

# Revolutionary Communist League on the Afro American National Question

## Introduction

The Afro American National Question (AANQ) has always been, and continues to be, one of the major pivotal questions that disclose the level of opportunism or revolutionary content of different communist movements in the United States.

Historically, it was and is opportunist and white chauvinist positions on the AANQ which have their "roots in the corruptive influence of the leading imperialist bourgeoisie, to which the United States working class is directly subjected" that were a part of the downfall of the early communist movement and contributed as well to the low level of fusion between the contemporary anti-revisionist communist movement and the workers' movement. The Socialist Party, for instance, sought to ignore the AANQ totally, but when forced by the fundamental importance of the question only conceded it to be part of the general class question, and therefore requiring no specific address, as did its successor, the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA) in its early days when it was led by Jay Lovestone (late 1920s).

With the decline of the revolutionary aspirations of the CPUSA, necessarily came the decline of its revolutionary position on the AANQ because those not interested in revolution are also not interested in revolutionary allies. The CPUSA took up the bankrupt revisionist line that blacks no longer constitute a nation, no longer have a right to self-determination, and in fact had exercised self-determination and opted for bourgeois integration.

Presently there are similar revisionist lines that have been and are being put forward on the AANQ by some *so-called* communist organizations:

(A) the Communist League (CL), which began in 1968 as the California Communist League, was formed around a core of former members of the Provisional Organizing Committee (POC) and has degenerated into a right-wing Trotskyist organization. This organization calls for the "Independence for the Negro Nation." This slogan represents an anticommunist position on the AANQ because it attempts to liquidate self-determination for the Afro American nation, i.e., its inalienable right to choose either independence (separation) or union with a socialist United States;

(B) the October League, currently called the "Communist Party" (Marxist-Leninist) ("CP"ML), formed in 1971. They say, "While supporting the rights of the black nation to self-determination we, at this time, oppose secession. (For Working Class Unity and Black Liberation, October League, 1973) This is also an attempt to liquidate the Afro American nation's right to choose between separation and union, especially since the Afro American nation is still struggling against monopoly capitalism. Lenin clearly points out that, as long as the oppressor nation still reigns, communists must not come out opposing secession;

(C) the Revolutionary "Communist" Party, founded in 1969 as the Revolutionary Union, calls the Afro American nation a "Nation of the New Type." This line is very much more related to the CPUSA's line of liquidating the whole national question, i.e., to say that there is no Afro American nation. RCP says that this so-called New Type Nation has been dispersed throughout the entire United States and cannot be associated with any particular land base such as the Black Belt South. At the same time RCP claims to uphold the right of self-determination, but then they denounce the Afro American nation's right to secession;

(D) the Guardian Newspaper and Revolutionary Workers League (RWL, formed in 1973), both hold similar right opportunist, anticommunist positions on the AANQ as the traitorous revisionist CPUSA.

Harry Haywood's analysis of the CPUSA's line on the Afro American National Question sums up very well why these other so-called communist organizations uphold similar opportunist and white chauvinist positions. Haywood states:

*Thus, in the name of the general class struggle it denied the special character of the Negro question, regarding the fight for special demands of the Negro people as divisive and tending to distract the workers from the struggle for socialism.*

<sup>1</sup> (our italics)

The turn to revisionism on the part of all the newly formed

---

<sup>1</sup> Harry Haywood, *For a Revolutionary Position on the Negro Question*, Liberator Press, 1976, 1.

organizations named above can be attributed in part to their anti-Marxist-Leninist positions on the AANQ. Unity among the multi-national working class has not been sufficiently moved forward by these incorrect lines on the AANQ, because the fight against the major obstacle to working class unity (white chauvinist) proceeds from a correct position on the AANQ.

## **The Black Nation**

Black people in the United States are at once an oppressed nation whose land base is in the Black Belt South, and at the same time, live as an oppressed nationality<sup>2</sup> in the other areas of the U.S. state in which they are found. These other areas can be abstracted to about 26 major central cities (see Appendix B) with populations over 100,000. They are redeposited in ghetto versions of the Black Belt, thereby reinforcing or extending the national character of their lives, even spread throughout this land.

Though the cry in these spread-out cities of the United States is democratic rights, equal rights, blacks are in many cases grown to such substantial plurality, even in some cases majority, that the struggle for equal rights to be meaningful often is a struggle for political "control" of institutions, communities, or even whole cities. For this reason we are against the bogus line of imperialist assimilation, or "integration", pushed by the bourgeoisie, because this is used to oppose the democratic rights and political "control" of black people. It often involves cultural aggression as well. (This must not be confused with discussion of the aim of voluntary union of the working class, which we support.) But even as a part of the multi-national working class, blacks must demand "control" of those areas in which they are a majority as a means to obtain democracy and equal rights.

By "nation" we mean, according to Joseph Stalin's definition, "a historically constituted stable community of people formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological makeup

---

<sup>2</sup>. We use the term oppressed nationality (instead of "national minority") as a general description of Afro Americans outside of the national territory of the black nation (the Black Belt). We oppose the use of the term "national minority" to liquidate the National Question. The tendency exists in the U.S. to define a "national minority" as a minority nationality unconnected to an oppressed nation and to apply that to blacks, hence to deny the existence of the black nation.

manifested in a common culture."<sup>3</sup> Such a nation exists, as it has ever since the end of the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War, in "the whole lower South", basically a territory stretching as far north as Delaware and as far southwest as Texas in a broad sweeping crescent some "1600 miles long and 300 miles deep."<sup>4</sup>

The historically evolved territory of the black nation is the old agrarian Black Belt plus the "border" areas surrounding it that give the Nation its total economic and geographical character. Though Harry Haywood has said, "It has become abundantly clear from the population shifts that have taken place that we cannot restrict the territorial base of the Negro nation to the agrarian Black Belt region. We cannot now determine the question of specific national boundaries. This will be determined at the appropriate time, and on the basis of the interests of the formerly oppressed people." (Ibid., p. 25)

The maps (see Appendices A & B) show precisely the area we mean. The Black Belt has also been called the cotton belt, because it was here that the great bulk of the United States cotton crop was grown. It could also be called the sugar cane, rice, tobacco, indigo and sugar belt as well, and the slaves were concentrated according to the location of the crops. From the time that Africans were new to this land, from many different parts of Africa, through slavery, reconstruction, developing into an Afro American nation into the twentieth century, even up to the present day, it is these areas that the historically constituted community of people was and is located.

Throughout the United States, black people's common condition is that of double oppression, nationally oppressed and economically exploited. Those elements that we mentioned previously help maintain black people's national character wherever they are in the United States.

Some people, anxious to liquidate the National Question, have said that somehow because blacks speak English, even the blacks in the Black Belt Nation, that this somehow is diminished as their national language; but this is nonsense. Americans still exist even though the English speak English. Throughout the West Indies English is spoken but certainly no one asks that we liquidate national entities just because they speak the language of their imperialist oppressors.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Stalin, *Marxism and the National-Colonial Question*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Haywood, *op. cit.*, 25.

<sup>5</sup> J. Stalin, *op. cit.*, 19.

The common territory has been pointed out. As far as common economic life, it is the existence of classes within the black nation in the Black Belt, and in the commonality of the economic conditions of other Afro Americans as an oppressed nationality throughout the United States, that indicate our national economic character. Even those dispersed from the territorial delineation of the nation share all of the oppressive exploitative effects of imperialist domination, though inside the national territory itself conditions of life are the worst of any section in the United States land mass. Afro Americans are exploited commonly as wage-salary workers (ibid., p. 19, ¶2) but there is as well a national black market organized since the post Civil War reconstruction, which gave rise to the earliest of a black national bourgeois. (This contradicts the "Johnson-Alkalimat" position that our common economic life has "more to do with our exploitation as wage-salary workers rather than a national market organized by the black bourgeoisie."<sup>6</sup> This trend of thinking wants to talk--to a certain extent--of class struggle in the black nation, and about a black bourgeoisie, etc., but does not want to see that this bourgeoisie was formed with the black nation before the turn of the century.)

The commonality of black culture is obvious, whether in the Black Belt national territory or in the huge Northern, Midwestern and Western ghettos. The "Johnson-Alkalimat" assertion that Afro-American culture was based on "our creative response to our condition but mostly organized and controlled by our oppressors (e.g., black radio stations)"<sup>7</sup> is to make culture simply singing and dancing. Rather it is the totality of (black) life, how people live, caused at base by the economic and political character of their productive forces and their relationship to them. Someone could think that black culture could be limited to something one heard on the radio only if a soul station were the only relationship one had to the organic living culture of the black masses!

---

<sup>6</sup> *A Response to Criticism of the ALSC [African Liberation Support Committee] Statement of Principles--Alkalimat-Johnson.*

Importantly, both Alkalimat and Johnson were either closed members of RWL (M-L) at the time this right opportunist line was put forward in the ALSC, or became members shortly thereafter. At any rate, both have since been purged--Alkalimat charged with being a "renegade" conciliator to the CPUSA and Johnson with being a "conciliator" to purged "mensheviks" inside the so-called "revolutionary wing."

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

There are two arguments that some forces give for liquidating the black national question. The first is that blacks are "dispersed" out of the Black Belt south. The so-called Revolutionary "Communist" Party puts out this bankrupt line as part of their revisionist formulation that black people in the United States are a "nation of a new type", i.e., that they are a nation wherever they are and that self-determination is no longer the main demand in the Black Belt South. This is outright chauvinism; it completely liquidates the Afro American National Question. Our research data disproves this opportunistic assertion completely. (See appendix.) Since 1940 black people have left the South at the rate of one and one half million per ten years, which is a total of four and a half million in the last thirty years. But in this same period there has been an actual *increase* of blacks in the South by over three million! Even though there has apparently been a decrease of blacks in proportion to whites in the South, 53% of the Afro Americans still live in the South, or about twelve million people, of whom ten million are in the Black Belt and its border regions. The population in the Black Belt alone is larger than the population of thirty-four nations in the United Nations! The map also shows how scattered the blacks outside the Southern concentration actually are, located in twenty-six large ghetto cities; but also at this moment, over 70% of the total black population of the United States was born in the South! And most of the rest, almost certainly, have ties still with the South.

The other main argument, this one the favorite of revisionists, particularly the post-revolutionary CPUSA, is that by now black people have been assimilated into this United States nation completely by the "development of the productive forces."<sup>8</sup> (The Lovestoneites talked this same argument in the 1920s.) Even though the Communist International position in 1928 and the Communist Party's position in 1930 spoke bluntly against the bourgeois integrationist hypothesis, as the Party became revisionist the same bourgeois assimilationist line crept back in until it was formalized in 1954 with the abandonment of the demand for the right of self-determination for the Afro American nation in the Black Belt South. This also explains why it was so easy for the CPUSA in the 1950s to unite with the bourgeois assimilationist wing of the black bourgeoisie and push the NAACP, etc., as "the true leaders of the negro liberation movement." The revisionist statement which summed up this "new" position of the CPUSA on the Black National Question says, in part, "with respect to long-

---

<sup>8</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*.

range trends, the most important is the movement of the negro people towards full equality on the basis of full integration into all aspects of American life. This is sustained by material, objective factors, which are expressed primarily in the greatly expanded base for Negro-White working class solidarity and in the integrationist programs put forth by the Negro freedom movement itself."<sup>9</sup> This is the height of "peaceful transition" and "gradualist" thinking. It is pure bourgeois accommodationist thought. This is the same kind of thinking that characterizes some incorrect tendencies in the Marxist movement today, such as the October League, currently known as the "Communist Party" (Marxist-Leninist) ("CP"ML), which sees the Black Liberation Movement as a "struggle for integration" and erroneously supports the bourgeois integrationist position on busing, confusing bourgeois "forced busing" with voluntary union of the working class.

Our statistics also show that, to the contrary, there has been no bourgeois assimilation into the United States nation. Black (and indeed 3rd World workers) inhabit what amounts to an entirely different labor market. Certainly the statistics show the completely separate economic and political reality of the black nation and the black oppressed nationality in relationship to the United States nation. To the claim of the revisionists and reformists and petty bourgeois socialists that the productive forces have integrated the black nation into the United States nation, we raise the fact that it is the stunting of nations through the imprisonment of their productive forces which characterizes the rise of nations under imperialism. It is precisely for this reason that national liberation struggles throughout the 3rd World are a characteristic of this particular epoch. "The era when the colonies, semi-colonies and neo-colonies are rising up against imperialism and its lackies." (Peking Review)

Harry Haywood points out, "imperialist oppression, in stifling the development of nations, creates the conditions for the rise of national revolutionary movements which, in this epoch, are a special phase of the struggle for socialism."<sup>10</sup> The 3rd World nations, to which the black nation in North America is linked, can only achieve national liberation through "revolutionary struggle in alliance with the working class against imperialism."<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> James S. Allen, memorandum submitted to the National Committee of the CPUSA, 1954.

<sup>10</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*, p. 21.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

## How the Black Nation Formed--Slavery and Reconstruction

It was actually the counter-revolutionary overthrow of the black and progressive reconstruction governments that made any talk of "assimilation" of black people into the United States idealist. Haywood, in *Negro Liberation*, points out, "The rise of a finance-capitalist oligarchy to a dominant position in American economic and political life precluded the possibility of peaceful democratic fusion of the Negro into a single American nation along with whites. Thenceforth, the issues of Negro equality could be solved only via the path of the Negro's full development as a nation. The Negro question had now definitely become the problem of an oppressed nation striving for national freedom against the main enemy, imperialism."<sup>12</sup>

That is, the smashing of the reconstruction governments, which was directly financed by Northern finance capital, *halted the United States bourgeois democratic revolution in an unfinished state*. The Northern industrialists had achieved their main aim to completely dominate U.S. economic life and subdue the Southern planter oligarchy. But redivision of the plantations and the extension of democratic rights to blacks was not on their agenda. (As a matter of fact, by the time the reconstruction governments were destroyed, the ownership of "Southern" land had largely passed into the hands of the Northern industrialists! C. Van Woodward states in *Origins of the New South*, page 179, "At least half the planters after 1870 were either Northern men or were supported by Northern money. F. C. Morehead, President of the National Cotton Planters' Association, estimated in 1881 that not one-third of the cotton plantations in the Mississippi Valley were 'owned by the men who held them at the end of the war,' and that others were daily 'passing into the hands of the commission merchants' at that time."

