100 years after the emancipation proclamation

AMERICAN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL

The Negro as Touchstone of History

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A statement by the National Editorial Board of News & Letters
AMERICAN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL
BLACK MASSES AS VANGUARD

With a new section:
"BLACK CAUCUSES IN THE UNIONS"

A Statement by the National Editorial Board of News & Letters
Philosophy and Revolution
By Rayn Dunayevskaya

Part I Why Hegel? Why Now?
Hegel; Marx; Lenin

Part II Alternatives
Trotsky; Mao; Sartre

Part III Economic Reality and The Dialectics of Liberation
Africa; East Europe; the U.S.
With Excerpts from Marx's Grundrisse as Appendix
Introduction to the Third Edition
August, 1970

American Civilization on Trial, when it was first published in 1967, was a response to the events of the Freedom Proclamation, was the only statement of the movement that upheld the principles that had been proclaimed black masses as cosmic which had been put white labor in mass production to the test.

Where others praised the liberalism of the Kennedy Administration in supporting the struggle for civil rights, we blamed J.F.K. to the kind "a rope gives ahanding man." We complained that it was not too far distant from that of George Wallace who had just become Governor of that "magnolia jungle" which views with South Africa in the scene of racism on this side of the diamond nursery.

As against the silly-shuffling and silly-dallying which has always characterized white rulers, even of the type of Thomas Jefferson, we printed in a center of the black renaissance in Boston, David Walker, who challenged the author of the Declaration of Independence for his statement that the color black, was "unfortunate," by declaring: "My color will yet reappear, some day out of the very earth!"

Moreover, the Negro, as touchstone of American History, had also earned a two-way road to the African Revolution as against the triangular trade of rum, molasses and slaves that characterized capitalism in the past.

The Nixon-Kissinger Administration in heightening the war at home and abroad, by the extension of Johnson's war in South Vietnam to Cambodia, and the massacres of anti-Vietnam war protesters and blacks in the Watts, Jackson, Miss., area, has brought our nation to the edge of civil war and counter-revolution. It is time the initiative returned from the hands of the counter-revolutionaries to the Freedom Fighters.

The deepening struggles during the seven years that have intervened between the first edition of American Civilization on Trial, and this, its third edition, have placed a new urgency on our 1963 publication:

"Above all, we hold fast to the one-ness and the new Humanism, a sliver of light, from the East German workers in the West Virginian coal mines; from the Chinese revolutionaries in the Mongolian ski boycott; as well as from the North Carolina Sharecroppers to the African Freedom Fighters. The elements of the new society, submerged the world over, but by the logic of capital, are emerging in all quarters. The unique experience of the past, the movement from practice with the movement from theory into an overall philosophy that can form the foundation of a truly new order.

The eruptions throughout the length and breadth of our nation in the year 1967, were totally spontaneous, and spoke in such clearer terms than any other which the black masses would no longer tolerate their inhuman ghetto life; that they would speak to "whitey" in the only language he understands - by fire, that they would translate "black power" from a mere slogan to an unquenchable force. Whitey and the message of the black masses on the streets all over are being absorbed by the black masses as never before. They proceeded to search for a total philosophy on their own.

In this we called together the Third Red Conference in Miami, Havana, Dakar, and the Women's Liberation Movement, (see Notes on Women's Liberation: We Speak in Many Voices) to the whole generation of revolutionaries searching for a total philosophy of revolution.

As a step toward that end, we reproduce this third expanded edition of American Civilization on Trial, which includes as an Appendix an article on black capitalists, by Charles Foster, an article produced by our black production worker editor, Charles Denny. We are now in the task of achieving a unity of thought and action, for only in unity can the black society on truly human beginnings be established.
Preface

This second edition of American Civilization on Trial goes to press three months to the day after the first edition was put on sale.* The popular demand for our pamphlet is due to the fact that we alone have written of past history and of history in the making as one continuous development of the vanguard role of the Negro. This heightened interest in analysis is due also to the fact that in the short time between the Birmingham events in May and the March on Washington in August the massiveness of the resistance, the many sidedness of the demands of the Freedom NOW movement, the tremendous surge, courage and reason of this movement, as against the barbarism of the Bull Connors with their hounds, hoses and murders have totally changed the objective situation in the United States.

Thus, the movement compelled the Kennedy Administration to admit a "voting right of dissent" and execute an about-face with the introduction of a civil rights bill. In contrast to his original opposition to any March on Washington, on the alleged ground that Congress could not be forced, Kennedy came to support the March. Unfortunately it's the kind of support a rope gives a hanging man. Therein lies the danger to the Freedom NOW movement.

This has brought the movement to the crossroads. Though it is impossible, to stop the momentum of the Negro struggle, its forward development can be impeded if the underlying philosophy for total freedom is in any way compromised. Here, precisely, are revealed both the strength and weakness of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The transforming events of Birmingham have revealed King's new stature both organizationally and philosophically. In his letter from a Birmingham jail to a group of "fellow clergymen," Dr. King rejected their attempt to confine the movement to the status quo. He wrote, "that everything Hitler did in Germany was 'illegal'... this calls for a confrontation with the power structure." Dr. King writes: "To use the words of Martin Buber, the great Jewish philosopher, segregation substitutes an 'I-thou' relationship for the 'I-thou' relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things." But King himself makes an impersonal ethic rather than the living mass movement, the point of creative origin and forward march of humanity.

The Negro leadership is listening more to Kennedy's civil rights measures than to the full application of the mass movement. They fail to see that the alleged defeat in the cold war and the intensification of the Sino-Soviet conflict will actually free the hand of the Administration to bear down against both labor and the Negro movement. Thus, it is why we say openly that, so far, the Freedom NOW movement has combined reason and activity only to the extent of the immediate demands of desegregation, and not to the ultimate of total freedom from class society.

In this situation, a small organization like ours has a pivotal role to play both as a catalyst and a prophet.

NEWS & LETTERS COMMITTEES, which have participated in every phase of activity and struggle from the Montgomery bus boycott to the March on Washington, have a unique feature that distinguishes us from almost all other organizations. It is this: We have, from the very start, refused to separate theory from practice, or practice from theory. Take the need to change the role of white labor in the civil rights struggle.

WHITE LABOR has so far shown a sorry spectacle. The labor leaders, like Meany, Reuther, McDonald and Hillel, have all spoken big and some have even marched with mass Negro demonstrations in the North, as in Detroit and San Francisco, but not in the South, where it comes to Negro workers, they have neithe...
white rank-and-file to help forge the unity needed in the civil rights struggle. We also insist in drafting a ballot which soon made the rounds in Detroit factories. It was addressed to the labor leadership and said:

Know ye then this — and learn your lesson from that Sunday March in Detroit and all the battles for Civil Rights South and North. First, you are cutting your own throat because, without the unity of white and black workers, management can ride all over you, even as they did when you launched Electrical Dixie and proved to be just a still-born.

Know ye, further, that the end of discrimination, even more than charity, must begin at home, and home for working people is the Union. BEGIN THERE.

BEGIN NOW to put an end to lily white departments.

BEGIN NOW the retaining and upgrading of Negro workers who now, as before un-ionism, are still the last to be hired and the first to be fired.

BEGIN NOW to tell the white workers the truth of their own conditions of employment and unemployment. For the truth is that, while percentage-wise, Negroes have more unemployment than white, it is still they, the white workers, the majority of Americans, who are still the majority in absolute numbers of those unemployed.

Neither you have begun contract negotiations a year in advance, with management. How about beginning to talk to us, your black brothers, 25 years after we helped to create the CIO!

THE NEGRO LEADERSHIP, on the other hand, the free from seeing the role of the labor bureaucracy has actually protected it from the races by playing up the lip-service and ostentatious checks with which the union leaders give token support to the struggle. The great danger, moreover, is the fact that the labor bureaucracy is at the beck and call of Kennedy — and especially in this situation where they yield to Kennedy on everything from unemployment to civil rights.

All the more reason to continue instead, with us, in the full tradition of the Abolitionist movement, in which was concentrated every strand of struggle for freedom — abolition of slavery, woman's suffrage, labor movement — and that released new human dimensions. Look at Sojourner Truth whose creative activity embraced not only the work with the Underground Railroad but also the woman's struggle. Look at the Marquis Joseph Weydemeyer, who was both a general in the Union Army and editor of a Marxist periodical in the United States (which published Marx's Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon 17 years before it was published in Europe).

