number of political trials, largely involving members of the liberation movement spearheaded by the ANC, is a further reflection of the growing development of the all-round struggle in SA. In 1977 there were 95 major political trials involving 40 people. In 1978 there were over 70 major trials. In 1980 there have already been 25 major trials involving 96 people. The accused have been charged with guerilla activity, having been trained for that purpose or having collaborated with the guerillas or being recruited or recruiting for military training.

Freedom fighter Solomon Mahlangu's last words as he walked to the gallows were:

"Do not worry about me. But worry about those who are suffering. My blood will nourish the tree which will bear the fruits of freedom. Tell my people I love them and they must continue the struggle. A Luta continua."

This is a magnificent testimony to the militant spirit and political maturity of those who are today confronting the apartheid system at every level.

At times of revolutionary upsurge it has always been the enemy's strategy to find collaborators and "moderates" within the ranks of the oppressed and exploited masses to deflect them from course of militant struggle and move them towards compromise and surrender. But today the battle lines are drawn and preparations are far advanced for a determined onslaught for the armed seizure of power. In the words of Mandela,

"The time has come that those who wish to be counted amongst the forces of national liberation in our country should extricate themselves from the shifting sands of illusion that we will win our demands by dialogue and conciliation with the fascist regime. Experience has shown that it is only through all forms of militant mass struggle—legal, semi-legal and illegal, armed and non-armed—that genuine national liberation and social emancipation can be won. Today the masses have seized the initiative and through their actions they are becoming the determinants of their destiny."

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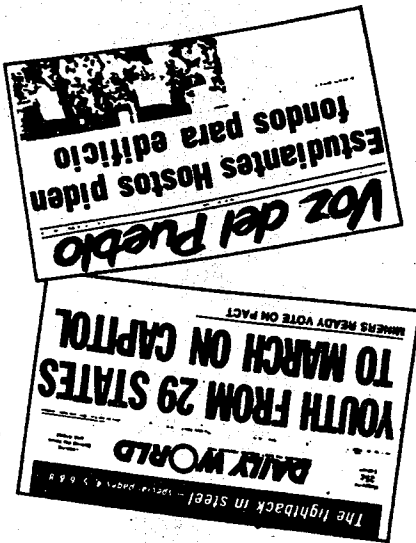
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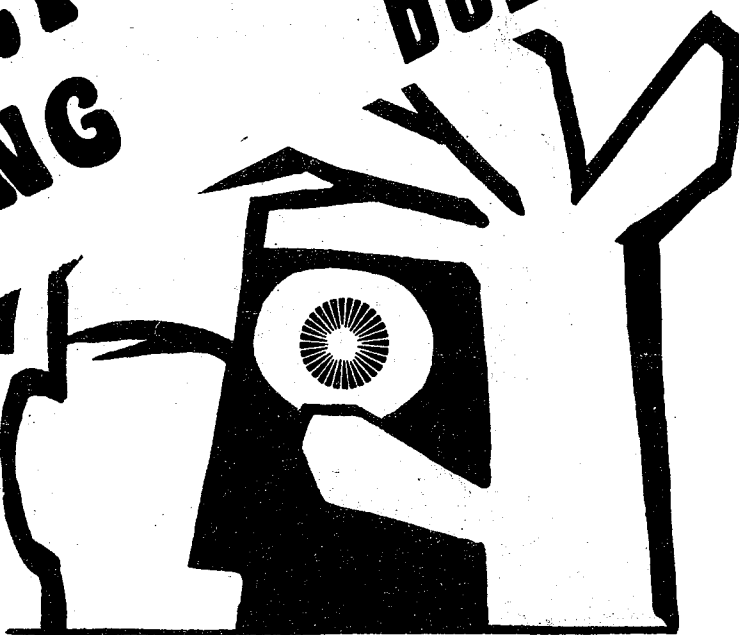
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