But in describing the relationship of the black nation and the black oppressed nationality in the United States as a whole, it is critical to see how the nation came into being in the first place, and how this initial appearance set a particular pattern for this relationship that still exists. At the end of the Revolutionary War, the movement of black people fully into the United States was anticipated; but the introduction of capitalist slavery early in the nineteenth century, spurred by the emergence of cotton as an

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 143.



international cash crop, able to be supplied by the United States South with the cotton gin and slave labor, turned the slowly dying slavery around, and in fact turned slavery from its earlier feudalistic and patriarchal stage to the more vicious capitalist slavery based on the cotton crop as a large scale enterprise covering much of the lower South.

The Negro was not freed by the Revolution of 1776, nor was he fully freed by the second American Revolution of 1861-1877--the Civil War and Reconstruction. The fact is that the first American republic contained a glaring flaw--the institution of chattel slavery... Excluded from these inalienable rights (given to Americans) was an important segment of the American people--the Negro slave, who, at this time, comprised one fifth of the country's population...

The compromises which the Constitution contained on the issue of slavery precluded the participation of the Negro in the first American Republic. They prevented his democratic integration into the new national state...

But the constitutional compromises only postponed the issue of slavery. This issue was to flare up anew in the second decade of the nineteenth century and was to occupy the spotlight in American politics up until the end of the Civil War.

The question of slavery, as Marx observed, was for half a century the moving power of American history. The issue was finally resolved only by the Second American Revolution--the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Here again, for the second time, hope was held for the full integration of the Negro into American life as a free and equal citizen, for the consolidation of Americans, Black and White, into one nation. But again the revolution was aborted, again the Negro was left outside the portals of full citizenship.<sup>13</sup>

A successful bourgeois democratic revolution, which would have given land and, therefore, political rights to the freed slaves as emancipated peasants, would have been the basis for such integration into America; but it did not happen. The Civil War and Reconstruction governments were supposed to extend full democratic rights to black people, but the destruction of the Reconstruction governments prevented that. The Reconstruction governments had a dual purpose: 1) to govern the

---

<sup>13</sup> Harry Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 22.

South for the Northern industrial capitalists, so that the Southern vote would be neutralized and the financiers would be in total control over the South; and 2) to see that the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution would be enforced, so as to make the first task possible.

The contemporary Negro Question in the United States is a product of the unfinished bourgeois democratic revolution of the Civil War and Reconstruction--the failure to carry through democratic land redivision as the only economic basis for political freedom...<sup>14</sup>

In the formation of nation-states, Lenin, in showing that they historically were not limited to Western Europe but existed in England and France, also points out that the U.S.A. and Japan are generally homogeneous (Japan 99% so) but,

In the United States, the Negroes (and also the Mulattoes and Indians) account for only 11.1%. They should be classed as an oppressed nation, for the equality won in the Civil War of 1861-1865 and guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic was in many respects increasingly curtailed in the chief Negro areas [the South] in the transition from the progressive, pre-monopoly capitalism of 1860-1870 to the reactionary, monopoly capitalism [imperialism] of the new era, which in America was especially sharply etched by the Spanish-American imperialist war of 1898 (a war between two robbers over the division of the booty).

The white population of the United States makes up 88.7% of the total, and of this total 74.3% are Americans and only 14.4% are foreign-born, i.e., immigrants. We know that especially favorable conditions in America for the development of capitalism and the rapidity of this development have produced a situation in which vast national differences are speedily and fundamentally, as nowhere else in the world, smoothed out to form a single 'American' nation.<sup>15</sup>

For further analysis, see *Lenin on the National and Colonial Questions*--"The Right of Self-Determination and its Relation to Federation."

---

<sup>14</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*, 22.

<sup>15</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Volume 23, 275-276 (Statistics and Sociology)

DuBois has contrasted the earlier slavery as a feudalistic plantation slavery most objectified in the Virginia and Carolina plantations ruled over by the slave master, and the "house service" and personal retainership with a personal interpretation of the slave code which ranged from the paternalistically "moderate" to arbitrarily cruel as anything known. But about the late 1820s with an economic catalyst provided by the earlier invention of the cotton gin as part of the industrial revolution (cotton production in the United States increased from 8,000 bales in 1790 to 650,000 bales in 1820--Dubois, *The Negro*, 18), slavery took on another economic and social character. And just as the United States economy became tied to the international economy with the massive cotton trade, so did slavery, which was the basis for an entire economic motion of United States society, take on a capitalist character. Marx summed it up in *Das Kapital*: "But as soon as people, whose production moves within the lower forms of slave labor, corvee-labor, etc., are drawn into the whirlpool of an international market dominated by the capitalist mode of production, the sale of their products for export becoming their principal interest, the civilized horrors of overwork are grafted on the barbaric horrors of slavery, serfdom, etc. Hence, the Negro labor in the Southern states of the American Union preserved something of a patriarchal character, so long as production was chiefly directed to immediate local consumption. But, in proportion, as the export of cotton became of vital interest to these states, the overworking of the Negro and the using up of his life in seven years labor, became a factor in a calculated and calculating system."

At this point the laws of slavery began to be reinforced, and where they had gradually started to weaken after the Revolutionary War, they were now severely enforced. In 1835, even the 320,000 free blacks in the United States lost democratic rights. And it was out of the increased cruelty and harshness brought on by King Cotton's large scale production that the large scale slave revolts of the period, and subsequent political activity and protest such as the Negro Convention Movement in the 1830s came about. (In 1822, Denmark Vesey's revolt; in 1829, David Walker's *Appeal*; 1830-1831, Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. By 1840 Frederick Douglass made his first pronouncements in active relationship with the abolitionists.)

Black slavery began in the United States much like the white indentured labor of the whites. For blacks, it was necessary that they be converted to the "true religion" and cast down their heathen ways. Hence, they were redeemable and could be freed. But the owners, many in the North, quickly dismissed the religious justification for slavery, and with that

the redeemable, freedom for conversion, relationship. They had determined that it was better to have slave labor for the slave's entire life than to have it cut off by religion. It was at this point that it became a feudalist or patriarchal slavery, and then later passed into capitalist slavery. In *Capital*, Marx explains, "Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery, credits, etc. Without slavery you have no cotton; without cotton you have no modern industry. It is slavery that has given the colonies their value; it is the colonies that have created *world trade*, and it is world trade that is the precondition of large scale industry. Thus, slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance.

"Without slavery, North America, the most progressive of countries would be transformed into a patriarchal country. Wipe out North America from the map of the world, and you will have anarchy--the complete decay of modern commerce and civilization. Abolish slavery and you will have wiped America off the map of nations." (*Poverty of Philosophy*)

The entire United States nation was tied to slavery, with the North selling the South meats and cloth; and it was not until the North actually began to produce more than the South could use that the struggle for political power intensified. For one thing, once the North began to produce corn and meat for export, two products that had once been traded solely to the South, and also when the North became principally an "industrial country;" then the North no longer depended on the South as it had earlier. Prior to this, the only products that the United States exported were cotton and tobacco, the products produced by slave labor. (See Engels, *Introduction to Poverty of Philosophy*.) These changes made slavery more expendable, plus the fact that the American cotton monopoly now had to face powerful competition from India, Brazil, Egypt... The gradual depletion of cotton lands, the increased prices of the slaves, and the consolidation of the Northern industrial economy forced the slavocracy to make ever increased demands on the country, including the forcing of slavery West, attempts at reopening the slave trade, fugitive slave acts, all served the coming of the Civil War.<sup>16</sup> The South had developed a drive against the

---

<sup>16</sup> "In 1860", Kenneth Stamp points out in *Peculiar Institution*, "there were in the South 385,000 owners of slaves distributed among 1,516,000 families. Nearly three fourths of all free Southerners had no connection with slavery. The typical Southerner was a small farmer and a non-slaveholder." Half of the slaves were owned by about 25,000 masters operating large plantations.

entire "free labor" system itself, not just in the North, and had no other alternative but to try to force the slave system upon the entire United States. DuBois peeps this when he says, "The war was not fought against slavery, it was fought to protect free white laborers against the competition of slaves; and it was thought possible to do this by segregating slavery." And again, "Emancipation was a war measure to break the power of the Confederacy, preserve the Union and gain the sympathy of the civilized world." (*The Negro*, 122)

The increased repression of the international cotton trade era brought a militancy among blacks against slavery that culminated with them having literally to fight their way into the Union Army, as most Northern leadership, even the abolitionists, and especially some of the Northern military leaders who were really copperheads (Southern sympathizers) were all opposed to Black participation. It was only in desperation at the military situation that the North finally put the blacks formally in arms, under white commanders. The defeat of the South was brought about in part by the fact that the North had put 200,000 black troops in arms by the end of the war.

### **Passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments; Reconstruction**

The Reconstruction saw the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution passed, each one a classic plank of bourgeois democracy. The 13th made slavery illegal in the United States ("except as a punishment for a crime"--a grim loophole). The 14th recognized all citizens as equal before the law and having equal rights. The 15th was the right to vote (suffrage). The passage of these acts was accomplished primarily because the Northern industrialists wanted to crush the Southern planter oligarchy and gain complete dominance over them. They used the blacks and small white farmers to do this. But by the 1870s, having accomplished the basic takeover they sought they initiated a counter-revolution so fierce and bloody that its effects still can be seen on black people and small white farmers today. (The effects still observable are the lack of the complete extension of democracy to either group. Not only blacks in the Black Belt, but the poor white peasant or rural laborer is among the most oppressed and exploited groups in the United States. The plight of the "hillbillies" and poor white country people is well known. (See Lenin, *Russians and Negroes*, p. 59, or *Collected Works*, vol. 18 pp. 543-544, on education in the Black Belt.)

In the South, the median income for whites over 14 is \$3911<sup>17</sup>. For the same year] the rural non-farm median annual income for whites is \$3516, \$712, that is, 20%, less than the \$4228 urban median income for whites. But even lower than the rural non-farm median income is that for rural farm-related whites, which is only \$2975. Some might argue that this simply reflects the contradiction between income from industry versus that from farming. But in comparison the Southern white farmer still lags behind the Northeastern, North Central or Western farmer by \$800, \$694, or \$576 per year median income, respectively.

"The proportion of illiterates *among the whites* is *twice as high* in the former slaveholding areas. It is not only the Negroes that show traces of slavery!"<sup>18</sup> The democratic or "Civil" rights extended by the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments and the Reconstruction governments, the most democratic and revolutionary ones (and finally these came about because of the struggle of black people and their determination to carry the "revolution" through to the end), were eliminated with the counter-revolution. DuBois said, "We may recognize three things which Negro rule gave to the South: 1) democratic government; 2) free public schools; and 3) new social legislation."<sup>19</sup>

The Northern industrialists had to allow the black and reconstruction governments at first because that was the only way to insure loyal governments against the planters. But the Hayes (Republican)-Tilden (Democrat) compromise in 1876 formalized the counter-revolution and OK'd the bloodbath that followed that actually toppled these governments. This agreement allowed Rutherford B. Hayes, who lost the popular vote by a quarter of a million votes, to win the presidential election of 1876, provided that the Democratic Party was given control of those states in which it had won the popular vote, namely, the Southern states. Northern troops were withdrawn even in states where the Republicans had popular control, like South Carolina and Louisiana. The combined assault of the reasserted political power of the planters and landlords, the guerilla terrorism of the KKK and the like, formed from the offshoots of the same forces that Tom Watson had supposedly organized earlier as the Populist

---

<sup>17</sup> 1970 census.

<sup>18</sup> Lenin, "Russians and Negroes," *Collected Works*, vol. 18, 543-544.

<sup>19</sup> W.E.B. DuBois on Reconstruction governments, *The Negro*, 130.

movement which was supposed to join blacks and poor white farmers together to struggle for political power in the South,<sup>20</sup> was enough to crush the Reconstruction governments and end the development of democracy in the South, as well as to take away the gains of the Reconstruction period.

There are two schools of thought on Watson and the Populists. One line sees Watson as simply a vacillating opportunist who used black votes to get over and then switched with the changed situation to become a vociferous white supremacist who even justified lynching. The other line sees Watson as always having always been a tool of the Northern monopolists who used him first to build coalitions with blacks to smash the planters, but once the monopolists had consolidated total power, used him to help smash the Black Power because it was taking the bourgeois democratic revolution too far. Both seen plausible and probably have some elements of truth to them.

Once the Reconstruction governments were overthrown, the Northern monopolists who controlled the Southern racist governments tried to force black people back into slavery with a rule of terror. Dialectically, it was this complete attempt at suppression, segregation, discrimination and oppression that helped form the black nation in the South and consolidate a national character that would be sustained even in the Northern ghettos, all of which carried, as Haywood said, "the shadow of the Black Belt." Here, too, rule over blacks was largely by terror.

The Black Codes, the so-called "Redemption of the South," the "Revolt of the Poor Whites," (KKK terror, Northern monopoly capitalist bourgeois financed, Southern planter petty bourgeois led), the peonage system (see *Definitions*), and sharecropping, all had the design and partial result of enforced re-enslavement. "The plantation is patently an outmoded structure in the country's economic life. Yet it is not just a relic of the past. If it has survived in defiance of social change and progress, it is because it has been bolstered up and kept alive by the dominant economic force of the country, finance capital. Wall Street is the supreme usurer of the plantation. It is the secret shrine revered by the Yankee-hating bourbon landlords. It is the great Moloch to which are offered up sacrifices soaked with the blood, sweat and tears of the Negro bondsmen and the great propertyless mass of Southern 'poor whites.' This entrenched 'big money' power of the North and East is the chief beneficiary of Negro oppression, of Southern distress and poverty.

---

<sup>20</sup> C. Van Woodward, *Origins of the New South*, 393.