We close, in Freedom Readers Speak for Themselves, not only participated fully in the activity, but in making it possible for the Freedom Riders to speak for themselves have issued the only serious analysis, to date, of that great turning point and its continuity with what preceded and followed.

In the News & Letters Committees we have not only supported, reported, and participated in all the great actions, but have compelled world attention to focus on them as central to the global struggle for a new society.

The Freedom NOW movement must not be stopped in its tracks nor derailed. It must be extended and deepened so that it leads to the total re-creation of society on new human foundations.

It is no accident that this second edition of American Civilisation on Trial comes out when the movement is being put to the test. The road ahead is not smooth or easy. With this edition we invite you to face the challenge and join the News & Letters Committee.

— National Editorial Board
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INTRODUCTION

1. Of Patriots, Soundreis and Slave-Masters

"Subversion" is a favorite expression of the F.B.I., the Presidency, the Attorney-General and Congress. J. Edgar Hoover, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, not to mention Eisenhower and the rest dog it considers its watchdog—the House Un-American Activities Committee—are certainly armed with immense, with world-making power, which they, in their search, harassment, and persecution of what they conceive to be subversive, use individually and collectively.

You all there kings' horses and all there kings' men can't seem to discover the most openly read and popular hate sheet calling itself "Folsom Underground," circulated on the University of Mississippi campus, which highly lauds both subversive issues as (1) "fight for the survival of President Kennedy" (2) referring to United States Marshal executing a Supreme Court Decision for desegregating schools as "martyred pupils" (3) hinting in no uncertain terms however, that Edward Brower, the courageous editor of the student paper which dared criticize the mob that rode over that campus, is a "traitor"; (4) making lie an unsubstantiated report only for the Negro James H. Meredith, but for any white whose attitudes are a shade less racist than those were paramount state of bigotry; and (5) shouting at the mouth against "the anti-Supreme Court." This isn't "just kids' stuff." This is the voice of those who were responsible for the actual murder, one of a foreign correspondent accredited, not to a battle in the Congress, the United States Senate, to report "the American way of life." This is the voice of the Governor of Mississippi, but of Alabama, and the voice of their counterparts in the Southern blue blood Congress.

To these stories of hate has now been added the savage growth of vicious police dogs unleashed against Negroes seeking to register to vote in Mississippi and Alabama. The Simon Legrees with their barking slave masters.

In January 1963, a new Governor came to the helm in a state that vies with the Magna Charta as the steadfastest outpost of racism on this side of diamond spangled, blazing red lines for the world to see. Not only, says this paragraph of "law and order in the state of Alabama. It is no Governor Wallace, for "suppression today, tomorrow and forever," but he will organize to spread this oppression in the South. He judges by the manner in which the KKK, after the Negroes were driven off, declared that this explosion of hate is out of tune with those values—and beyond his reputation. This is not because of the established powers at Washing- ton who has made it so. Indeed all this white Southern holiness is the result of the world bridging gap between the post-World War II era and the post-World War II era where the Negro, far from running deftly away from lynching, has taken the offensive for his full rights on all fronts and most of all in the South.

In contrast to the initiative of the Southern Negro, the white world is witness to the thuggishly, dilly-dallying, don't-do-anything, Kennedy Administration. At a time when the world exigency and challenge from totalitarianism demands the creation of total democracy, and has their own "will" would like to express itself with a New England rather than a Southern drawl, the peculiar American capitalism that has been both raped up, and thrown back by the embalmed state of its revolution, compels him to hide his "will." Capitalism, not capitalism in general, but American capitalism as it expanded after the Civil War, sharpened the basic contradictions of the primitive environment in which it functioned. This capitalism was tied to the cotton plantations.

For global power's sake the Administration presently tries to explain away the torque piece on the civil rights front, on the ground that, when the chips are down, the white South becomes at once transformed into "pure patriots." Samuel Johnson has long ago noted that patriotism has ever been the last refuge of scoundrels. Newbery and at no time was this truer than in the embattled South of today.

Even so conservative a writer as the Swedish scholar Gunnar Myrdal, had to write that World War II, which increased the myriads of the Negro, had only one effect on the Southern white liberals—they refused to continue the little co-operation they had started with the Negro intellectuals against discrimination unless the latter accepted, ray, reserved, racial segregation. So mystic of view is that region that the following passed for the words of a liberal. It is Mark Ethridge, ex-chairman of the FEPC, writing in The Virginia Quarterly Journal of July, 1942: "There is no power in the world—not even the armed forces of the earth, the Allied and the Axis—which can ever force the Southern white people to abandonment of racial segregation. It is a cruel disillusionment, bearing galls of strife and perhaps tragedy, for any of their Negroes leaders to tell them that they can expect it, or that they can exact it, as the price of their participation in the war." Mr. Myrdal had to conclude on the following note:

... The region is exceptional in Western non-peacey civilization since the Enlightenment in that it looks at every trace of radical thought. In the South all progressive thinking among further than personal freedom and liberalism has been practically non-existent for a century." (1)

It should be obvious that the South's patriotism lasts only so long as the Negroes don't insist that the white South give up its slave master mentality.

The blindness to all this on the part of the Administration is self-induced even as its impotence is self-imposed. There is no need whatever for the Federal power—true an awesome word might—"in any away at the challenge of a single voice, especially when that state is in retreat, on military contracts from the Federal Government for the major part of what economic power it has. The Ford management-trained Secretary of Defense called the President the "boldest of the Federal aid. But Mr. Kennedy already knows

(1) An American Dilemma, by Gunnar Myrdal, p. 449.

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that—and the politics behind it. This is what he says.

It took a great deal of digging by his Harvard-trained historian to come up with the absurdly inconsequential Lucan Q. C. Lomar as a "liberal" Southern hero of the past whom the present needs to emulate. (3) It would have been a great deal easier to find the emulation from Wendell Phillips that told the simple truth: "Cotton fibre was a rod of iron used in Lomar never wielded. It festered into obedience pulpit and rostrum, court, market-place and college and planted New York and Chicago to its chair of State." It still does.

Through this book, the politics based on racism reigns supreme in the South and fills the Halls of Congress with the abhorrent night that comes from despotic moral relations, quid-pro-quo politics that would troop easily enough if the Negro got his freedom. But thereby would also be exposed the truth of American democracy; that the reason which is the basis of the political rule of the South is acceptable to the North, and has been we not only since it withdrew the Federal troops from the South at the end of Reconstruction in 1877, but ever since the ambivalent Declaration of Independence was adopted in 1776.

2. The Compelling Issue at Stake

American Civilization is identified in the consciousness of the world with three phases in the development of its history.

The first is the Declaration of Independence and the freedom of the thirteen American colonies from British Imperial rule.

The second is the Civil War. The third is technology and world power which are presently being challenged by the country that now wields that power—Russia.

So persistent, intense, continuous, and ever-present a feature of the Negro, before and after the Civil War, before and after World War I and World War II, is that it has become the cause by which American Civilization is judged. The doctrine that Negroes are re-entered around the world with the speed of sound, though with which it shared world headlines in 1957, and which gave the lie to American claims of equality in every phase of life.

The Civil War remains the still unfinished revolution of the last century. The United States is losing the global struggle for the minds of men. President Kennedy, in that historic year, 1963, the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation, declared that the electronics industry must turn its genius in the gigantic task of erasing the stain of slavery from the American mind. It was a most hopeful tenet.

The Civil War remains the most significant event in the history of the American Negro, both in the South and in the North. In 1861 they reached a climax with the Freedom Riders to Mississippi. This selflessness has not only spread throughout upon the world's consciousness, but also reached back into white America's consciousness.

In a word, the new human dimension attained through an oppressed people's genius in the struggle for freedom, nationally and internationally, rather than the selfless achievement of an individual hero, became the measure of Man in action and thought.