"In the South, a direct product of Northern victory was the new Bourbon middle class. Born during Reconstruction, this was an extension of ruling Northern capitalist interests to the South and guaranteed the latter's supremacy in the former slave domain."<sup>21</sup> These years saw also a revival of the notorious Black Codes, a resurgence of the hooded terror of the Ku Klux Klan..."<sup>22</sup> It is now that the segregation laws first begin to appear<sup>23</sup> and with this, the development of the earliest forms of the black bourgeoisie. From enslaved African to freed Afro American, until now, after the counter-revolution that destroyed Reconstruction, what was being re-enslaved was a black nation! Between the fall of the Reconstruction governments and 1900, classes begin to appear in the black nation. "... the Negroes, who at the time of their release from chattel bondage comprised an almost undifferentiated peasant mass, had by the beginning of the twentieth century become transformed into a people manifesting among themselves the class groupings peculiar to modern capitalist society."<sup>24</sup>

The Northern monopolists financed counter-revolution to stop the ultimate redivision of land and wealth that the bourgeois democratic revolution, especially through the Reconstruction governments, would supposedly have accomplished. (Immediately after the Civil War, blacks seized great areas of land in the South, only to be called squatters and run off the land by federal troops!) The terror of the assault, the codification of it in the Black Codes, etc., rigid segregation laws and discrimination dialectically built the framework for the emergence of a black nation. And it is this unfinished bourgeois democratic revolution that not only ended any idea of assimilation of blacks into the United States nation, but linked the Black National Liberation struggle directly to the Socialist Revolution! The Civil Rights Movement in many ways can be seen as bringing to (in some cases superficial and in most cases illusory) completion of the Bourgeois Democratic Revolution as far as superstructure (see *Definitions*). This has the effect finally of compromising completely the Black National bourgeoisie and building an even larger comprador (imperialist-linked) sector since the economic basis for political equality is still not achieved because there has

---

<sup>21</sup> Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 49-60.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 59. See also Kenneth Stamp, "The Triumph of White Racism" in *Blacks in White America*, 50.

<sup>23</sup> Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*.

<sup>24</sup> Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 143.



as yet been no land redivision or independence. Like all 3rd World nations, the national liberation of black people can only be accomplished, in this era, with the destruction of imperialism, so as to smash imperialist domination of the black nation and racist exploitation of the black oppressed nationality, which is part of the United States multinational working class.

### **Class Formation, Class Interests, Class Struggle**

Some class stratification began among blacks even before the Civil War with the freed blacks producing the actual beginnings of the black middle class (viz., *Roots*.) In 1820 out of a total United States population of 9,638,553, the black population was listed as 1,771,665, or 18.5%. Of this, some 13.2% of the black population, or 233,634, was free, the majority living in the South.<sup>25</sup> Some of this miniature "middle class" in the South, "openly collaborated with the slaveholders in order to win all sorts of special favors and considerations."<sup>26</sup> In the 1830 census, 3,777 blacks were listed as holding slaves in Louisiana, Maryland, North and South Carolina and Virginia.

A black bourgeoisie and black proletariat are more recent class formations than the black peasant. The early freedmen were petty bourgeois, small peasants and even middle-class peasants holding slaves! DuBois summed the motion of the black people from slavery to black nationhood, in its class consolidation, thusly:

In 1863, there were about five million persons of Negro descent in the United States. Of these, four million and more were just being released from slavery... These slaves could be bought and sold, could move from place to place only with permission, were forbidden to learn to read or write, and legally could never hold property or marry. 90% were totally illiterate. Fifty years later, in 1913, there were ten and a quarter million... an increase of 105%. Legal slavery had been abolished, leaving... vestiges in debt slavery, peonage, and the convict lease system. Today there are two and a half million laborers... one million servants and tenant farmers, one million skilled and semi-skilled workers... and at the top of the economic column are 600,000 owners and managers of farms and businesses, cash

---

<sup>25</sup> McAdoo, *Pre Civil War Black Nationalism*.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

tenants, officials and professional men... a total of 5,192,535 colored breadwinners in 1910.

By 1875 the Negroes had gotten hold of something between two million and four million acres of land through their bounties as soldiers and the low price of land after the war. By 1880 this was... six million; in 1890 about eight million. In 1910 this land had increased to nearly twenty million acres, a real as large as Ireland. [By 1969 this had "shrunk" to 8.7 million acres, or 13,000 square miles, and area the size of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island combined--Ed.]

The 120,738 farms owned by Negroes in 1890 increased to 218,972 in 1910, or 81%. [This despite the disenfranchisement via the Black Codes, etc., of three quarters of the black population in this same period!--Ed.] There were already two hundred private schools and colleges managed almost entirely and supported by Negroes, plus one hundred old folks' homes and orphanages, thirty hospitals and five hundred cemeteries, also an organized commercial life [as DuBois called it, including] 22,000 small retail businesses and forty banks. (*The Philadelphia Negro*)

With the birth of the Afro-American nation, after the reconstruction period, the black struggle for democratic rights in the Black Belt South was transformed into a struggle for national liberation. It was out of the growing black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, but especially the black bourgeoisie, that the first heaves toward national liberation would most naturally come. Monopoly capitalism was growing rapidly during this period and would emerge as dominant in American life by 1900. Therefore, this bourgeoisie, like all national bourgeoisies under imperialism, could not develop except in a national liberation struggle (the "freedom movement.") But by 1890 it was apparent that the black bourgeoisie had two wings: 1) the national sector, for which DuBois spoke a little later; and, 2) the conservative aspect or earliest comprador sector (i.e., imperialist-dominated) element which arose as personified by Booker T. Washington (see appendix, "Comprador Bourgeoisie".) The DuBois sector was related, later on, to the militant Niagara Movement, and some years later even to the Communist Party; the other sector related to the comprador line of the NAACP and bourgeois integrationist reaction.

Because of the post-reconstruction segregation in the form of white terror campaigns, legal lynchings, etc., the black bourgeoisie had rapid growth within the confines of the black market. We find the expanding

imperialist monopolies did not get fully hip to the black market until the 1960s, hence the rising numbers of compradors post-1960.

<u>Date Founded, Black Business</u>	<u>Pct. Largest Black Business with Comprador Character</u>
1959	17.4
1960	26.5
1970	46.4

Black business doubled between 1910 and 1920. By 1920, the ownership of land rose still higher. The black national bourgeoisie was not only progressive in facing a developing U.S. imperialism but also "internationalist," as DuBois also initiated a Pan-Africanism by 1900 as well as the militant Niagara Movement (with J.M. Trotter) which called for full equality for blacks in direct defiance of the Carnegie-funded B.T. Washington! The imperialists countered, however, with the NAACP, which, despite its record of "accomplishment", was, in overall nature, the creation of the American bourgeoisie and black comprador sector. Cyrus McCormick (a big capitalist based in the manufacture of farm machinery), Harvey Firestone (tires and rubber goods) and the DuPont family were among the first backers of the NAACP, an open attempt, which worked, to co-opt the Niagara Movement. However, the NAACP did objectively seem to meet a rising need in the face of the continued reign of terror and lynching throughout the U.S.; but it met this need with calls for a bigger and better capitalism, a capitalism open to all, into which "all" could peacefully advance. By 1909, the NAACP (the B.T. Washington wing of the black bourgeoisie), and later on sections of the black petty bourgeoisie, especially its most impoverished sectors (doctors without patients, lawyers with few clients, small businessmen), in alliance with peasants newly come to the city and as yet unintegrated as a northern proletariat and thus still ripe for the idealism of the petty bourgeoisie, formed movements such as Garvey's Back to Africa Movement. "Garveyism reflected the ideology of the Negro petty bourgeoisie, their abortive attempt at hegemony in the Negro Movement. It was a trend of the small property holder, the shopkeeper pushed to the wall, ruined or threatened with ruin by the ravages of the crisis, the frustrated and unemployed Negro professional, doctors and lawyers with impoverished clientele, storefront preachers, poverty stricken students; in sum, the elements of the middle class closest to the Negro laboring people and, therefore, affected most keenly by the

deterioration of their conditions."<sup>27</sup>

Another aspect of this trend was represented by the transformation of the rural black church into storefront Evangelical societies and sects. These numerous churches served as forums for ambitious petty bourgeoisie wishing to develop their leadership talent and bale themselves out of debt. These semi-religious organizations preached self-esteem, self-improvement, upward social mobility, i.e., black integration into American society through economic and often mystical means. These organizations served also as the root from which the larger scale organizations of Father Divine, Daddy Grace, Elijah Muhammad, Noble Drew Ali and Elder Lightfoot Micheaux were to come.

Thus it can be seen that DuBois, the focal point of progressive political consciousness of the radicalized black national bourgeoisie, fought ideological battles with the compradors on the one hand (B.T. Washington & Co.), and the petty bourgeois idealists and narrow nationalists (Garvey & Co.) on the other. The weakness of DuBois and the Black National Bourgeoisie was that they never consistently posed self-determination and independence for the black nation in ad mass organizational fashion, but more constant calls for democratic rights that could be easily co-opted by the bourgeois integrationist tendency of the compradors. Garvey rightly felt the black masses' need for "sovereignty and independence", and this is why he was so popular, but he saw those incorrectly as Black Zionism. This is but another replay of the black ideological struggles among the people; "Stay & Fight" or "Stay & Submit" or "Back to Africa." Revolutionary black nationalism was always juxtaposed between abject compromise and liberalism or black zionism. Men like C.H. Langston, H.H. Garnet, C.L. Redmonds, had taken clear revolutionary nationalist positions in the 1850s, and at the Cleveland Convention in 1854 even raised the question that a Negro nationality had to be based on the possession of some land in the United States!

3; That the right to breathe the air and use the soil on which the creator has placed us, is co-inherent; consequently, whatever interferes with this sacred inheritance, is the joint ally of slavery, and at war against the just decree of Heaven. Hence man cannot be independent without possessing the land on which he resides.

4; That whatever interferes with the natural rights of man, should meet from him with adequate resistance.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 198-199.

<sup>28</sup> "Platform: or Declaration of Sentiments of the Cleveland

The depression years wiped out a great many black businesses; in fact, according to Woodson and Wesley, "During the crisis and depression years of 1920-1927, one half to two thirds of all negro businesses were wiped out."<sup>29</sup> This calamity turned the national bourgeoisie around and saw the national bourgeoisie decline as the fighting leadership of the black nation and oppressed nationality. Before the end of the depression, the Garvey movement had failed as well; and for the first time, the working class movement was beginning to emerge.

The black working class movement had its origins in the great migrations of southern blacks during and after World War I, which was the acceleration of a trickle northward already in progress. There were a number of factors that contributed to these population shifts. The stifling racial oppression of blacks in the south, natural disasters which severely affected the southern economy such as the invasion of the boll weevil, catastrophic floods, especially in Alabama and Mississippi, and finally, since the immigration of Europeans had been cut off by the imperialist war, the northern industrialists energetically encouraged impoverished blacks to come north because they needed a quick source of unskilled and semi-skilled labor (i.e., cheap labor) so they could supply their imperialist allies in Europe. Blacks, however, upon reaching their northern urban destinations, found that racial and economic conditions were much the same, if not worse in some cases. Bourgeois-inspired racial hatred ran rampant, resulting in many race riots and numerous other racially motivated acts of violence and black reprisals in self-defense. Economically, blacks received the most laborious jobs and were generally underpaid compared to the wages of the working whites.

In the post-war period, much of the same was to occur in the U.S. labor movement. As reported by Meier in his book, *Plantation and Ghetto* (p. 233), "The unionization of industrial plants often led to the expulsion of black employees. On the other hand, many employers wanted to use Negroes to destroy or suppress union activity, which of course only antagonized whites even more." These bourgeois tactics can be viewed as an attempt to divide and confuse the workers because of the immense difficulties the bourgeoisie faced in the wake of World War I, in the form of

---

Convention, August 24-26, 1854", from *Pre-Civil War Revolutionary Black Nationalism*, by Bill McAdoo.

<sup>29</sup> Woodson and Wesley, *The Negro in Our History*, 545.

mass unemployment and other labor problems. The repeated failure of black bourgeois and petty bourgeois organizations, such as the Urban League and the NAACP, which all but ignored the pressing needs of the working class blacks, caused a leftward move of black workers. Harry Haywood points out that strikes in 1917 and 1919 led by black labor and the emergence of black left wing publications as early as 1917, such as the *Messenger*, *The Emancipator*, and *The Challenge*. "The organization of the African Blood Brotherhood with its organ, *The Crusader*, brought together splitoffs of the Garvey movement and the Negro communists."<sup>30</sup>

### **The Working Class and its Betrayal**

The Communist International in 1928 and 1930 came forward with the most progressive analyses and statements concerning the black nation in the U.S.A., and it was partially because of these correct political lines as well as the actual organizing of black workers that thousands of blacks came into the CPUSA during the 1930s, only to be driven out later by the chauvinism, opportunism, and eventual complete fall into revisionism of the CPUSA in the late 1940s and 1950s and from then on.

According to *The Communist* (early theoretical journal of the CPUSA until 1944, when its name was changed to *Political Affairs*), in October of 1928 the CPUSA, based upon the resolutions of the C.I. on the Negro National Question, adopted a resolution which stated:

The various forms of oppression of the Negro masses who are concentrated mainly in the so-called 'Black Belt' provide the necessary conditions for a national revolutionary movement among the Negroes.

To accomplish this task, the Communist Party must come out as the champion of the oppressed Negro race (nation) for full emancipation. While continuing and intensifying the struggle under the slogan of full social and political equality for the Negroes, which remains the central slogan of our party for work among the masses, the Party must come out openly and unreservedly for the right of Negroes to national self-determination in the Southern states where the Negroes form the majority of the population.

-The Communist International

---

<sup>30</sup> Harry Haywood, *Black Bolshevik*, page?