Negroes' Vanguard Role

The vanguard role of an oppressed people has also put white labor in mass production to the test. And it has put a question mark over the continuous technological revolutions, brought to a climax with Automation and nuclear power, for without an underlying philosophy, neither the man-made revolutions nor the splitting of the atom can produce anything but fear—fear of unemployment in the one case and fear of war in the other. As was evident by the Negro's attitude in World War II, nothing can stop him from being the bitter enemy of the existing society. In the midst of the struggle to rid the world of the atom, the whole world is drawn into the struggle against the atom, as well as into the struggle against the armies in the United States, which the Northerner, white and Negro, and the Negro as the discriminator against minority, refused to put a halt to the class struggle or the struggle for equal rights. Both sides challenged their own state as well as Communist propagandists who had declared the imperialism of the United States was ensuring "national liberation" which demanded subordination to it at all costs. (4)

Fully to understand today's activities—and that is the only meaningful way to start—is the climax of the Emancipation Proclamation—creative tension. We must turn to the roots of this problem. We must turn to the roots of this problem, to the roots of the American Negro's thinking in the South, and to the roots of the world's thinking in terms of it in the world of today.

To be able to anticipate tomorrow one has to understand today. One cannot imagine the movement—the pull of the future on the present and the links to the past—to the relationship of the Negro American to the African Revolutions. Because it is easy enough to see that the United States Supreme Court which, in 1954, gave its decision on segregation in schools is not the Court which, 100 years before, proclaimed the infamous Dred Scott decision, there are those who deprecate today's self-activity of the Negro. Instead, they credit Administration policy with changing the status of the American Negro.

They point to the Cold War and the need for America, in its context with Russia, to win "the Negro mind." There is no doubt that the Cold War-influenced decision of the Supreme Court. Neither is there any doubt that the African Revolutions were born to the Negro American struggle. But this is not one-way traffic. For decades, if not for centuries, the self-activity of the American Negro gained strength and inspired the African Revolutions, its leaders as well as its ranks. Its thoughts as well as its actions. The relationship is to flow from Africa. It is a two-way

The Abolitionists, however, saw themselves differently. The great New Englanders, Wendell Phillips, was fully aware of the fact that not only Negro leaders like Frederick Douglass or Harriet Tubman, but white Abolitionists like himself and even the founder of the \textit{Liberator}, William Lloyd Garrison, were "too tall" because they stood on the shoulders of the actual mass movement of slaves following the North Star to freedom. Without this constant contact of the New England Abolitionists with the Negro man, slave and free, they would have been nothing—and no one admitted it, more truly than these leaders themselves.

The Abolitionists felt that strongly because they found what great literary figures like Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville and Whitman did not find—the human heart for the reconstruction of liberty.

This is what armed them 100 years ago, with a more accurate measure of the "Great Emancipator" than most of today's writers, though the latter write with hindsight. This is what gave the Abolitionists the foresight to see that the Civil War may be won by the battleless but lost in the more fundamental problem of reorganizing the life of the country. This is what led Karl Marx to say that a speech by Wendell Phillips was of "greater importance than a legislative bill." This is what led the great Abolitionist, Phillips, afterooth his role in the labor movement, writing himself "willing to accept the final results of any experiment as rational as the overthrow of the whole profit-making system, the emancipation of all monopolies, the abolition of private property, the delegation of power from class to class, and best and grandest of all, the clear obliteration of that foul blight upon our so-called Christian civilization, the poverty of the masses."

**American Roots of Marxism**

The spontaneous affluence of ideas, the independent working out of the problems of the age as manifested in one's own country, and the common human interest in the progress of science, are the sources of the philosophy of Marxism. Theodore Roosevelt, in his \textit{New Nationalism}, pronounced it to be a "new thought." Indeed, the intellectual roots of Marxism, as well as the philosophical ideas from which it springs, have their foundations in the work of the so-called Christian civilization, the poverty of the masses. (5)
PART I
from the First through the Second American Revolution

The African, brought here as slave against his will, played a decisive role in the shaping of America's Civil War.

Some (6) there are who feel it is wrong to begin the Negro's history in America with his arrival here as a slave in 1510 since he had reached these shores long before then—with the discovery of the New World. In fact, many, as servants, or in some cases, to the encouragement of the explorers themselves. It is certainly true that in the first quarter of the 17th century there were as many as 10,000 free Negroes in the United States. This is not the point. However, the point is that in slave revolts, first and foremost, in appeals of free Negroes in the runaways, was conducted North via the Underground Railway by fugitive slaves, as the Negro, free or slave, but especially slave, was decisive in the course of American development following.

The Ambivalence of the Declaration of Independence

It was the Negro's will to be free, not his alleged docility, that moved the first draft of the Declaration of Independence in which Thomas Jefferson, dashed out against King George III for a "cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred, rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another country ...

Upon the instigation of the Southern delegation at the Continental Congress, this paragraph was stricken from the Declaration, in the first burst of full freedom's call it imbued the social conditions of the Southern states.

Though the section which specifically aimed at the abrogation of the slave condition was expunged from the Declaration of Independence so that the abstractions of the soul could be kept in the context of a slave society, so overpowered were its implications that it "sounded the most solemn (italics)" for the European revolutions that followed. From the very birth of the nation there was a great divide between the leaders in government and the rank and file masses, as in the slave revolts in the North. It showed itself in unrest and repression of the Negroes in Massachusetts in the Shays' Rebellion, and of the workmen in Philadelphia and New York in their first strikes and formation of workingmen's parties.

Thus, the year 1816, Walker invented the cotton gin that transformed cotton into a high cash crop, was the year in which the House of Representatives refused to pass a law abolishing slavery. It was the year the first Fugitive Slave Act was passed against the runaways. A short five years later, the Alien and Sedition Law was passed aimed at all opposition to the ruling Federalists. The radical Jefferson revolution which put an end to the odious Alien and Sedition Law did not, however, do anything to reverse the first Fugitive Slave Act which was soon to be followed by others more repressive.

The cotton gin had signaled not only the conclusion of slavery in the 1790s, but the drafting of a law at the turn of the 19th century, of all the acts that were monopolistic exploitation. The decades 1820-1839 marked the birth of industrial capitalism so that Cotton was now King not only of the plantation economy, and in trade, but in New England textiles and industry and politics in general. As King made and mandate presidents and induced so great a national complicity of silences that its imposition on the young democracy. The stream of runaways played a key role in impelling the European against the runaways. A Negro's revolution which put the foremost in the entourage of workingmen's parties.

Underground Railroad 
Negroes. In the 17th century there were as many as 10,000 free Negroes in the new world, in fact, mainly as domestics. It wasn't limited to the slave condition. It "sounded the most solemn (italics)" for the European revolutions that followed. From the very birth of the nation there was a great divide between the leaders in government and the rank and file masses, as in the slave revolts in the North. It showed itself in unrest and repression of the Negroes in Massachusetts in the Shays' Rebellion, and of the workmen in Philadelphia and New York in their first strikes and formation of workingmen's parties.

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Some (6) there are who feel it is wrong to begin the Negro's history in America with his arrival here as a slave in 1510 since he had reached these shores long before then—with the discovery of the New World. In fact, many, as servants, or in some cases, to the encouragement of the explorers themselves. It is certainly true that in the first quarter of the 17th century there were as many as 10,000 free Negroes in the United States. This is not the point. However, the point is that in slave revolts, first and foremost, in appeals of free Negroes in the runaways, was conducted North via the Underground Railway by fugitive slaves, as the Negro, free or slave, but especially slave, was decisive in the course of American development following.

The Ambivalence of the Declaration of Independence

It was the Negro's will to be free, not his alleged docility, that moved the first draft of the Declaration of Independence in which Thomas Jefferson, dashed out against King George III for a "cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred, rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another country ...

Upon the instigation of the Southern delegation at the Continental Congress, this paragraph was stricken from the Declaration, in the first burst of full freedom's call it imbued the social conditions of the Southern states.

Though the section which specifically aimed at the abrogation of the slave condition was expunged from the Declaration of Independence so that the abstractions of the soul could be kept in the context of a slave society, so overpowered were its implications that it "sounded the most solemn (italics)" for the European revolutions that followed. From the very birth of the nation there was a great divide between the leaders in government and the rank and file masses, as in the slave revolts in the North. It showed itself in unrest and repression of the Negroes in Massachusetts in the Shays' Rebellion, and of the workmen in Philadelphia and New York in their first strikes and formation of workingmen's parties.

Thus, the year 1816, Walker invented the cotton gin that transformed cotton into a high cash crop, was the year in which the House of Representatives refused to pass a law abolishing slavery. It was the year the first Fugitive Slave Act was passed against the runaways. A short five years later, the Alien and Sedition Law was passed aimed at all opposition to the ruling Federalists. The radical Jefferson revolution which put an end to the odious Alien and Sedition Law did not, however, do anything to reverse the first Fugitive Slave Act which was soon to be followed by others more repressive.

The cotton gin had signaled not only the conclusion of slavery in the 1790s, but the drafting of a law at the turn of the 19th century, of all the acts that were monopolistic exploitation. The decades 1820-1839 marked the birth of industrial capitalism so that Cotton was now King not only of the plantation economy, and in trade, but in New England textiles and industry and politics in general. As King made and mandate presidents and induced so great a national complicity of silences that its imposition on the young democracy. The stream of runaways played a key role in impelling the European against the runaways. A Negro's revolution which put the foremost in the entourage of workingmen's parties.
Negroes as against slaves for reading it. They put a price of $3,000 on the head of its author. Nevertheless, 50,000 copies of this Repeal pamphlet were sold and circulated from hand to hand. These who could not read had others to read it to them. The South trembled at the single word of an obscure Negro.

The maddening role of the Negro in the struggle for freedom helped bring out the historic truth: the most extraordinary of all phenomena of American Civilization: New England Abolitionism. The year that William Lloyd Garrison (8) founded the LIBERATOR, 1831, was the year also of the last and glorious of Negro slave revolts—that of Nat Turner. The Cambridge Modern History tells us:

"The insurrection was at once attributed to Negro pamphlets and 'irregular publications' such as Walker's pamphlet and the Liberator. . . To attack the Liberator now became habitual in all slave-holding States. The corporation of one city forbade any free Negro to take a copy of it from the post-office. A vigilance committee in another offered $1000 for the detection and conviction of any white person found circulating copies. The governor of Georgia and Virginia called on the mayor of Boston to suppress it; and the legislature of Georgia offered $3,000 to any person who should secure the arrest and conviction of Garrison under the laws of the State.

"Undeterred by these attacks, Garrison gathered about him a little band of Abolitionists, and towards the close of 1831, founded at Boston the New England Anti-slavery Society, and in 1832, at Philadelphia, the American Anti-slavery Society."

Abolitionism: a New Dimension of American Character

Nothing had so surprised this merger of white intellectual with the Negro mind with the same intensity as the more intimate relations of white and black. The former unfitted at the time any measure of persecution—and even during the whole period of slavery, the character was notably good. In the long decades of struggle, there were individual conflicts, no doubt, but not a single Negro ever raised a hand that did not give up the fight but sought to transform the white man's war for Negro slavery into a war for Negro emancipation, or to convert the movement of Northern industry over Southern cotton culture to one of human freedom.

"The movement denounced all traditional politics, considering all political parties of the day as 'corrupt.' They were inter-rotus and in a slave society it was impossible to emancipate the Negro equality. They were distinguished as well for inspiring, allying, and even subordinating for many years to women. In an age when the women had neither the right to the ballot nor to property at all, they were internationalists, covering Europe with their messages, and bringing back to this country the message of the Irish Freedom Fighters."

"They were a grand body of the kind, fighting for the pure idea, though that meant facing the hatred and ridicule of all the white world: the slave owners, the slave traders, the local police, and the best citizens who became the paid assassins of the freedmen. They were beaten, stabbed, and stoned."

These New England Abolitionists added a new dimension to the word, intellectual, for these were intellectuals, whose intellectual, social and political creativity was the expression of precise social forces. They played in reality the "mirror" role by which a social movement expressed itself. The movement of slaves and free Negroes for their freedom.

Passing through philosophy, they lived up with John Brown. Perhaps it explains why the position of that man is the defense of the great martyr. "Harper's Ferry" is the line of today. Brown did fail. There are two kinds of death—martyrdom, or the death of Liberty. A victory nothing but victory. Soldiers and Bunyan fell a defeat; but liberty dates from it. . . .”

2. Abolitionism, Second Phase: The Unfinished Revolution

On January 11, 1860, Marx wrote to Engels: "In my opinion, the biggest things that are happening in the world today are, on the one hand, the movement of the slave in America started by the death of John Brown, and on the other, the movement of the serfs in Russia... I have just seen in the Tribune that there has been a fresh rising of slaves in Missouri, naturally suppressed. But the signal has now been given." (9)

When the young Marx first broke from bourgeois society and elaborated his philosophy of Humanism in 1844, he paid little attention to the problem of chattel slavery. Now, however, Marx kept his eyes fixed on the movement of the then slaves. When the Civil War broke out, and "the Great Emancipator" did all in his power to limit it to a white man's war for union, Marx began to popularize the speeches and analyses of the Abolitionists, especially those Wendell Phillips wrote against the Northern conduct of the war: "The President has not put the Emancipation Act into operation... he has neither sought nor foregone..."

Benton, Lincoln's main strategic concern was to consolidate the so-called "moderate" border slave states that remained in the Union, he wanted neither his free states nor let them participate in the war as soldiers. Lincoln satisfied the few attempts by generals on the spot (John C. Fremont in Missouri, David Hunter in Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, and Ben Butler in Virginia) to issue their own emancipation proclamations. As late as 1862, however, Horace Greeley as editor of the Tribune published "A Prayer of 20 Million" for the abolition of slavery. Lincoln replied: "My paramount objective is to save the union, and not to either to save or destroy slavery."

This denotes the first phase of the Long Civil War which lasted four years and cost the lives of a million men. Phillips maintained that if it had been fought as a war of liberation and the Negroes were pounding at all the doors, North and South..."
South, to let them fight—it could be easily won in a few months. When military expediency, however, dictated a change in course, Phillips maintained that "in this war mere victory on a battle-field amounts to nothing, constitutes little or nothing toward ending the war... Such an aimless war I still waited and watched." In the end, Phillips conceded that things were going so badly for the North, "that it would lose the war," Marx wrote. "A single battle—a regiment would have a remarkable effect on Southern hearts... A war of this kind must be conducted on revolutionary lines while the Yankees have thus far been trying to conduct it constitutionally." [11]

Finally, on January 1, 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation. It was no ringing declaration; his component words moved generally to free only those slaves in the rebellious states. As one historian recently put it, it was "an emotional act as a bill of sale." [12]

Turning Point

Nevertheless it is the turning point. This second stage of the war, altogether transformed its character. The passing of this year in the Civil War outlines the contrast of centuries. Negroes flocked into the Army, latticed began being won. Wendell Phillips declared: "We are blacks as the very basis of the effort to pacify the South." On the other side of the Atlantic, English workers, whose livelihood as textile workers depended on Southern cotton, held mass demonstrations to prevent their ruling class from intervening on the South side of the Bourbon South, whose cotton kingdom supplied Britain's textile barons the raw materials for their world-dominating industry.

A new decade had indeed dawned in the world with the outbreak of the Civil War in the United States, the insurrection in Poland, the strikes in Paris, and the mass meetings of English workers who chose to starve rather than perpetuate slavery on the other side of the Atlantic. The activist emer­gent in the establishment of the International Workers' Association, headed by Karl Marx.

From the first, Marx took the side of the North. Though, naturally, as we saw, he was with Phillips' criticism of the conduct of the war, rather than with that of Lincoln, he had written to Engels: "All Lincoln's acts appear like the meanest—indeed the lowest—act of a lawyer going to his opposing lawyer. But this does not alter their historic content... The events over there are a world upheaval." [13]

He therefore警示教育 himself from 14 (14) self-styled Marxists in the United States who evaded the whole issue of the Civil War... saying they were opposed to "all slavery, wage and chattel." In the name of the International, Marx wrote, "While the workingmen, the true political power of the North, allowed slavery to define its own republic; while before the Negro conquered and sold without his concurrence they boasted of the highest prerogative of the white-skinned laborer to sell himself and chose his own master: they were unable to attain the true freedom of labor or to support their European brethren in their struggle for emancipation, but this barrier to prosperity has been swept out by the rod of the Civil War." [15]

At Marx later expressed it in CAPITAL, "In the United States of North America, every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed as long as they configured a part of the Republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black it is branded. But out of the death of slavery a new life at once arose. The first fruit of the Civil War was the abolition for the eight-hour-day that ran with the seven­eight-hour-day of the locomotive from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California. The General Congress of the Workers' Alliance at Baltimore (August 16, 1886) declared: The first and great necessity of the present, to free the labor of this country from capitalist slavery, is the passing of a law by which eight hours shall be the legal time for work in all states of the American Union. We are resolved to put forth all our strength until this glorious result is attained".