The emergence of the black working class after the First World War as an increasingly independent force was signalled by their massive entrance into the Communist Party in the 1930s. Harry Haywood says that, "... the Negro proletarians under the leadership of the Communist Party made their first real bid for leadership of the Negro movement in the Scottsboro Case, and unemployment struggles, and the fight for the organization of the unorganized crowned the formation of the C.I.O. and the Negro National Congress, effectively challenging the bankrupt, collaborationist and accomodationist policies of the Negro reformist leadership centered in the NAACP."<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, the work that the Communist Party did among blacks was responsible to a great extent for bringing black workers into the unions as well. In 1920, there were 110,000 blacks in the CIO; by 1945, there were 739,000. The subsequent turns to the right by the CPUSA disillusioned and disoriented a great many black people. The line of class collaboration seized upon by opportunists as a result of distorting the correct United Front Against Fascism policy of the C.I. from 1935 allowed the American Exceptionalists led by Earl Browder to dissolve the militant Sharecroppers' Union in the South in 1936, made up largely of black sharecroppers. They were merged into a union of small white farmers in the name of "national unity." After Browder's infamous "Teheran Speech" in which he actually called for class collaboration, saying "Communism is 20th Century Americanism," and in which he also said, "Black people have already exercised their right to self-determination and decided for complete integration into United States society as a whole." The slogan of self-determination was dropped in 1944. Even the Communist Party itself, as Browder had projected in his 1943 speech, was liquidated in favor of a "Communist Political Association" which could "influence both parties of the American two-party system." The Association's line on international affairs was that the small nations should "Trust America."

It is no wonder that in this atmosphere of dizzy compromise and collaboration with monopoly capitalism and imperialism the Party lost its base among the black masses, whose working class was just emerging as the leading and most militant force. It is no wonder as well that by the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement in 1953 the Party was uniting completely with the line of the black bourgeoisie, pushing the assimilationist

---

<sup>31</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*, 34.

comprador wing as the leadership of the Negro Freedom Movement. The revisionist-bound Party even tailed the more progressive sector of the black bourgeoisie, M.L. King, etc., whose non-violent tactics paralleled those of Ghandi in India and Nkrumah in Africa.

During World War II and the Korean War, and especially in the post-war periods, the struggle of the Afro-Americans reached new heights only to be met by a more brutal and violent repression from the U.S. imperialists who sought to turn around the minor gains made by blacks during the war years and to frustrate the newly awakened political consciousness that had emerged as a result of black participation in these wars.

"From 1933 to 1945, for instance, some 149 anti-lynching bills were submitted to the U.S. Congress--and all died there. From 1940 to 1945, eighteen anti-poll-tax bills were also killed, thus denying the vote to some four million blacks in the South. And from 1942 to 1945, seventeen bills against discrimination in industry were also thwarted. Black people resisted these attacks. Rebellions against racist harassments took place in many military camps. Pitched battles with many casualties shook Detroit, Michigan; Mobile, Alabama; and Beaumont, Texas in 1942 and 1943."<sup>32</sup>

The CPUSA came up shaky again during this period. It actually took a position to the right of the black reformist leaders who had raised the "Double V" slogan of "Victory against fascism abroad and Jim Crow at home." The CPUSA opposed both the "Double V" slogan and the threatened March on Washington under the guise of "national unity."

"The victory over fascism in World War II signalled a new period of struggle for the Afro-American people. The end of the war held the promise of new advances in the struggle against national oppression and class exploitation, a fight which was inspired even further by the great victories in Asia, Africa and Latin America," writes Harry Haywood.<sup>33</sup>

"Black people would no longer be cowed and bullied by Jim Crow. They experienced a mass political awakening as a result of the wartime experience..." It had, "...served to break the historic isolation of the Afro American people from the struggles of the people of the world," he continued. "Black men and women had served over a million strong in the armed forces and the wartime expansion of industry saw an unprecedented number of blacks--close to a million workers--in the U.S. labor force. Through such an involvement, black people were able to see more than

---

<sup>32</sup> William Z. Foster, *The Negro People in American History*, page?

<sup>33</sup> Haywood, *Black Bolshevik*.



ever that they had allies in the colonially oppressed people abroad and in the U.S. working class in their struggle against Jim Crow and the monopoly capitalist."

Just as the U.S. imperialists had used the counter-revolutionary dual tactics of repression and reform abroad in their attempt to thwart the rising tide of national liberation struggles and socialist revolution (war in Korea but "aid" to the newly independent third world countries), they use these tactics against the Afro Americans and working class at home as well, on the one hand, the Smith Act, the Rosenberg executions, Taft-Hartley injunctions, the McCarthy reign of terror and the rise of lynchings and Klan activity throughout the country and especially in the South. On the other hand there was the tokenism of the Truman administration, the bribery of the upper strata of labor and black reformist leaders, etc. Additionally, U.S. imperialism was compelled to make such concessions to the Afro American people in this period as the *Brown v. Topeka* 1954 Supreme Court decision, brought about due to decades of black struggle and the political stand of the newly independent African countries who questioned U.S. claims of being "defenders of freedom" abroad while maintaining Jim Crow at home. Moreover, these concessions were intended to allow the U.S. imperialists to save face in the world, but in reality they further aggravated the struggle for equality and were almost always met with massive resistance from reactionary forces in the U.S. who saw in even the least token concession to blacks a direct threat to the rotten Jim Crow system.

By the time of the Civil Rights Movement, the Montgomery bus boycott and the sit-ins, freedom rides, etc., of the early 1960s, which had originated in the black nation but had spread rapidly throughout the North and West as well, the leadership of Wilkins and his NAACP had been overshadowed by the national wing of the black bourgeoisie led by M.L. King. "It was the national wing that could articulate some struggle against our national oppression, i.e., against our oppression as a black nation, but because of their class interests could never carry the struggle beyond the civil rights phase. The beneficiaries from the gains from the civil rights movement were mainly the black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. The reforms directed toward the black working class were mainly illusory and have for the most part been destroyed by the seventies."<sup>34</sup>

The Civil Rights Movement was able to bring together the "big six leadership" of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois of the black nation--

---

<sup>34</sup> Amiri Baraka, "Black Liberation Today", *Unity & Struggle*, 1976.

NAACP, SCLC, Urban League, A. Philip Randolph, SNCC (John Lewis), CORE (James Farmer)--for the March on Washington because, from the "left" to the right, the black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie were lined up with their sponsor, the United States bourgeoisie (which was applauded by the CPUSA). The imperialist bourgeoisie had also reached accord on tactics against the left-over production relations of the unfinished bourgeois democratic revolution of the Reconstruction.

For U.S. Marxist-Leninists, the struggle to build a new anti-revisionist Communist party of the new type of which Lenin spoke, free of the "soiled shirt" of Social-Democracy, began with the consolidation of revisionism in the "Communist Party" U.S.A. at its Sixteenth National Convention held in 1957.

### **Black Liberation Movement & Black Class Consolidation**

By the early 1960s the Afro American struggle occupied the center stage of U.S. domestic turmoil. It has both a non-violent, bourgeois integrationist-led aspect (King & Co.) as well as an anti-imperialist revolutionary nationalist aspect which arose with and was articulated by an international black working class leader, Malcolm X. His rise to leadership and his consistently revolutionary nationalist and developing anti-imperialist positions not only overshadowed M.L. King and the non-violent scope of the "Civil Rights Movement," which was being supported and pushed on all sides by the ruling class, but it moved the whole Black Liberation Movement (BLM) to a more militant and revolutionary position as a whole and influenced a more militant student movement (SNCC, Stokely Carmichael in the 1960s, H. Rap Brown and national rebellions from Watts to Newark in the mid to late 1960s.) Malcolm's influence was responsible for the increased and heightened concern for self-defense evidenced in the call for armed self-defense by Robert F. Williams of Monroe, North Carolina, the Deacons for Defense and Justice of Bogalooza, Louisiana, and again in the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense.

By the end of the 1960s, the most militant aspect of the Black Power rebellions had subsided. It was a good example of the democratic impulse which the black bourgeoisie pushed because of its national oppression. Taken up in earnest, past black bourgeois restraints, by the working class and oppressed black masses, it led to the rebellions of the late 1960s. These rebellions by and large were led by working class blacks, not the lumpen, as has been falsely projected. "Characteristically, the typical rioter was not a hoodlum, habitual criminal, or riffraff; nor was he a recent

migrant, a member of an uneducated underclass, or a person lacking broad social and political concerns. Instead, he was a teenager or young adult, a lifelong resident of the city in which he rioted, a high school dropout--but somewhat better educated than his Negro neighbor--and almost invariably underemployed or employed in a menial job. He was proud of his race, extremely hostile to both whites and middle-class Negroes, and, though informed about politics, highly distrustful of the political system and of political leaders."<sup>35</sup> But on the one hand the militancy of the black working class was led into a petty bourgeois idealism, similar to the Garvey escapism of an earlier period, which was replayed with the Nation of Islam and Black Cultural Nationalist organizations (US Organization, Congress of African People [CAP], Student Organization for Black Unity [SOBU], etc.) On the other hand there was the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, which combined a position on anti-imperialism with negative gun cultism and romanticization of the Lumpen. The mood of the sixties was necessary and positive overall. But after Malcolm's death the void in leadership of the Black Liberation Movement was filled by the petty bourgeoisie, because there was no vanguard communist party to give correct proletarian leadership to the mass movement, due to the traitorous fall into revisionism of the CPUSA. Hence the BLM came to a dead-end with "Eastern metaphysics, new "Back to Africa" Pan-Africanism, idealist cultural nationalism, romantic gun cultism and worship of the lumpen, and militant reformism vis-a-vis black capitalism.

Later on the emergence of working class organizations like the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, which emerged from the spontaneous struggle of black workers, could not gain clear leadership of the Black Liberation Movement because of the lack of a vanguard Marxist-Leninist party.

The gains of the 1960s were largely those of the cultural revolution of raising "black consciousness" against the triple-team bourgeois assimilationist line of the comprador bourgeoisie, the revisionists and the U.S. bourgeoisie. The fight for democratic rights that marked the so-called Civil Rights Movement put an end to the surface of segregated social and production relations that came into being with the betrayal of reconstruction. But United States imperialism needed to do this, hence Kennedy's support and leadership in the Civil Rights Movement, in order to give imperialism the look of progress and facilitate its struggle with

---

<sup>35</sup> Kerner Commission, *Report on Civil Disorders*.

European powers for hegemony in Third World markets. The oppression of black people in the South, especially in the Black Belt, showed that all talk of the U.S.A. as the world leader was shaky.

The absence of a vanguard party and the vacuum created by the murder of Malcolm X can still be measured today in the Black Liberation Movement in a whole group of opportunists, bourgeois nationalists and reformists who are trying to mislead Afro Americans.

The so-called Pan Africanist trend is represented by groups like PAC-USA, and people like Oba Shaka and Elombe Brath, whose solution to the problems faced by black people is to go back to Africa, much like the Garvey escapism of an earlier period. People like this were also helpful to the superpower contention in Angola between the United States and the Soviet Union by advocating that people here support one of the Angolan liberation movements over the others.

Another so-called Pan-Africanist trend is the All African Peoples Revolutionary Party headed by Stokely Carmichael, who openly supports the attempts by Soviet imperialism to gain control over southern Africa. They also objectively aid the struggle of the social imperialists by advocating support of its plans, thus facilitating the growing threat of a new world war.

While talking about the Pan Africanists we must also include Roy Innis and his Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), whose whole line is so openly bourgeois that he would even advocate the recruitment of mercenaries to fight on the side of one imperialist against another. All of these "Pan Africanist" trends have in common their objective service to one superpower or the other.

The instability of the petty bourgeois vacillators who have grown disillusioned by the struggles of the masses is objectified by the lines of "institution building," health foods mysticism, cultural nationalism and right-wing "Afro-Centrism." This is also in unity with the line of, "Black people are a nation wherever we are." All of these are variations of the same position of cultural autonomy, which means that black people should have "their own" separate educational and cultural institutions, but the system of monopoly capitalism can remain intact with all power and control still in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Groups like the Republic of New Africa, who correctly identify the historic homeland of the Black Nation, also fall into the bourgeois nationalist position with such lines as the separation of the struggle to liberate the Black Nation from the struggle to overthrow U.S. imperialism. This leads to theories of peaceful transition to national liberation, and the

tactics of pleading with the government to set us free and give us reparations. Some groups advocate male chauvinist practices like polygamy and take such national chauvinist positions as that only blacks will be allowed citizenship in the nation after liberation.

The largest and most organized movement, the Nation of Islam, even with all of its recent changes, must still be criticized as it becomes more and more evident that it represents the interests of the black bourgeoisie. Even dressed up in Islam, the positions that the "Nation" takes, like its continuous support for gun control and "anti-crime" actions by the state, its recent anti-drug farces, and also its constant anti-communist lines, must be seen as objectively aiding the bourgeoisie in its move toward fascism.

Since the 1960s the rise of the Black Christian Nationalist movements are further attempts to paint an enslaving religious doctrine "Black" in order to keep the masses tied to external solutions to our problems and pacify black people with promises of black heaven and black Jesus, rather than fire black people to revolution.

Even Eldridge Cleaver's strange religious conversion can only be seen as a continuation of his bankrupt bourgeois line, from his earlier male chauvinist positions on women, to his relationship with the Trotskyites, to the Bakuninist<sup>36</sup> anarchy and terrorism he advocated in the Black Panther Party, to his decadent commercial "codpiece" pants creation, all of his lines have objectively in service to the bourgeoisie.

Jesse Jackson and his People United to Serve Humanity (PUSH) represent a bourgeois attempt to promote a petty bourgeois reformist preacher to the leadership of the Black Liberation Movement, whose program for the liberation of the black masses amounts to nothing more than empty appeals to the sentiments of working class black people, while at the same time advocating that the petty bourgeoisie buy stock and get on the boards of corporations that oppress us. It is only another version of "militant Booker T.-ism."

Another attempt by the bourgeoisie and/or the revisionists to push opportunists as the leadership of the Black Liberation Movement are the black mouthpieces for the "CP"USA, the traitors to the working class, the 5th column of the "CP"USA and the Soviet social imperialists who are the main source of a new world war. They are revisionists who advocate that our liberation come peacefully, that we can live happily together with the Rockefellers and the rest of the bourgeoisie. They are agents of bourgeois

---

<sup>36</sup> After M. Bakunin, nineteenth century anarchist and political opponent of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

ideology, attempting to keep us chained to the bourgeoisie.