Soon after the war and the abolition of slavery, Abolitionism as a movement vanished from the scene. Of all its leaders, Wendell Phillips alone had made the transition to the labor movement. The four million freedmen remained to change culture and thereby lies imbedded the roots of the Negro Question...
PART II
the Still-Unfinished Revolution

The ignorant white mobs, instigated by Pissabau, Rose and their ilk in the Deep South who had been on the rampage ever since the 1864 United States Supreme Court decision to desegregate schools, may not know it, but the free public education from which they stand and the Negroes excluded, was first instituted in the South by the Negro during the much-maligned Reconstruction period. The Negro and white legislators of the post-Civil War period gave the South the only democracy it had ever known—and has since forgotten.

No one can rewrite history, which records that also for the first time, universal manhood suffrage as well as equal political, civil and legal rights for its citizens that became a way of life for the South. That such elementary democracy had to be brought there by bayonets and then only after the white supremacist secessionists were finally defeated in a bloody war lasting four years is further proof of the philosophy of unfreedom, of the aristocratic South that had to drive the best of human beings reduced to slavery. This expression, "philosophy of unfreedom," coined by the great German philosopher, G. W. F. Hegel, to characterize India's caste system, perfectly describes the ideology of the dominant South. Even as an unfinished revolution the achievements of the Civil War, however, cannot be expelled from the historical record which is reflected in the 15th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, added to the Constitution by the radical Reconstruction Congress and approved by the whole nation, which abolished slavery and thereby achieved blacks.

No one can rewrite history, which unfortunately also records that they were virtually nullified once the Army was withdrawn. The counter-revolution in the South, however, was not of regional make only, although it was instigated there by the obvious sympathizers who lost the war but won the peace. The former slaveowners were the dictators of Northern Reconstruction. In enacting the infamous Black Codes, the white minority once the Army was withdrawn, was able to do with impunity once the Army was withdrawn, was able to do with theer own likes.

The withdrawal of the Army, however, the cause, but the consequent of the freedmen's development of the Black codes and the betrayal of four million newly-freed human beings who did not own the land, contributed to the explosion of the Reconstruction era. The three basic conditions of the betrayal were: (1) the freedmen's state of reparation; (2) the lack of a motive force for political leadership; (3) the absence of a political infrastructure to dominate reconstruction projects and control the machinery of government. This was the "slavery of the freedmen" that Abbreviator of the South said of Andrew Johnson as his running mate for the second term, in place of the Vice-Presidential of the first term, Hannibal Hamlin who was President of the first term. Hannibal Hamlin was President of the first term, Hannibal Hamlin who was President of the first term.

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largely between the economic position of the American Negro and that of the former serf of the center agricultural provinces in Russia. Even in Russia, where there was some fraudulent attempt to give the serf the land, it was proposed for the Russian serf to his above the needs of the land. The latter, where the Negro did not get his ‘40 acres and a mule,’ Color remain-

such either deal with the in some cases mem-

ments, with half of the crop for masses.

KKK.

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emerge.

The diversion of labor set up by the cotton

forced the social isolation of the Negroes

'traditionalism' was used.

‘prescribed’ to the cropper.

changed than the soil itself on which the
cotton is grown.”(15)

Boss and Black Relationship

Naturally the infamous “Black Codes” which the plantation owners now enacted and were free in execute and “the gentlemen’s agreement” with Northern capital, as well as with the help of the KKK, paved the royal road back for white supremacy South. But once we show the problem in its proper economic framework, the human factors can emerge and then we see the limitations of all laws, written and unwritten. Nowhere is this clearer than in the bourgeois South as the counter-

revolution comes into head-on collision with masses in revolt in the decade of the 1880’s and 1890’s and Populism sweeps the South. When this new attempt at revolutionary change occurred, “the boss and black” relationship was fully dominant.

The cropper has neither control of the nature of his crop nor the marketing of it. The cropper owns nothing but his labor power, and must part with half of the crop for ‘furnishings.’ Somehow the rest of the crop seems likewise to go to the merchant whom he depends for his every purchase of clothing, food, implements and fertil-

izers. The cropper is charged exorbitant prices but he must not question the word of the boss who keeps the books and makes the “suggestion” at each labor agreement. Here the old boss and black relationship of Negro servitude is today reasserted exactly as with the ‘suggestions’ as with the ‘unpaid labor’ of the Negro tenant.

The cropper has a contract with the planter that the cropper be bound by the planter’s agreement with the A.A.A. If he made it difficult and impractical for the planter to carry out his deal with the cropper directly, the ‘suggestions’ were removed from him by force from his home and he was compelled to live according to the rules of the planter. The Knights of Labor that replaced it organized white and black alike with the result that, in 1887, out of a total membership of one million no less than 80,000 were Negroes. Nevertheless, no Northern organization could possibly get in the mass base of Negroes who remained overwhelmingly predominantly in the South. For, along with being freed from slavery, the Negroes were freed also from a way to make a living. Landlords were the new freemen, and landlords.

As the 1889 Congress Resolution of the National Labor Union put it: “American citizenship for the black man is a complete failure if he is prostrated from the workshops of the community.” When Northern labor emerged as a force in the 1877 railroad strike, Negro labor was still South and still in agriculture.


1. Northern Labor Struggles Against Capital’s Stronghold, 1877-97

1877, the year the Federal troops were removed from the South, was the year they were used to crush the railroad strikes stretching from Penn-
sylvania to Texas. The Pennsylvania Governor was only threatened labor with “a sharp use of bayonet and musket,” but the Federal Government in 1877 was, the “product of the American negro, the southern black man, the black laborer.” 117) Nothing has changed, in the two decades since, except that FDR, instead of FDR, now occupies the White House. No wonder we have advanced so little from 1877 when Union, “one and indivisible” meant unity forged in the struggle against labor for imperialist adventures. To understand today’s racism as well as totalitarianism it is necessary to return to that page in history when the “gentlemens’ agreement” of Northern capital with the South set the stage for the unbridled violence against labor.

(14) Dean South, by Deed, Garner, and Weaver, p. 266.
The severe financial crisis of 1873 dealt a death blow to the Eight Hours League, but not to the idea for an eight-hour day. In 1884 not only the idea but the action to get it into effect were once again initiated, this time by the Federation of Organized Traders and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, later to be known as the American Federation of Labor.

The struggle for the eight-hour day during the decade of the 1880's was the leading feature of the counter-revolution initiated by the capitalist exacerbation of the user-profit system of government. The anarchist labor leaders, Parsons, Spies, Fischer and Engel, were railroaded to the gallows.

The year 1886, a year which became the dividing line in American labor, was the year when no less than three historic battles were fought as the steel workers, the Pullman workers, and the miners of Idaho produced the same struggle for the hour—surely we ought finally to understand the relationship of land and peace in our own South and not keep piling stupidity upon stupidity to explain away the Negro Question. To just such a betrayal of peasant rebell during the Lutheran Reformation Marx attributed the state of backwardness of the Germany of his day. In his Peasant Wars in Germany, Frederick Engels, a collaborator of Karl Marx, pointed out that it was not only the peasants who were betrayed but that they did not get the land during the 16th century German Reformation, but Germany itself did not pass from the ranks of reaction playing an independent part in history.

In the case of the white supremacy Solid South, its re-establishment, at first, was short lived. The violent KKK lynch lawlessness, rope and faggot rule was broken by its very foundation within one short decade after the removal of the Union Army. (This revolutionary upheaval) came from within, not without. It came out of the great discontent of the farmers with the new form of monopoly planter-merchant-railroad vested interests which brought the 'New South' its greatest crisis. Populism spread like a prairie fire bringing the 'Solid South' a more fundamental challenge than even the Civil War.

2. Black and White Unity and 1 1/4 Million Forgotten Negro Populists

Most amazing of all was the organization of the National Colored Farmers' Alliance, first in the history of the slave revolt, when it was finally recognized that the Negroes had no redress for their wrongs, so this little-known glorious chapter puts an end to the myth that the Negroes are a conquered people, but a revelation of the tenacity and the spirit of the Negroes make the organized class to be reckoned with even.
hid him in his home, but sent a call for Populists to protect him. Farmers rode all night to get there, and some stood on Watson's veranda, and fully 2,000 farmers there as a defense guard. Watson said: "We are determined that in this free country that the humblest white or black man who wants to talk our doctrine shall do so, and the man doesn't live who shall touch a hair on his head without fighting every man in the People's Party.

Watson made hundreds of such speeches in the decade of the 1890's. He spoke repeatedly from the same platform with Negro speakers to mixed audiences of Negro and white farmers, all on the theme of the need of white and Negro solidarity to fight "the money kings" who are to use "the agonist of color" to divide the unified struggle: "This is not a political fight and politicians cannot lead or direct it. It is a movement of the masses, an upheaval of the people, and they, not the politicians, will direct it. The people need spokesmen, not leaders, men in the front who will obey, not command."

Here is how the distinguished Southern historian, C. Ventwood, on fire-eyed radical, maps up the decade of the 1890's in his study of Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel: "Never before or since have the two races in the South come so close together as they did during the Populist struggles. The unity of white and black was soon, in turn, shattered by the combined interests of the Bourbon South with monopoly capital that had won the struggle over labor in the North, and spread its tentacles over the Caribbean and the Pacific. Monopoly capital's growth into imperialism puts the last nail in the coffin of Southern democracy and thus not only re-establishes racism in the South but brings it to the North.

Populism

The unbridled violence of private capital—its Pinkerton detectives and armed thugs as strikebreakers and the railroad vigilantes with one and the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, not against the corporations as against the individual became the unanimous strikers battling for the elementary right to a livelihood. Finding their full-class expression in the use of troops by the Federal Government, combined both labor and agriculture to challenge capitalist's monopoly of the rents of government. It did so with a new mass group—the People's Party—more popularly called Populism, which reached its highest point in the 1890 election.

The class struggles of the two decades, 1877 to 1895, by which the Populists had not succeeded in freeing farm capital from the ironclad bond, it bore the stamp of the struggle's兼职. During the same period agrarian discontent resulting from the agrarian depression of the 1870 and 1880 completely overturned the unbridled rule of the Southern plantation. Despite the success of the Federal troops, despite its unity of armed power, the violence of the Ku-Klux and the more brutal lynchings, the new South experienced a general depression, but in the civil war itself was a greater political relations than during the Civil War itself. This civil war didn't come there on Watson said it to the point of a Yankee bayonet. It was internal and it succeeded in establishing white and black solidarity under the banner of Populism at the very time when the class struggles in the North
gave socialism its native roots among workers and farmers. Matching the agriculture was the industrial unrest which from 1881 through 1890, reached 27,703 strikes involving no fewer than 630,526 workers.

Intellectual Ferment

The emergence of labor as a new power affected every aspect of life. The resulting intellectual ferment gave birth to muckrakers as well as to sociolonomists, to writers of utopias as well as to such professional associations as the American Economic Association (AEA). The associations were formed under a leadership that stressed the need to abandon ruthless "laissez faire," and instead "to humanize" economics.

As noted of the AEA, "Richard T. Ely has praised Marx's Capital, as one of the "abused Class struggles and the need to humanize social relations. The muckrakers even more than sociolonomists, historians and the Workingmen's party thought that "books did not teach and educated men did not know reasons for workmen's behavior." (19)

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The book writing, however, followed his capital in judging Richard T. Ely's The Labor Movement in America as "visions of an anarchist or the dream of a socialist." Not was the failure of American sociology to understand the class struggles and the need to humanize social relations. The muckrakers even more than sociolonomists, historians and the Workingmen's party thought that "books did not teach and educated men did not know reasons for workmen's behavior." (19)
PART III

Imperialism and Racism

One thing should be said for Abraham Lincoln. He had not the result for empire nor for monopoly capitalism. As a young Congressman, he opposed the Mexican-American War and thereby throw away his chances for re-election. As a member of the South's oligarchy that supported the war, he looked forward to the victory over the South for the outlet of, and market for, its agricultural produce. As a result of the war, corporations have been estabished and an era of corruption in high places will follow. The money power of the country will endeavor to procure its own ends by working upon the prejudices of the people to establish a system of monopoly capital which combined with the economic remains of slavery to establish racism as a permanent feature of American life, even as European资本的carving up of Africa in the 1860's established the "white man's burdens," or racism, as the new feature for all of capitalist imperialism.

1. Rise of Monopoly Capital

The United States' plunge into imperialism in 1898 came so suddenly that Populism hardly noticed it. Although for a decade more Populism had reared its head, it never reached the height of the Log Cabin party of the 1840's, which had brought about the Civil War. The unprecedented rate of industrialization telescoped its victory over agriculture and its transformation from competitive to monopoly capitalism.

Because monopoly capital had appeared first in transportation, the Mid-Western wheat belt as well as the post-Reconstruction South resisted their inevitable bondage to the railroads that controlled the outlet of, and thus the prices for, their products. The agricultural population had been the first to revolt, the first to organize into a new political party, and the one mainly responsible for getting the anti-trust Act of 1897 and 1898.

It was this precisely which so shook up the Southern oligarchy that it quickly gave up its resistance of Northern capital's victory over agrarianism in order to unite with its former war enemy to destroy their mutual class enemy, Populism. Together, North and South pulled out all stops—the violence of Northern capital against labor was more than matched by the Southern oligarchy's encouragement of the revival of the rule of rape and forget against a mythical "Negro domination" inherent in Populism.

That additive of color, moreover, now had a prominent note attached to it: a veritable heaven on earth was promised the poor whites in the new white-only enterprises—textiles. So began "the great slaughter of the innocents" (21) that will first in the late 1890's explode into the unwritten civil war of unarmed, starving textile workers against armed, wealthy Southern monopolists—the great Gastonia, North Carolina strike. But for the late 1890's the Southern monopolists—in agriculture as in industry—became so frightened over the explosive force contained in Populism, the threat to their rule, that they happily embraced the North, Northern capital.

Monopoly capital first appeared in transportation before it appeared in industry, but from the first it was built on Andrew Carnegie's principles: "Pioneering doesn't pay." Empire building through consolidation did. Swallowing up of smaller capital, destruction of anti-trust competition alongside of monopolization, not to mention cheating on top of exploitation—that was the way of all great American fortunes built by men more foul than Jay Gould, with the expection of boorish politicians had to admit; after the fact, of course. In Rise of American Civilization, Charles A. Beard states: "The public land office of the United States was little more than a center of exchange for purposes of plunder; according to President Roosevelt's land commission, hardly a single great western estate had a title unainted by fraud." Monopoly was on its way in all fields and with just as unclean hands. (22) Rockefeller started the oil trust; Carnegie, steel; Morgan, banking; while Jay Gould, Leaded Stanford, James J. Hill, Cornelia Vanderbilt first kept to railroads and then spread fantasies outward unto all in order to impel the Federal Government to its imperative path.

(21) "Pioneering doesn't pay." Carnegie, steel; Morgan, banking; (22) see History of Great American Fortunes, by Gustave Le Page.
Slavery and Capitalism

Long before American capital's discovery of the easy road to wealth, Marx had described European capitalist exploitation of gold and silver in America. The expropriation, enslavement, and exploitation of the indigenous population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, and the starting of Africa into a worse form for the commercial hunting of black-skinned, signalized African production. These imperial proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. On the basis of the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theater, great fortunes sprung up like mushrooms in a day; primitive accumulation went on without the advance of a shifting.