There are positive aspects that can be seen in a wholesided historical and current view of many of these lines. Still, all patriots and revolutionaries must sternly oppose all counter-revolutionary lines. The people and organization who represent these lines should be criticized and exposed to clear the path of bourgeois obstacles.

### **Crumbs for a Few, but no Integration**

At the end of the 1960s what had been consolidated was a somewhat larger petty bourgeoisie and a new set of compradors. Their task was to take advantage of the black market and at the same time "allow black leadership" politically and economically. It was essentially a program of neo-colonialism, exactly like that imposed on Africa and the West Indies and the rest of the Third World, "the indirect role of imperialism, by means of native agents," as Cabral pointed out. Talk of black people moving into the greater society, "the great society," was not borne out by any statistics. As a matter of fact, in 1971 there was a \$3700 gap between black and white family income, as measured against only a \$2700 gap in 1947! In 1971, 32%, or one out of three blacks, about 7.7 million people, were still below the poverty guideline (\$4137 per annum). Even though there was some expansion of the black petty bourgeoisie, a black four-year college graduate could still make only an average of \$8669, as opposed to the \$8829 a white high school graduate could expect. Only 6.3% finished college, and only 54% complete high school.

	<u>High School</u>	<u>College Entrance</u>	<u>College Graduation</u>
Black	54%	10%	6.3%
White	81%	17%	13%

The quality of separateness and distance is still consistent, and in the Black Belt itself, the look of a nation oppressed by imperialism is still more blatant. Black Belt voter registration is 29.6%, and of the whole South, 50%. The average income of whites in the North is \$8937, and of blacks it is \$5360. For whites in the South it is \$7963 and of blacks it is \$4283. Combined, blacks and whites in the Black Belt have an average income of \$3486! (The border areas are around \$4340.)

Union membership of blacks in the Black Belt is 14.2% as opposed to 24.0% in the rest of the South, and 27% in the U.S. as a whole. What is evident is that the Black Belt South, as Haywood and the Communist International and the CPUSA pointed out, is the seat of national oppression

of black people in the U.S. It remains so today despite the rapid industrialization of the last thirty years.

"Between 1940 and 1956 the number of factories tripled from 11,000 to 33,000. Between 1935 and 1955, the number of employees in manufacturing increased 86% for the U.S. as a whole, and 127%, from 1.5 to 3.4 million workers, in the South."<sup>37</sup> By 1969 there were 7,631,354 manufacturing workers in the South. Haywood adds, "But the harsh facts are that the kind of industrialization based upon war economy and runaway shops is not leading to the all-around industrialization of the area." It is the focus on national oppression, the actual oppression of the black nation!, which casts its shadow, a shadow of steel, pulling down all life of the oppressed black nationality wherever it is in the U.S. The white workers, too, are anchored to the oppression and degradation of blacks in the Black Belt, which is used by the imperialists to depress the quality of life of the whole multinational working class. The runaway shops always go to the Black Belt, although now to South Africa or Taiwan or South Korea. The ghettos themselves are no more than displaced Black Belts with the same relationship to those cities as the Black Belt has to the U.S. nation.

Following any statistical data, not seeking to lie with figures, it is easy to see that, essentially, for the great masses of black people there has been no relative change with regard to distance from the U.S. nation's economic norm in the last 35 years. The dollar gap has actually gotten broader. All classes within the black nation--bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, working class, peasant (farmer), and lumpen--have an absolute relationship as classes only within the context of the black nation and oppressed nationality. The black national bourgeoisie is the black bourgeoisie only because of the black nation and the market of the oppressed nationality.

The black bourgeoisie is an authentic bourgeoisie, in the scientific definition of that term. That is, the black bourgeoisie exists as a class because of its relationship to the means of production, i.e., it owns the means of production and exploits labor. But it exists as a bourgeoisie only because of the black nation, that was and is its market; therefore its inclusion in the U.S. bourgeoisie is problematic. Certainly in terms of the U.S. bourgeoisie's ownership and accumulation, the black bourgeoisie is *marginal* (see appendix). "Economically, the Negro upper and middle classes are essentially a marginal bourgeoisie, restricted to the leftovers of the dominant white ruling class; they are a class of small entrepreneurs."<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*.

<sup>38</sup> Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 194-195.

Class analyses in depth are needed of the black nation in the Black Belt, the black oppressed nationality in the U.S. nation, and the relationship of the black nation class structure to the black nationality outside the Black Belt. (Part of the market of the black bourgeoisie resides outside of the Black Belt and part of the labor that it exploits also.) Haywood says of the black nation that, "For example, with regard to common economic life, there exists class differentiation. There is an industrial proletariat, a class of farmers. There is an intelligentsia, or educated stratum, of the black middle class. In other words, all classes essential to modern social development exist in the Black Belt area. The development of all these classes is artificially retarded by American monopoly capitalism and its Bourbon cohorts. All classes suffer from ferocious racial-national oppression, and the people as a whole find their interests running counter to this stifling Jim Crow."<sup>39</sup> Haywood says elsewhere,

There is a Negro upper class of professionals and in rural communities, striving as do all bourgeois classes for the extension of its markets. Its most influential segment resides in the cities functioning mainly in the fields of insurance, small-scale banking, real estate and other services for the Negro community. There is also a sprinkling of well-to-do Negro farm owners in the rural areas. This Negro bourgeoisie has its ideologists in the educated middle classes, striving for the modern development of their people. There is a thin stratum of professional people, including doctors, lawyers, teachers, ministers (the largest group) and social workers...

The Negro workers want modern conditions of labor; the sharecroppers, tenants, poor farmers, and plantation hands want land and freedom from the yoke of peonage. The town middle classes and intelligentsia want equal opportunity in business and professions...

The character of the oppression of the Negro people in no sense differs from that of colonial peoples. The economy of the region is not controlled by the Negro capitalists. Its immediate direction is in the hands of white local capitalists and landlords, who act as the outpost command for the real rulers, the financial dynasty of Wall Street...

Among the Negro people of the area there exists all class groupings peculiar to capitalism, which historically provided the basis for the emergence of modern nations. Not only do Negroes work as

---

<sup>39</sup> Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 145-146.



laborers in the cotton and tobacco fields; they work also in the coal mines, steel mills, saw and planing mills, ginning and cottonseed oil mills, in furniture, turpentine refining, in processing of tobacco, in chemical industries and in pulp and paper, in longshore and logging, on railroads, etc.<sup>40</sup>

The relationship of the class structure of the black nation in the Black Belt and the inclusion of the black oppressed nationality in the U.S. class structure is important because the national oppression of blacks follows them via racism wherever they go in North America even outside the Black Belt homeland. This racism allows the black bourgeoisie's market to cohere to a certain extent for thousands of miles outside the Black Belt. It depresses the black nationality economically to the point where it is a marginal, almost separate labor force. This marginal character exists among all classes of the black nation and oppressed nationality in corresponding relationship to the whole of the class structure of the U.S.A. This has resulted in a marginal black bourgeoisie, a marginal petty bourgeoisie, as well as the marginal character of the black sector of the working class.

Bruce Hartford in his study of class structure of the United States<sup>41</sup> says that 4% of the U.S. petty bourgeoisie are "third world" (2.3%) black; but he also defines the petty bourgeoisie by saying: "What separates these members of the petty bourgeoisie from the working class is that they are not exploited. That is, the wealth returned to them as salary is equal to or greater than the value of the wealth or service they create (if any)." He defines their income as ranging from about \$50,000 to \$200,000 and also says, "The number of third world people can probably be counted on your fingers."

It is also a power relationship that is defined here, and the separation between blacks and whites is obvious. We know that the black petty bourgeoisie is exploited, nevertheless, and the same education and performance in the same job still brings \$1200 less in salary [in 1972]. The black petty bourgeoisie is exploited economically in absolute terms. The racism that is one form, and the maintainer, of black national oppression throughout the oppressed nationality is an added torture to the black petty bourgeois as well.

---

<sup>40</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*, 23.

<sup>41</sup> Bruce Hartford, *Class Analysis*, Jordan-Hill.

Even the black bourgeoisie suffer national oppression, which made them the leader of the Black Liberation Movement in the last part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. That lifted them to the leadership of the movement in the early 1950s because of the traitorous activities of the CPUSA in disillusioning and disorienting the black working class leadership that had arisen by use of the CPUSA as its vanguard from the 1920s through the early 1940s. This is one reason why we cannot take a static, dogmatic position, which would be undialectical, on the national black bourgeoisie. We do not think that they are totally comprador, as the Black Workers Congress and the Communist Labor Party assert. Quite the contrary, they have shown in the past a tendency to struggle when their interests were threatened, along with the instability and tendency to compromise related to that class. Certainly we must understand this dual tendency and relate to them accordingly. (To understand the percentage of the black bourgeoisie that is comprador, see the chart on p. ??")

The black petty bourgeoisie tends--like everything else--to break down into three groups, the advanced, the middle, and the reactionary. There is an urban progressive tendency among the petty bourgeoisie; there is also a comprador aspect. There are generally those that relate to the proletariat (usually the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie) and those that serve the bourgeoisie. We must unite with or struggle with the black petty bourgeoisie accordingly.

The black proletariat inhabits the bottom of the labor market, it is at the bottom of the whole proletariat. *The multinational working class is not divided vertically; it is divided horizontally, with blacks and other third world people at the very bottom.* The national consciousness of the black nation is in the main anti-imperialist, as is that of the majority of U.S. workers. There is a small sector of the U.S. working class whose consciousness is shaped to some extent by a bribery made possible by a superexploitation of the third world, and of third world peoples inside the United States. It is a consciousness shaped by the petty bourgeois politicians, trade union whores and revisionists. It is a consciousness shaped by chauvinism. The black nation and oppressed nationality, on the other hand, though having a small bribed sector and receiving some small concessions, are largely ruled by repression and terror! "The third world labor market is basically limited to the bottom sector of the proletariat, a small number of third world men in the middle sector and a small number of third world women in the office sector." It is a "separate and unequal job market, with the overwhelming bulk of them in the lowest paid, dirtiest and most menial

jobs."<sup>42</sup>

"Ninety-three percent of proletarian women are in the lowest paid, most oppressive sectors." Most black workers are marginal and manufacturing workers, forty-three percent are in the industrial proletariat. Ninety-six percent of the total black population in the U.S. is in the working class. Most black workers are operators (operatives), i.e., assembly line workers, checkers, cutters, pressers, garage workers and gas station attendants, laundry workers, butchers, miners, packers, metal workers (punch press, welding, grinding, lathe operators, milling), sailors, sewer workers, textile workers, machine and equipment operators, drivers (category of transport operatives). "Operatives are the mass base of America's industrial system. More than any other group, these workers are trained by their work into patterns of cooperation, unity and interdependence... work in giant industrial plants employing thousands. Most operatives are not unionized; only one third are unionized. Most of the black membership in unions is from this sector of the proletariat, the majority of these in steel, auto, appliances, chemical, rubber, electrical food processing, assembly lines." It is Hartford's opinion that, "as an occupation category, operatives will play the most important role in class struggle."<sup>43</sup>

But these jobs were, and are, the worst there are to find, the jobs no one else would do. As Marx pointed out, "In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and the division of labor increases, the same proportion and the burden of toil increases whether by prolongation of working hours, by increases of work exacted in a given time, or by the increased speed of the machinery."<sup>44</sup>

As for the political relationship of blacks to the U.S. nation, the national representation tells the story. We speak of the degree to which blacks have been assimilated into the U.S. nation by the productive forces. We deny and state flatly that assimilation is a revisionist and reformist

---

<sup>42</sup> Bruce Hartford-Jordan Hill, *Class Analysis*, 44. The middle sector, or stratum, "contains those workers who earn between a 'lower' and a 'higher' standard of living as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This range of incomes occupies the ground between the life of the 'middle class' American dream and poverty... not quite poor."

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>44</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Communist Manifesto*.

concept worthy of Browder and Lovestone. For instance, the only times that blacks have been in the U.S. Senate in its history before 1967 and Edward Brooke (when rebellion was at its highest) were 1869-1871 with Hiram Revels and 1875-1881 with Blanche K. Bruce. Both were products of Reconstruction and both were from Mississippi. *There never has been another black Senator.*

From 1891 to 1945, there was only one black representative at any time in Congress at all. (Cheatam, 1891-1893; Murray, 1893-1897; White, 1897-1901.)

*From 1901 to 1929, THERE WERE NO BLACKS IN CONGRESS AT ALL!* Neither Senate nor House. From 1901 to 1943, there was only one at any time, including Depriest from 1929 to 1935 and Arthur Mitchell from 1935 to 1943.

From 1945 to 1955, there were only two, Dawson of Illinois and Powell of New York. By 1969, by adding one every two years from 1955 (Diggs, 1955; Nix, 1957; Hawkins, 1963; Conyers, 1965), there was a grand total of six, or two less than in 1875 during Reconstruction!

The first black congressman from the South since 1901 was elected in 1974! Until five years ago there were only six members of Congress and one Senator to represent over twenty million people. Most of the present sixteen members have been elected since 1969, and half since 1971! The total number of black elected officials in the United States is 3503. This total, according to the Joint Center for Political Studies, represents a 196% increase in number... since 1969! However, black people, who are 11% of the U.S. population, "continue to account for less than one percent of the more than 500,000 elected officials in the U.S." (JCPS)

Even the phrase "assimilated into the U.S. nation" conjures up the idea that somehow we are spread evenly through this nation but that is far from the truth. As we said, there are about 26 large cities (100,000 or over) with ghettos that are exact replicas of the Black Belt, where black people are found in homes that are worth on the average \$11,000, as compared with \$17,000 for the rest of the U.S., paying as rent 24% of black income compared with 6% of white income, with an infant mortality rate of 12.1% black versus 4.7% white, with an unemployment rate at least twice the official 9.2% national rate. (JCPS)

In all statistics, the late 1960s show a perceptible rise in income (based on white income, black income rose from 57.8% in 1966 to 61.3% in 1970--but by 1973 it was down to 57.7% again!), a rise in the employment rate, more new business starts, and the abovementioned flurry in electoral politics. All of this is due to the Civil Rights Movement and the thrust of the

democratic revolution that it represented. Though it was coopted by the black bourgeoisie and the ruling class tampered with it, it rose nevertheless with the rage of the working masses and culminated in the late 1960s eruption which force some change in the superstructure of U.S. society, some slight inclusion in the middle economic sector for blacks. From 1967 to 1970 there was a percentage increase of black employment versus total employment of 8.7% to 10.0%. From 1970 to 1973, however, it slopes off rapidly to 10.3%.