The capitalist leap did not change the seeds in the United States even though its primitive accumulation had to be achieved within the confines of its own land. Direct slavery was still the method of developing Southern agriculture, wage labor that of developing industry. Despite the famous free factories in the West and its seemingly endless frontier, free land was still more, fantastically more, at the disposal of railroads than available to homesteaders, and that fact held though the "migration" was first to become more. Here too "great fortunes sprung up like mushrooms in a day" not for every man but for those who knew how to get the best and make it into monopoly form.

It is no historic secret that the later the bourgeois revolution against feudalism or slavery took place, the less complete it is, due to the height of class opposition between capital and labor, the lasting in the ablation of slavery in the United States and the absence of economic survivals of slavery which still exist in the country.

2. Plunge Into Imperialism

Nevertheless, as the strength of Populism and the solidarity of black and white that it forged showed, if slavery couldn't have persisted, much less dominated the life of the Negro, had they not been redefined by the "new" Northern capital. It was the geography of Jim Crowism that did the redefinition. The new geography of Southern economy suplanted the notion of the Northern capital. It is only the geography of Jim Crowism that is left the result, not the cause, of monopoly capital extending its hold over the Caribbean and the Pacific as it became transformed into imperialism, with the Spanish-American War.

So great, however, was the corruption of capitalism that the boundaries were blurred by it, that is to say, diverted by it from grasping capitalism's original American nature that would naturally transform itself into quasi-colonialist imperialism. The result was that when the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, it had the effect of transference into another out of nowhere. In truth it was long building up, Latin America since 1825, that while the Monroe Doctrine could protect it from European invasions, it could not protect from American aggression for which the doctrine was not designed. With the Monroe Doctrine it was unable to guard against the imperialist adventure of the Mexican-American War of 1848, on the same grounds that had been instigated, not by Northern capital but by the Southern wish to expand the territory for slavery, these facts that are incontrovertible preceded the Spanish-American War:

1. three full decades of phenomenal industrial expansion followed the end of the Civil War; (2) three full decades of undeclared civil war were waged against labor in the North; and (3) the combined might of Northern capital and the Southern aristocracy was used against the challenge from agriculture—Populism. The removal of the Federal leash was only the first of the signs in this uneasy alliance which two decades later jointly ventured into imperialism.

It could not be otherwise. The capitalistic mentality and the monstrous mentality are not very far apart when the domination of the exploiters is challenged by the working people. Indeed, monopoly capital needed Southern racism for its plunge into empire. North and South, the thirst for empire was brilliantly white.

As America shouldered the "White Man's Burden" she took up in the same time many Southern attitudes on the subject of race. "If the stronger and cleverer race," said the editor of the Atlanta Monthly, "is free to impose its will upon hewsters, alien peoples on the other side of the globe, why not in South Carolina and Mississippi?" Professor Wann Woodward notes that "These adventures in the Pacific and the Caribbean suddenly brought under the jurisdiction of the United States some eight million people of the colored races, a varied assortment of inferior races," as the Nation described them, "which, of course, could not be allowed to vote."

The Atlantic Monthly was no exception. Professor Woodward reminds us once again, this time in his article in the Progressive (Dec. 1891): "In the pages of Harper's, North and South, the North American Review can be found all the shibboleths of white supremacy." The daily press, of course, was no different.

The Boston Evening Transcript of 14 January, 1890, admitted that Southern race policy was "not the policy of the Administration of the very party which carried the country into and through a civil war to free the slave." And The New York Times of 10 May, 1890, reported editorially that the President, "... no longer daunted the suppression of the Negro Vote (in the South) as it used to be denounced in the reconstruction days. The necessity of it under the says law of self-preservation is candidly recognized."

No does that mean that the academic world that "should" know better was any different in New York than in Massachusetts. The doctrine of Anglo-Saxon superiority by which Professor John W. Burgess of Columbia University, Professor Alfred T. Mahan of the United States Navy, and Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana justified and rationalized American imperialism. Five little windows were built in the Philippines, Hawaii, and Cuba differed in no essentials.

(23) The People versus Joe Crow, by C. Vance Wood-ward, speech of campaign of 1894, reproduced and reprinted in the Chicago Daily News on the 1st of May, 1895, and in the Chicago Inter Ocean of the same date. This speech was delivered in the Chicago Inter Ocean of the same date. This speech was delivered at the Chicago Inter Ocean on May 1st, 1895, before the Miner's Union, and it was also published as a pamphlet by the People's Publishing Company, New York, under the title of "American Imperialism and the New World Order of Things."
from the race theories by which Senator Benjamin R. Tillman of South Carolina and Senator James K. Vardaman of Mississippi justified white supremacy in the South. Even Samuel Gompers and the A.F. of L., which began by opposing this imperialistic venture, ended by capitulating to it. Only the independent Negro movement maintained a consistent and principled opposition to this plunge into imperialism: 

...in 1898 the Afro-American Council... demanded an end to lynching and the enforcement of the 14th and 15th Amendments. This was the year of the Spanish-American War when the United States was introducing itself into the affairs of the African Methodist Episcopal Church Bishop, Henry M. Turner—were raised against the use of Negro troops in the United States' effort against the Boxer Rebellion in China. (24) 

3. Racism

This poison in the air from the smell of empire pervaded North as well as South even as it had already pervaded the West. Fear was now rife about carrying this Africa in the previous depictions. It is true that there is a link between the alleged "savage" in not sticking only to the dollar profits but participating both in making a living, but the actual occupation, American imperialism was not on the level of the exploitation and barbarism of Europe's conquest of Africa. The greater truth, however, is that Theodore Roosevelt's imperialism does not fundamentally differ from Britain's imperialistic "white man's burden," Germany's "kultur," or the German "Aryan." All white civilization showed its barbarism in the conquest of the whole Afro-American, Latin American, and Middle Eastern worlds. (25)

The debate over whether imperialism means a search for exports and investments or imports and "consumer choice" sheds no illumination on the roots of racism and its persistence over the decades. So that by some the hollowness of American democracy recuperates around the globe and makes the newly awakened giants of freedom in the economically underdeveloped world look sympathetically to the totalitarian state of Soviet which had not only repudiated it. Whether imperialism's exploitation was due to the need for cotton or copper, coffee or copra, cocoa or diamonds, super-profits for finite capital or "progress" for national governments, its inhumanity to man is what spawned its return home to root on native races as well as exploitative grounds.

The Spanish-American War was no sooner over than the United States began setting the door open to trade in China. The 1900 election campaign was built around this imperialistic note. It was not merely out of the lips of a young senator from Indiana that we heard jubilation (26): "The Philippines are ours forever... And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We will not retreat from either... We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race... When McKinley was assassinated there came to rule over this new empire from Latin America to the Philippines, and from Hawaii to some open doors in China and Japan, Theodore Roosevelt—\[that alleged trust buster and very real empire builder.\]

Racism, in the United States and/or abroad, helped pave the way for totalitarianism, with its out of "Aryanism" and its brutal destruction of an entire white race in the very heart of Europe. (27). Those who wish to forget that at the end of present-day apartheid South Africa was the "civilizing mission" of the white race which means, in fact, just horror as the extermination of the Herero tribes by the Germans and L. R. Kromer's reduction of 20 to 40 million peaceful Congolese to 8 million—were the goes who took the cutting blow of the Jews in Nazi Germany in a century...until the Nazi search for "superiority" was a challenge to their own area of exploitation.

Surely, on the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation when the holocaust of World War II is still fresh within the memory of living men, it is high time to stop playing psychological games with racism. It is precisely such playing with the question as to whether the Civil War was to be limited only to the question of Union, and not extended to the abolition of slavery, which both prolonged the war and left the revolution in human relations as unfinished a state then to this day we suffer from its state of incompleteness. In 1965 labor made one more try for a fundamental change.

4. New Awakening of Labor—the I.W.W.

The imperialist mask of the 20th century did not long go unchallenged.

First, the South while light industry bypassed the Negro, heavy industry did not. Being at the
very bottom of the social structure, capitalism

industry pushed the Negro into the worst paid in-

dustries. Since, however, as capitalist industrial-

ization developed, three very industries—coal,

steel, iron—became pivotal to the whole move-

ment, the Negro was very systematically placed in

industry. There was no mass migration North

until World War I, but in the South the Negro

did become an integral part of labor from the

earliest days of heavy industrialization—and a

militant member of whatever unions took root there.