#### Black Managers and Professionals by Percent of Total

	<u>1967</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1973</u>
Officers, Managers	1.0	1.9	2.7
Professionals	1.8	2.5	3.2

Technicians, salesworkers and office personnel show a similar trend. These together make up (in 1970) some 18.9% of the total black work force. On the other hand, for operatives, laborers, and service workers, the heart of the black proletariat (64%), the picture is different. Operatives increase, but laborers and service workers both show *declines*:

#### Black Operatives, Laborers and Service Workers by Percent of Total

	<u>1967</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1973</u>
Operatives	11.8	14.1	15.3
Laborers	21.6	21.8	20.6
Service workers	27.2	26.3	23.9

In many cases, the most marked gains were by black women. In 1967, black men were 8.7% of the total, and by 1973 they were 9.9%, whereas black women went from 8.6% of total female employment in 1967 to 11.8% in 1973. "But in all too many cases, this simply represented the employer's way of converting previously high- or medium-paying jobs to medium- or low-paying jobs."<sup>45</sup>

This motion of reform and inclusion of blacks at white collar and selected job levels, included with the electoral movement occasioned by the legal and legislative battles of the 1950s and 1960s and the firestorms of the late 1960s, removed only the most extreme and terrorist-inspired public segregation and discrimination laws of the counter-revolution that

---

<sup>45</sup> Victor Perlo, *Economics of Racism*.

formally halted the march to bourgeois democracy in the South. It created the superstructural illusion that the bourgeois democratic revolution was carried to completion! In reality, full democratic rights have never been extended to the mass of black people. Only a working-class-led liberation struggle can totally free a nation from imperialism. The contradiction to the bourgeois democracy against which we generally struggle in the U.S. is the fact that the national oppression of the black nation and oppressed black nationality lays a double oppression on black people, a triple oppression on black women that makes black liberation a National Liberation Struggle in the Black Belt but one that takes place within the framework of a bourgeois democracy, in which blacks are a submerged oppressed nation that cannot liberate itself unless the entire framework of imperialist-monopoly capitalism is smashed throughout the United States. U.S. imperialism cannot withdraw from the Black Belt as it withdrew from Vietnam.<sup>46</sup>

The fallacy of the completion of the democratic revolution that the Civil Rights Movement purports to be is that finally there is no independence for the national bourgeoisie; there is no final control of their market; there is no real economic base yet for political equality with the U.S. nation. And there can never even be a fully formed black national bourgeoisie without the full release of the productive forces of the nation, and that could only come with the destruction of imperialism. But even then, given the leadership of the proletariat through its Communist Party, there would be no consolidation or hegemony of the national bourgeoisie, but the rapid motion toward socialism. This was Lenin's line in *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*. It was proven true then, and since in China, North Korea and South Vietnam, Cambodia, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique, etc.

What is happening is very significant; instead of national independence for the black national bourgeoisie, there is more and more competition for them coming from compradors. The absolute growth of black business since the Civil Rights Movement and the rebellions [of the 1960s] has seen the emergence of more and more compradors, suggesting not only the "discovery" of the black market by the big bourgeoisie, but since Black Liberation was not brought to its necessary resolution, i.e., black self-determination, that by now the only market that the black bourgeoisie has is more than ever accessible to the big bourgeoisie. The black bourgeoisie was always a stunted, non-industrial bourgeoisie, which

---

<sup>46</sup> See Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*, 27.

developed too late "to get in on the ground floor of modern industrial enterprise, to share the so-called benefits of free enterprise; its misfortune was that it arrived in the epoch of trusts, when the key points of the country's economic life were already dominated by big business." (Haywood) It was stunted from the jump by monopoly capitalism. The dualistic view of the national bourgeoisie is that while the democratic revolution was supposed to bring equal rights, civil rights, it also had the effect of exposing the black market to the onslaught of the big bourgeoisie, because the segregation and discrimination which gave the black bourgeoisie its market in the first place, were effectively lessened.

The modern national black bourgeoisie has even in effect abandoned its homeland in favor of trying to get a share of the urban ghetto market of the oppressed black nationality. The comprador also gives the imperialist the cover of expanding black business and political democracy as an illusion of black progress and partnership of blacks in capitalism, so-called black capitalism. More and more the trend in black business is the coming of the comprador. (See chart on p. ??)

Just as neo-colonialism is the main enemy throughout the African world, even though the struggle against colonialism is still being waged, it is true in the U.S. that the black-face agent of imperialism is now the most deadly form. Black people's relationship to the U.S. nation, in the South, in the Black Belt, and throughout the country is marked by the emergence of more and more elected officials, in the Black Belt and in the ghetto versions of the Black Belt, whose job it is to simulate black power while signalling a more sophisticated level of imperialist domination.

In fact, the nature of black submersion in North America as an oppressed nation on the same landmass as the U.S. bourgeoisie has long given rise to the tendency of the black bourgeoisie to compromise and for large sectors of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to actually aspire to become compradors, to serve imperialism, and abandon even the normal contradiction that competition for their market would bring about.

This is also true with respect to the black bourgeoisie's relationship to Africa and the West Indies. As Harry Haywood points out, "The fact is that an American imperialism has given plans for utilization of this section of the Negro bourgeoisie. It finds it essential to its strategy of world domination to hold Africa as a reserve continent" and prevent it from following Asia's example. A New York Times editorial spoke of, "Negro citizens... who can play useful roles in building bridges between the United States and Africa."

## **Communist International 1928, Africa, and the Black Nation**

The bourgeoisie seems clearly aware of Afro Americans' special relationship to Africa. The October, 1928 resolution of the Communist International took notice of this relationship to say: "The Negro question in the United States must be treated in its relation to the Negro question and struggles in other parts of the world. The Negro race everywhere is an oppressed race. Whether it is a minority (U.S.A., etc.) or a majority (South Africa) or inhabits so-called independent states (Liberia, etc.), the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism. Thus, a common tie of interest is established for the revolutionary struggle of race and national liberation from imperialist domination of the Negroes in various parts of the world. A strong Negro revolutionary movement in the U.S.A. will be able to influence... and direct the revolutionary movement in all those parts of the world where the Negroes are oppressed by imperialism."

Obviously, attempts to liquidate this special relationship of history, heritage, culture, politics and emotion, is only a further liquidation of the national question itself. The lie that there is no Afro American nation, that blacks are totally assimilated or integrated into the United States nation, and also have no special relationship to Africa, exactly like the rest of the United States nation, is finally to reduce the black connection to Africa to one of moral outrage at its exploitation. It is similar to the watering down of the national oppression of black people to racism, and making racism merely the feeling that one people is superior to another. This feeling is white chauvinism, which is a justification for racism, and racism is the method by which fascism will be brought to the United States wrapped in the American flag. But black oppression is at base caused by the domination of the black nation by imperialism. Its reflection in the rest of the United States is powerlessness and substandard, inferior living conditions militarily enforced by the state. Chauvinism believes that blacks are substandard, inferior, and need to remain powerless. Racism is the apparatus by which they are to be kept that way. The root of these is national oppression, which is domination by imperialism. ("The material base of chauvinism is imperialism", Lenin, *The Collapse of the Second International*.)

"The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists in one of the numerous branches of industry, in one of the numerous countries, etc., makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers; and for a time, a fairly considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry *or given nation against all others*. The intensification of antagonisms between the



imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this urge. And so there is created that bond between imperialism and opportunism." (V.I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*.)

The fact that blacks are identifiable as members of an imprisoned nation maintains their national oppression wherever they are, which is a means of superexploitation by class and race (national oppression). The race allows the national oppression to continue outside of the nation itself, as blacks are grouped together in ghettos which duplicate the poverty and isolation from the rest of America that the Black Belt exhibits.

The revisionists see the black liberation struggle as merely a moral struggle against racism, as the question of the immorality of racism having to be destroyed, which is actually to reduce and dilute the question. *The National Question is one of power*.

### **Black Power and Self-Determination**

The 1928 and 1930 Comintern documents and the 1930 position of the CPUSA are eminently useful. They set the correct Communist line on the Black National Question in the United States, which, despite the normal changes created by the passage of time that must be addressed (for instance, most farmers are now farm laborers, increasing the proletarian character of the Afro American nation), are clearly still valid and revolutionary today.

The recognition of the Black National Question as a national question and not a race question was revolutionary, because it raised the question of Power, not a muted plea to pollyanna humanism, etc. As the Resolution of the Communist International on the Negro Question in the United States said, "The Communist Party of the United States has always acted openly and energetically against Negro oppression and has thereby won sympathy among the Negro population. In its own ranks, too, the Party has relentlessly fought the slightest evidences of white chauvinism, and has purged itself of the gross opportunism of the Lovestonites. According to the assertions of these people, the 'Industrial Revolution' will sweep away the remnants of slavery in the agricultural South, and will proletarianize the Negro peasantry, so that the Negro question as a special national question would thereby be presumably solved, or could be put off until the time of socialist revolution in America... In the interest of the utmost clarity of ideas on this question, the Negro question in the United States must be viewed from the standpoint of its peculiarity; namely, as the question of an oppressed nation, which is a peculiar and extraordinarily distressing

situation of national oppression not only in view of the prominent racial distinctions (color of skin, etc.), but above all because of considerable racial antagonism (remnants of slavery)... The struggle of the Communists for the equal rights of the Negroes applies to all Negroes, in the North as well as in the South, where the main Communist slogan must be: 'The Right of Self-Determination of the Negroes in the Black Belt.' These two slogans, however, are closely connected. The Negroes in the North are very much interested in winning the right of self-determination of the Negro population of the Black Belt and can, thereby, hope for strong support for the establishment of true equality of Negroes in the North. In the South, the Negroes are suffering no less, but still more than the Negroes in the North, from the glaring lack of all equality; for the most part the struggle for their most urgent partial demands in the Black Belt is nothing more than the struggle for their equal rights, and only the fulfillment of their main slogan, the right of self-determination in the Black Belt, can assure them of true equality... The demand for equal rights, in our sense of the word, means not only the same rights for the Negroes as the Whites have in the United States at the present time, but also demanding that the Negroes should be granted all rights and other advantages which we demand for the corresponding oppressed classes of whites (workers and other toilers). Thus in our sense of the word, the demand for equal rights means a continuous work of abolishment of all forms of social and political oppression of the Negroes, as well as their social exclusion, the insults perpetrated against them and their segregation... It is the special duty of the revolutionary Negro workers to carry on tireless activity among the Negro working masses to free them of their distrust of the White proletariat and draw them into the common front of the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie... They must ruthlessly unmask all Negro politicians corrupted or directly bribed by American bourgeois ideology, who systematically interfere with the real proletarian struggle for equal rights for the Negroes."

### **Self-determination in the Black Belt**

The Black Belt is the geographical site of the black nation and the heartland of the oppressed black nationality throughout the United States. The depression of the ghettos is linked directly to the domination and depression in the Black Belt, the anchor of oppression. The view of national revolution in the Black Belt is still valid and the cry, "Self-Determination, Liberation for the Black Nation," speaks not only to the Black Belt and its

related border areas, but to the national consciousness of black people throughout the United States. The struggle for equal rights or democratic rights in the United States nation is linked to the national oppression of the Black Belt, and as the Communist International states, the two struggles for democratic rights and self-determination must be linked together because they are part of one struggle. It is exactly why the Black Liberation Movement takes on and has always taken on a distinct national character. There is no doubt that the call for self-determination weakens imperialism. The national character of black people in the United States is still so tightly formed that Self-Determination and Liberation of the Black Nation speaks directly to them. The largest movement of black people in the U.S., the Nation of Islam, until recently made self-determination of the Black Belt their cry for thirty years.

There seems little doubt that increased presence and organizing in the South, particularly in the Black Belt nation homeland, is called for. The line calling for self-determination for the Afro-American or Black Nation is a revolutionary call for democratic rights. Not only did Lenin, the Communist International, and Stalin, make this call, and the CPUSA, before it degenerated, but all genuine communists must uphold this call. Various Black Nationalist and revolutionary organizations have made this call, demonstrating the revolutionary thrust of oppressed nations and the people in the fight against imperialism.

In the North we are speaking of an unassimilated proletariat that has been among the most active bases of the multinational proletariat. The C.I. document is clear when it says that, "The struggle for equal rights and the propaganda for the slogan of self-determination must be linked up with the economic demands of the Negro masses."

The cry for self-determination, liberation of the black nation, upholds the revolutionary thrust of the black liberation movement. The demands of the C.I. still seem relevant, no matter how many of the black peasants have been transformed into the rural proletariat as farm laborers and migrant laborers. (In 1959, 7.7% of all farm laborers were black, as compared to 14% in 1920. By 1969 this had fallen further to 3.8%)

A demand for self-determination of the Black Belt in the 1928 Comintern Resolution stated: "a. *Confiscation of the property of the white landowners and capitalists for the benefit of the Negro farmers.*" Now we are talking directly to capitalist farming industry, agribusiness, which has driven even small white farmers off their land. The land was never divided from the latifundist capitalist stage, for the most part when the transfer of

ownership went north to the monopolists. They kept increasing their land holdings, and the agribusiness monopolies were added to the others, so that today, "One percent of America's farms produce 25% of the nation's food. Eight percent of the farms account for more than one half of the agricultural sales. These farms are run by corporate farmers, big corporations such as Dow Chemical, Southern Pacific Railroad, and Tenneco."<sup>47</sup> Of course, state-owned and cooperative large-scale farming are methods of Socialism, but "dividing" the land is the thrust of democracy on the way to Socialism, as democracy as such is a prerequisite to socialism. In the same sense, Black Liberation cannot be seen as a bloodless "gift of socialism," though socialism obviously will be a condition for complete liberation.

The aim of socialism is not only to end the division of mankind into tiny states and the isolation of nations in any form; it is not only to bring the nations closer together, but to integrate them. And it is precisely to achieve this aim that we must, on the one hand, explain to the masses the reactionary nature of Renner and Otto Bauer's idea of so-called "cultural and national autonomy," and on the other, demand the liberation of oppressed nations in a clearly and precisely formulated political program that takes special account of the hypocrisy and cowardice of socialists in the oppressor nations, and not in empty declamations and not by way of 'relegating' the question until socialism has been achieved.

In the same way that mankind can arrive at the abolition of classes only through a transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through the transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede.<sup>48</sup>

The motive of black struggle is Black Liberation, but we must relate it directly to Socialist Revolution, so that land division is the democratic thrust which is the first motion of voluntary socialist union. Failure to want to break up huge capitalist farms for peasants constitutes "Imperialist Economism"... and neglects the stage of democracy--the other demands of Self-Determination of the Black Belt that the 1928 document spoke to: "b.

---

<sup>47</sup> Foodprice Blackmail/United Front

<sup>48</sup> V.I. Lenin, "Socialist Revolution and Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, v. 22, 146.

*Establishment of the state unit of the Black Belt* [which meant 'the bringing together into one governmental unit of all districts of the South where the majority of the settled population consists of Negroes' as the unit of state power]; c. *Right of Self-Determination*. This means complete and unlimited right of the Negro majority to exercise governmental authority in the entire territory of the Black Belt as well as to decide upon the relations between their territory and other nations, particularly the United States."

Self-determination has been roundly misinterpreted by a host of opportunists and chauvinists. But Self-Determination means just that, the right to decide. "This is the meaning of self-determination: that the Negro people, in full possession of their homeland, have the right to decide the political future of that area."<sup>49</sup>

Lenin has said, and Stalin, that a nation has the right of Self-Determination up to and including Secession. But that secession itself was to be decided by the people according to the context. The ultra-"left" Communist League<sup>50</sup> says that Self-Determination and Secession, or as they say, "Independence", is the same thing. But it is not. Self-Determination is the right to decide. Perhaps the decision will be regional autonomy, regional control by the black masses in the area of the lower South. But Self-Determination is not automatically secession, otherwise there would be no need to use both terms. But without the right to secession, Self-Determination is a sham.

The chauvinist "Revolutionary Communist" Party, on the other hand, takes Self-Determination to be secession, but for the opposite end, saying that "Lenin and Stalin insisted that when the national question is an 'internal state problem,' when there is the direct possibility of a single proletarian revolution throughout the entire state [country], the right of self-determination was a negative demand."<sup>51</sup> But no such meaning can be gained from Lenin and Stalin, except by chauvinists! It was secession that would, under such circumstances, be deemed negative, but never Self-Determination! Failure to support the right of Self-Determination was to them to be a "scoundrel and an imperialist"; and the Social Democrat (i.e., communist) that failed to support this right must be treated as such, said

---

<sup>49</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*.

<sup>50</sup> Now "Communist" Labor "Party", an opportunist group calling itself a party which has swept from "left" revisionism to right revisionism.

<sup>51</sup> *Red Papers*, No. 5.

Lenin. "The right of nations to self-determination means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free, political secession from the oppressing nation... Consequently, this demand is by no means identical with the demand for secession, for partition, for the formation of small states. It is merely the logical expression of the struggle against national oppression in every form."<sup>52</sup>

The Communist International document makes the same distinction. "In particular, some misunderstandings have arisen from the failure to make a clear distinction between the demand 'right of self-determination' and the demand for governmental separation, simply treating these two demands in the same way. However, these two demands are not identical. Complete right of self-determination includes also the right to governmental separation, but does not necessarily imply that the Negro population should make use of this right in all circumstances, that is, that it must actually separate or attempt to separate the Black Belt from the existing governmental federation with the United States. If it desires to separate, it must be free to do so; but if it prefers to remain federated with the United States, it must also be free to do that. This is the correct meaning of the idea of self-determination, and it must be recognized quite independently of whether the United States is still a capitalist state or whether a proletarian dictatorship is already established there."

The document goes on to say, and again flies in the face of the assimilationist Lovestone-Browderites and petty bourgeois socialists, "If the proletariat has come into power in the United States, the Communist Negroes will not come out for but against separation of the Negro Republic from federation with the United States, but the right of the Negroes to governmental separation will be unconditionally recognized by the Communist Party; it will unconditionally give the Negro population of the Black Belt freedom of choice on this question. Only when the proletariat has come into power in the United States, the Communists will carry on propaganda among the working masses of the Negro population against separation, in order to convince them that it is much better and in the interest of the Negro Nation for the Black Belt to be a free republic, where the Negro majority has complete right of self-determination but remains governmentally federated with the great proletarian republic of the United States... *But the question at the present time is not this. As long as capitalism rules in the United States, the Communists **cannot** come out*

---

<sup>52</sup> *Lenin on the National and Colonial Questions*, 5.

*against governmental separation of the Negro zone from the United States."* [Emphasis added.]

As long as capitalism rules in the United States, communists cannot come out against separation; but at the same time, this does not mean that communists support reactionary bourgeois separatist schemes. What is clear is that it is the right of self-determination that is upheld at all costs, and that it is an error, as the document suggests, to think that the right of self-determination is revolutionary only if it means separation. The right to exercise state power over the area by the black majority is truly revolutionary. But in our current political work, we must also stress that regional autonomy has been a successful method of resolving the relationship of liberated nations within a multinational socialist state, but certainly voluntary union with the United States nation under the dictatorship of the proletariat. *In any view, the liberation of the Black Belt before the proletarian revolution of the United States nation would cause that revolution; likewise, the proletarian revolution of the United States would cause the liberation of the black nation.* We fight for the union of those struggles--Liberation of the Black Nation/Socialist Revolution, Democratic Rights/Self-Determination/Socialist Revolution! We push, in essence, the old slogan, "Revolutionary struggle against the ruling white bourgeois through a fighting alliance with the revolutionary white proletariat and all oppressed people."

The statement of the Communist International of 1928 says that, "The Negro working class has reached a stage of development which enables it, if properly organized and well led, to fulfill successfully its double historical mission: (a) to play a considerable role in the class struggle against imperialism as an important part of the American working class; and (b) to lead the movement of the oppressed masses of the Negro population." And this brings us exactly into our present time.

One main struggle that we have touched on before that plagued the CPUSA then, and was spoken to in detail, was the question of white chauvinism. It still plagues us in our need to build a multinational communist party. This chauvinism, of which the material base is imperialism, has caused those all around us to liquidate the true black national struggle, a critical link between the black masses and Socialist Revolution. The question of Self-Determination is that of the recognition of the struggle for the liberation of the black nation, the relation to the struggle for democratic rights of the black oppressed nationality, and the overall struggle for socialism. It is the active struggle for an end to its national oppression (and its economic superexploitation) which makes the black

proletariat a leading force in the thrust for Socialist Revolution. And this national oppression leads directly to the struggle for the liberation of the Black Belt Nation.

It is the question of self-determination that plagues black people, in the face of chauvinism from "friends," national oppression and racism from imperialism, and the "double consciousness" of cultural aggression suffered by some petty bourgeois black socialists. The Black Liberation Movement is not just a struggle against racism, it is a struggle for power! This is the validity of Black Power, and we go backwards if we think that cries for black power are reactionary. What is reactionary is not to see that it is only the defeat of imperialism that can bring Black Power!

Haywood puts it like this:

Even with the elimination of legal discrimination and the abolition of exploitation, the historically-formed inequality--the economic and cultural disparity between Negro and white--will not disappear with one blow; the age-old rancor of the oppressed Negro people will not disappear, nor will the deeply-ingrained white chauvinism among the white masses. The Negro masses in the Deep South must have guarantees in the concrete form of political power to protect their equality. It is impossible for the working class in the United States to organize an effective revolutionary movement and advance to Socialism without fighting for full freedom for the Negro Nation in the Deep South; that is, to determine their own fate... They will have both the right and the means (the state apparatus) to determine their future relations with the United States nation.<sup>53</sup>

We must show that the Black Liberation Movement, in all aspects, is part of the struggle to make proletarian revolution. The call for self-determination of the Afro-American nation is a part not only of the struggle of oppressed nations and peoples against imperialism, which is the motor of revolution around the world, but is part of the international proletarian revolution. That is, in order to liberate the black nation and win democratic rights for blacks anywhere in the United States, there must be a Socialist Revolution made by the multinational working class. We must not make Black Liberation an "automaton of socialism," that is, incorrectly imply that there is no need to struggle for Black Liberation, as revisionists say, because the *only* struggle is for socialist revolution. Genuine communists

---

<sup>53</sup> Haywood, *Revolutionary Position*.



know that the struggle to liberate the black nation *is a part* of the struggle to destroy capitalism and build socialism, *and it must not be liquidated*. Narrow nationalists accuse us of asking "for black people to wait for everybody else" before black people make revolution. The fact is that the *only* revolution that can be made in the United States will be the result of the construction of a multinational revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Party to guide the multinational proletariat and the working masses in socialist revolution.

Our Concerns Then Can Be Reduced to These:

1. *The Afro American National Question must be seen in the context of our central task of this period, Party Building*. It is a key question that must be solved correctly in order that the black sector of the proletariat and advanced elements of the black nation and black oppressed nationality be drawn into the new Marxist-Leninist Communist Party. Historically, an incorrect position on the Afro American National Question has blatantly contributed to the degeneration of would-be Communist movements.

It is critical that we have propaganda and agitation that put out the correct communist line on the Afro American National Question.

2. *Black People are an oppressed Black Nation whose land base is the Black Belt South*. Everywhere in the United States they are an oppressed nationality. We struggle for Liberation of the Black Nation and Socialist Revolution. We are Marxist-Leninists whose ideology is Marxism-Leninism Mao Tse Tung Thought.

3. *The Black Nation has not been "assimilated" into the United States Nation and will not be assimilated under capitalism*. Assimilation through the productive forces of imperialism is the program of the bourgeoisie, black and white, and the revisionists.

4. *Both the black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie have a dual character. National oppression makes sectors of both of them potential allies under certain conditions, though more and more the black bourgeoisie is becoming comprador in character*. We will unite with the progressive sector of the petty bourgeoisie, influence the middle sector, and relentlessly expose and attack the reactionary sector which serves the bourgeoisie.

We should also conduct a "carefully worked out" campaign against the petty bourgeois preacher-agents of imperialism as suggested by the

Comintern in the 1928 document.

5. *It is urgent that we also begin work in the Black Belt.* We must work along a set of planned actions to promote the process of building of a multi-national vanguard party, waging unyielding struggle against opportunism, especially chauvinism and narrow nationalism around the Afro American National Question, polemicize against incorrect party-building efforts of both the right, which, like the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and the October League (OL), is the main danger, and the "left", such as the "dangerous duo" (Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers' Organization and Revolutionary Workers' League).

6. *We recognize that black people in the USA have a special relationship to Africa, and we will continue to do much political and mass work, propaganda and agitation around African Liberation.* We will continue to make the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) [split and disappeared ca. 1978] viable again, struggling against the "left" liquidationist sectarianism of the Revolutionary Wing (PRRWO and RWL) and the right danger inside the ALSC as well.

We must also continue to reflect the fact that the struggle between imperialism and the people is the principal contradiction in the world today, and the motor driving revolution around the world, particularly the peoples and nations of the Third World. The Afro American Nation in the United States is part of that struggle against imperialism, which adds another revolutionary dimension to the key role of the black proletariat's struggle, along with the rest of the multinational proletariat, against U.S. capital. We must make it clear that the two superpowers are the main enemy of African Liberation and that Soviet Social Imperialism [ca. 1975] is the main danger to the independence of the Third World and the peoples of the world at this time, and represents the main danger of war in the world today. We must also point out the dangers of neo-colonialism as a growing form of imperialism in Africa.

7. *Our slogans must touch the thrust for equal rights and self-determination, but seek to join the Black Liberation Movement with the movement for proletarian revolution.* We should not make Black Liberation appear as an "automaton of socialism." The struggle for Black Liberation is a part of the struggle for Socialist Revolution.

Our slogans are:

"Self-Determination for the Afro-American Nation"

"Liberation for the Afro American Nation in the Black Belt South"

"Democratic Rights and Self-Determination"

"Equal Rights and Self-Determination"

"Black Liberation and Socialist Revolution"

*We emphasize continuously the struggle for national liberation as the Black Nation's path into the struggle for Socialist Revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

## Definitions and Appendices

### Comprador Bourgeoisie

The comprador bourgeoisie (from the Spanish word "comprador," one who sells), in contrast to the national bourgeoisie, has essentially no competitive relationship to the overall bourgeois class. Booker T. Washington reflects this common interest on a number of occasions and was sternly and consistently opposed by the national bourgeois wing represented by W.E.B. DuBois. Washington said, in a speech to the Century Club in Indiana, "To right his wrongs, the Russian appeals to dynamite, Americans to rebellion, the Irish to agitation, the Indian to his tomahawk; but the Negro, the most patient, the most unresentful and law-abiding, depends for the righting of his wrongs upon his songs, his midnight prayers, his inherent faith in the justice of his cause." Washington called upon the ex-slaves to be obedient: "There is no better test by which you can judge of a person's culture, civilization, or whatever else you may call it, so quickly and so accurately as the way in which that person respects authority and obeys orders."--Sunday Evening Tuskegee Talks.

### Revisionism

Revisionism is the theory of opportunists who claim to be Marxists but actually cut the revolutionary essence out of Marxism, namely, proletarian revolution--violent overthrow of the bourgeois ruling class--and the dictatorship of the proletariat (absolute control over society by the working class). "On the plea of 'freedom to criticize' Marx, it demanded a revision of the Marxist doctrine (hence the term 'revisionism'); it demanded renunciation of the revolution, of Socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>54</sup>

Revisionism is based on imperialism, and as the Chinese comrades point out, "For revisionism to become an international phenomenon, Lenin pointed out, its economic base is 'precisely the parasitism and decay of capitalism.' As a result of the daily ripening revolutionary crisis, the monopoly-capitalist class is bound to leave no stone unturned in sabotaging the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. And the

---

<sup>54</sup> *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, 1939 edition, p. 37.

superprofits grabbed by monopoly capital of a few big countries through exploitation and plunder of the world make it possible to bribe the labor leaders and the upper stratum of the labor aristocracy. This bourgeoisified privileged stratum is the main prop of revisionism, the watchdog of the capitalist and the corrupter of the workers' movement.

"Judged from its birth and its growth, revisionism did not emerge by chance but was a product of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. Revisionism is the inevitable concomitant of imperialism."<sup>55</sup>

Revisionism is now centered in the Soviet Union where it holds state power. It is the main danger in the revolutionary movement today, mainly because a revisionist clique led by Khrushchev, and later by Brezhnev, restored capitalism in the Soviet Union after the death of Comrade Stalin. This turned the Soviet Union from the stronghold of socialism into a Social Imperialist country (socialism in words but imperialism in deeds.) The restoration of capitalism serves as the material basis for social-imperialism.<sup>56</sup> It is also pushed throughout the world by various revisionist parties, the main bandit in the United States being the CPUSA.

### American Exceptionalism

This is a revisionist theory put forth by the leaders of the CPUSA in the late 1920s. This theory says that American capitalism has particular features that make it different from capitalism elsewhere, that it is still in its young and vigorous "free enterprise" stage and has not reached its monopoly stage. Therefore there could be a peaceful transition to socialism by the extension of democracy throughout the country by raising the level of the productive forces. This line pushes a position that American capitalism does not fall under the general analysis of capitalism and imperialism by Marx and Lenin. But, as Comrade Stalin pointed out, "the foundation of the activities of every communist party... on which it must base itself, must be the general features of capitalism which are the same for all countries."

---

<sup>55</sup> *Social Imperialism*, 3.

<sup>56</sup> Today, in 1992, we see the complete overthrow of even the pretensions of socialism in the USSR. Gorbachev was the ultimate betrayer of the Soviet people, delivering the USSR up to world imperialism.

(Stalin, *Speeches on the American Communist Party.*)

## Fascism

Fascism is "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, the most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital... Fascism is the power of finance capital itself. It is the organization of terrorist vengeance against the working class and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and the intelligentsia. In foreign policy, fascism is jingoism in its most brutal form, fomenting bestial hatred of other nations." - Dimitrov, *United Front Against Fascism.*

## The United Front Against Fascism, and the United Front Against Imperialism

One of the fundamental contradictions under imperialism is the struggle between the imperialists themselves for control of the world. This struggle always leads to a struggle among them for a redivision of the world. During the 1930s the rise of fascism in Europe as the domestic form of rule of some capitalist countries, particularly Germany and Italy, accelerated the contradictions between the imperialists and brought the world to the doorstep of World War II.

Fascism demanded of the working class that it develop new tactics. These tactics were laid out by Comrade Dimitrov in his report to the Communist International in 1935. In his report he called for an international united front against fascism, led by the working class in alliance with the other democratic classes, to crush the fascist offensive. It should be noted that the United Front Against Fascism is a defensive formation that the proletariat uses to protect itself and the democratic forces in society as a last resort.

The United Front Against Imperialism is an offensive formation that the proletariat uses as an aid to its liberation in the class struggle with the bourgeoisie. See G. Dimitrov, *United Front Against War and Fascism.*

Actually, the United Front Against Imperialism is a more advanced united front since it does not include conservative sectors of the petty bourgeoisie. The United Front Against Fascism is the broadest, hence the least advanced united front that the proletariat can participate in. It includes *all* sectors of the population who will unite against fascism.

## Segregation

Segregation is the forcible restriction of people to certain areas or to certain goods and services. Segregation is a violation of democratic rights because it denies (through force, law, tricks, etc.) people full and equal access to all areas of the society.

## Democratic Rights

Democracy is a form of state power used by the class in power to maintain its rule over the society. In a "democratic" republic, democratic rights are the rights that all of the people are supposed to have under that form of government. The "Civil Rights" Movement was a struggle for black people to gain democratic rights, e.g., the right to vote, equal access, etc., i.e., full citizenship.

But we must understand that democracy is a form of state rule. As Comrade Stalin said, "Under capitalism the exploited masses do not, nor can they ever, really participate in governing the country, if for no other reason than that, even under the most democratic regime under the conditions of capitalism, governments are not set up by the people but by the Rothschilds and the Stinesses, the Rockefellers and Morgans. Democracy under capitalism is capitalist democracy, the democracy of the exploiting minority, based on the restriction of the rights of the exploited majority and directed against this majority. Only under the proletarian dictatorship are real liberties for the exploited and real participation of the proletarians and peasants in governing the country possible. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, democracy is proletarian democracy, the democracy of the exploited majority, based on the restriction of the rights of the exploiting minority and directed against this minority." (Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 47.)

## Integration

In America, "integration" has been the way that the just demands of black people for equality and democracy have been co-opted by the bourgeoisie (mainly the imperialist bourgeoisie, but usually voiced in the

black nation by the comprador black bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.) The illusion of "integration" that is pushed has usually only been extended to the upper classes of the black community, the upper petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie. But the majority of the black masses, the black proletariat and peasantry, remain segregated and separated as a method of continuation of the superexploitation of black people. This is exactly why "integration" is impossible under imperialism. "Integration" has been used to water down the black national liberation struggle and characterize it as a struggle for acceptance into American bourgeois society, weakening the black political base and thus denying the struggle for self-determination. "Integration" tends to gloss over the superexploitation of the black nation and oppressed nationality, usually to a "moral appeal" for "acceptance." In this way it destroys the call for democracy as a reform used to make revolution, and turns the struggle for "integration" into a struggle for reform for reform.

As Communists we are for the voluntary union of the proletariat of all nationalities based on a common struggle against imperialism, and for a new socialist economic order in the United States and the world, under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

### Self-Determination

Self-determination is the right of nations to decide their own destiny. This is a democratic and political right; it includes also the right to political secession. Self-determination for oppressed nations is a major demand of the proletariat. Oppressed nations have the right, and through national liberation struggles and wars, achieve the power to decide their own destiny. Only by recognizing this right and concretely supporting the struggles of oppressed nations can the proletariat of the oppressor nation have principled unity with the proletariat of the oppressed nation in the common struggle against imperialism. (For further reading see *Lenin on the National and Colonial Questions*.)

### Regional Autonomy

This is a form of government control that oppressed nations can choose under socialism. Under regional autonomy the former oppressed nation decides to stay connected to the former oppressor nation, in the



same state on the basis of voluntary union. But the administrative control of the territory is in the hands of the former oppressed people as a part of the overall dictatorship of the proletariat.

### Independence

Independence is political and economic freedom as a separate state from imperialist oppressor nations.

### Peonage

Peonage is a system of forced labor where people are forced into servitude in order to pay off debts. This practice is a holdover from the feudal period. A whole system of peonage with laws and procedures, etc., developed in the South after the Civil War and Reconstruction in order to force black people back into a position of slavery. (See Haywood, *Negro Liberation*, 40-43.)

### Colony

A colony is a separate conquered territory that is economically and politically annexed by an imperialist state, but where the politics and economics are not in the hands of local capitalists, but are controlled by the imperialist colonizer. The territory serves as a source of raw materials for imperialism, and the people serve as a source of cheap labor. Thus the people are superexploited and the imperialist is able to extract superprofits from the colonies.

### Superstructure

The superstructure of society is the various views and doctrines manifested in political and social institutions, and those institutions that arise from the economic base, and that help to perpetuate that base. This includes religion, philosophy, schools, media, etc. (See Lenin, *Karl Marx*.)

## Liquidation of the Communist Party of the USA

In January of 1944, the American Communist Party under the leadership of the revisionist traitor Earl Browder, was dissolved and replaced with the Communist Political Association. This was done in accordance with the revisionist line of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The Party was reconstituted in June, 1945, and Earl Browder was expelled along with a host of other opportunists. However, the Party never really recovered from this and was to become in form and in essence a revisionist party in 1957, at its 16th Convention.

## Sharecroppers Union

The Sharecroppers Union was a union of black sharecroppers in the South, with poor white farmers, that was organized and led by the Communists in the 1930s. The Sharecroppers Union was one of the first Communist-led organizations of this type in the South that gave organization and protection to blacks, who had been unorganized until that time. As a result of the successful organizing and leadership of the Sharecroppers Union, many blacks were won to the side of Communism. But because of the revisionism and chauvinism that was to grip the CPUSA, many blacks were driven from the Party. The revisionism of the CPUSA led to its own dismantling, and also led the Party to break up the militant, fighting Sharecroppers Union.

Selected Statistics by Geographic Division for  
Minority-Owned Business: Black

<u>Region</u>	<u>Firms</u>	<u>Gross (\$1000)</u>	<u>Firms w/ Employees</u>	<u>Total Employed</u>
S. Atlantic	54,510	1,770,923	9,194	55,267
East N. Central	34,563	1,510,329	6,428	38,571
Mid Atlantic	28,099	1,066,138	4,498	24,078
West S. Central	26,779	917,522	3,877	23,955
Pacific	20,912	766,238	2,986	20,775
New England	3,512	125,630	622	3,890
Mountain	2,487	105,548	429	4,158
Unspecified Area	2,125	46,967	59	365
Total U.S.	194,986	7,168,491	31,893	196,596

## FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT

As has been pointed out by Lenin, "The state is an arm of the class in power which is used through its various machinery (laws, courts, legislatures, etc.) to suppress another class." Since the Civil War, the class in power has been, and is, the bourgeoisie, primarily the Northeastern industrial monopoly capitalists--Rockefellers, Morgans, Vanderbilts, Carnegies, etc.

Originally, when the Constitution was drawn up, its provisions protected the large property owners of the SLAVERY system. The Constitution declared: "the Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all of the Privileges or Immunities of Citizens in the several States." During the Industrial Revolution in 1819 (the rise of the Northeastern industrial capitalists), Supreme Court Justice Marshall ruled that, "*a corporation--as an artificial person (a Citizen as defined in the Constitution)--could not be artificially prevented from doing business or deprived of its property.*" The clause "deprived of its property" meant and means that the courts and Federal, State, or municipal governments could not prevent the capitalists' businesses, or at that time the Slavocrats, from setting prices that would guarantee them profits.

Prior to the Civil War the capitalists did not have the political power that they needed to control and expand. The Slavocrats, who were then the class in power, regarded property in land as more valuable and worthy of protection than that of the merchants, bankers, and manufacturers. Therefore the Slavocrats used the governmental machinery to suppress the rising new ruling class and primarily, the peasant farmers. But after the victory of the Northeastern industrial capitalists in the Civil War, all branches of the State came under their control. They constructed the Republican Party for the sole purpose of suppressing the Slavocrats, and fundamentally to guarantee their own economic expansion. The Republican Party passed the Tariff Act, the Homestead Act, and the National Bank Act as well as the Fourteenth Amendment--all furthered the expansion of the capitalists and legalized it.

The Fourteenth Amendment, termed by some bourgeois historians as "the Magna Carta of the business corporations", was originally added to the Constitution in 1868 in order *to protect the rights of Afro Americans* freed from plantation slavery only to be forced into industrial wage slavery. The Amendment declared in its first section that *no state shall "deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law."*

In a series of Supreme Court cases beginning in 1886 and

culminating in Smyth v. Ames in 1898, a business interpretation was added. In these cases the Supreme Court attributed a capitalist meaning to the phrase "due process" which had originally been intended to prevent any confiscation of black people's property or any other arbitrary violation of human rights. "Due process" was extended to prevent any regulation that might prevent a corporation from making profits.

Thus, the right of property no longer meant only the right of the corporation/citizen not to be deprived of tangible possessions such as land during the dictatorship of the Slavocrats as defined in the agrarian Eighteenth Century, or the protection of the rights of black people as in the Reconstruction period. But, as in accordance with the *capitalist dictatorship*, it included the right of a corporation/citizen to make a profit from its properties by engaging in business, and that profits are more valuable and worthy of protection. Between 1890 and 1910 (following the destruction of the Reconstruction governments, the beginning of Ku Klux Klan terror, and the migration northward), there were 528 cases which involved the Fourteenth Amendment, *of which 289 referred to corporations and only 19 to the violation of black people's rights.*

## Southern Poverty Statistics<sup>57</sup>

Among eleven Southern states<sup>58</sup> selected (Confederate states), two out of three black female headed families were poor<sup>59</sup>, while one out of ten white male headed families were poor. Over one half of the black families in rural Southern areas were poor compared with 17% for rural Southern white families. Of the working poor of family heads who were high school graduates, over one half of black females were poor compared with only 4% of white males. Over one third of poor white women had high school diplomas or more education; of white males, one fourth; of black females, one sixth; and of black males only one tenth. One fourth of white families headed by an elderly person were poor and over one half of similar black families. Of the elderly, unattached to families, 50% of whites and 70% of blacks were poor.

Over one third of Southern Social Security recipients remain poor. Black recipients were especially impoverished in Mississippi, Arkansas, and South Carolina where at least two thirds were poor. Nine percent of the white elderly and 23% of the black elderly in the South were poor and yet did not receive Social Security benefits. About one half of all poor families headed by females and one third of poor families headed by males live at less than one half of the poverty level. This includes 3.25 million family members, of whom 1.7 were black.

---

<sup>57</sup> Reference: *The Other 20%: A Statistical Analysis of Poverty in the South*, Gretchen MacLachlan.

<sup>58</sup> Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia.

<sup>59</sup> The poverty population of those whose income in 1969 fell below poverty level. The basis is the Department of Agriculture Food Plan which is designed for "emergency or temporary use when funds are low." The poverty line for non-farm families of four with a male head was \$3,745 in 1969.