Between the two extremes—textiles which em-

ployed no Negroes in the direct process of pro-

duction, and mines and steel mills in which Ne-

groes were more or less equal in number to

whites—there were the so-called strictly "Negro

jobs"—saw mills, fertilizer plants, etc. Those em-

ployed mainly Negroes. They remained unorgan-

ized. They were located usually so that the Negro

was as much isolated as a factory worker as if he

were a peasant still. Nevertheless the break from

share-cropping and personal dependence on plant-

er-merchant had been made.

By 1930 the United Mine Workers claimed one-

third of the total organized Negro labor force. By

an incident, the division with the craft union-

ism of the A.F. of L. was almost full of all from the

Western Federation of Miners, which merged into

the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) in

1913. It was an ill-conceived class struggle line,

industrial unionism 30 years ahead of the C.I.O. It

also had, first, a socialist, and then a syndicalist

philosophy of 'one big union' which would not

merely fight to better conditions of labor and raise

wages, but to control production.

At the height of its power, the I.W.W. claimed

membership of 300,000 of whom were Negroes. The

most important of the I.W.W. unions were

formed precisely in the South, the prejudice-

ridden South, in the lumber industries in

Louisiana and Texas and among the Longshore-

men and dockworkers in Baltimore, Norfolk and

Philadelphia. The Brotherhood of Timber Work-

ers in the lumber center of Louisiana, Texas and

Arkansas had 35,000 members in 1910, 50 per cent

of whom were Negroes.

1905 is a year that opens a new page in the role

of labor not only in America. It is the year of the

first Russian Revolution. It is the year of the first

victory of a colored race over a white one—with

Japan's victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese

War. However, neither Japanese labor nor Russian

fought their own governments. Instead the Social

Democratic leaders in both countries—Plekhanov

and Stalin—shook hands against capitalism and

chaosism in each country.

In the United States, too, we see the vanguard

role of the I.W.W., not only as labor in general,

but specifically in relationship to Negro labor who

thereby not only as "mass" but as reason re-

fashioned American unionism. The most promi-

nent of the Negro I.W.W. organizers was Ben

Fletcher who was joined with the founders of the

I.W.W., Haywood, Chaplin and others in their

opposition to World War I. (28)

Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of

the Negroes—no less than 77.7 per cent in 1905—

had remained in agriculture and were thus unin-

fluenced by the rise of the I.W.W. The Negro was

to experience no serious proletarianization and

urbanization until the First World War, when the

flow of immigrant labor was shut off and Nor-

thern capital was compelled to comb the South

for labor needed in war industries. By then the

war hysteria, persecution by the government and

imprisonment of its leaders brought about the de-

cline of the I.W.W. The only thing that awaited

the Negro in the North was isolation and extreme

inflation.

(28) See The Black Workers, by Sterling E. Stein and

Campbell A. Krice; and Negro Labor in the U.S., by

Charles S. Wesley.
PART IV
Nationalism and Internationalism

1. The Negro Moves North

"There is no use crying on the Lord—He never hears."—Cherry in Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe

One and one-half million Negroes left Southern farms to come North during and immediately after World War I. These two unprecedented waves of migration in 1914-1918 and again in 1921-1921 brought about an unparalleled population explosion that seemed to have happened over night, whether it was such a phenomenal growth in Negro population as in Gary, Ind., which experi enced a 1,200 per cent growth or only a 66.3 per cent increase in New York from 81,799 to 151,847. Detroit's Negro population between 1910-1920 jumped from a mere 5,541 to 45,928, a 613.8 per cent increase.

Far from finding paradise "up North," however, the Negroes soon discovered that they had been brought from Southern plantations to take the most ill-paid, back-breaking jobs in Chicago stockyards, Pittsburgh steel mills, Detroit auto factories, Philadelphia docks. Sometimes they had been brought in to break a strike, and in any case they found the union doors as closed to them as industry had been before. Indeed, as long as basic industries remained unorganized, the Negro couldn't become an integral part of the trade unions which were divided by crafts limited to the skilled workers. The color bar was thus both industry and union made.

The second shock that hit the migrant workers was that the move from country to city was not really to the big city. When the Negroes of small, overcrowded, filthy ghettos were moved to cities surrounded on all sides by prejudiced whites. Unemployment would come, and the end of the war, and the postwar period, and as new Negroes from the South poured in from North, the New Negroes faced the problem of organizing through competition for jobs. And the Klan had followed the Negroes with its strictures and attacks. Negro prejudices and outright attacks against them. This was whipped up further by the anti-foreign, anti-Red hysteria following the end of the war and the successes of the Russian Revolution, which had had a great impact on the world over, including the United States.

The social humiliation to which the Negroes were subjected daily, and out of the factory, in and out of the ghettos, was unrelenting. Negroes were segregated, and even in jobs where they were not segregated, were paid lower wages. They had to conform to the color bar, and the discrimination and harassment seemed to reign supreme.

Bloodied races; riots and a barbaric outburst of lynching climax ed the move North. "Red Summer 1919" was a description, not of the extension of the Russian Revolution, but of the fantastic number of race riots—no less than 16 in the last months of 1919.

The Negroes did not take all this lying down. They gave as good as they got. And then they searched for an organization, a philosophy that would express not only their frustrations and profound disillusionment, but also their spirit of revolt and desire for total freedom. But they found neither an existing Negro organization nor a Negro leadership. The so-called "talented tenth" might as well speak Greek as English. Communities between leadership—self-styled and otherwise—and mass had broken down.

Into this great divide within the American Negro West Indian printer and writer named Marcus Garvey stepped with a dream of "unifying all the Negro peoples of the world into one great body to establish a country and Government absolutely their own."

2. Garveyism vs. "Talented Tenth"

"We are the descendants of a suffering people; we are the descendants of a people determined to suffer no longer."

—Marcus Garvey

In January 1916 Marcus Garvey began to publish a weekly called NEGRO WORLD, claiming to reach "the mass of Negroes throughout the World." Very nearly overnight it attained a circulation of 25,000, and at its height in 1920-1921 claimed 300,000. It literally shook up all the colonial world and was banned in most of Africa. (19)

Its internationalism did not exhaust itself by its West Indian editorship, nor by its home in the United States, nor by its appeal to Africa. Sections of it were printed in French and Spanish for the benefit of other West Indian and Central American Negroes. Garvey's editorials were always addressed to "The Fellows of the Negro Race." Its pages stirred with pride over the heroes of the Negro: "The story of the Negro slave revolts in America to the Zulu Revolt of 1906 against British rule from the rise of the Ethiopian empire to Toussaint L'Ouverture's victory against the French in Haiti."

There were, as well, newly-told tales of great African civilizations "when Europe was inhabited by a race of cannibals, a race of savages, naked, bearded and pagan..." Black men, you were once great; you shall be great again. Let not courage, faith and faith, go forward. The thing to do is get organized, keep separated and you will be expelled, you will be expelled, you will be expelled. (20)

(20) Mr. Green Bennett's 'A People in Peril' was based on interviews with the editors of Negro, especially Horace Minor's "The People's Voice," of which he was editor. 'The Negro World,' his weekly paper in New York, is the organ of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and this organization is still an active body of Negroes who are trying to establish a LeNigeria in the Western Sudan and an African republic in South Africa. The Negro World is distributed in Africa and other continents, and has a wide circulation. Its masthead proclaims 'The Negro World, weekly organ of The Universal Negro Improvement Association, by Marcus Garvey, New York City.'
killed. Get organized, and you will compel the world to respect you. If the world fails to give you consideration, because you are black men, because you are Negroes, four hundred millions of you shall through organization shake the pillars of the universe and bring down creation, even as the black man in the future will be done out: Negro's to mainstream of American life. I but thereby the Negro intellectuals also proved how isolated they were from the profound earnest spirit of Americans, that of Negroes, whose total despair of ever achieving full democracy within the post-World War I American civilization.

Where they had urged and were proud of the Negro's participation in the war, Garvey lashed out: "We are not only Negroes over the world that when the white men say—yes, there is a black man in the future, they have to tell us what we are going to do for the black man in the future will be done by him and done by his own hand."

Long before the African revolutions came onto the states scene, Marcus Garvey raised the slogan "Africa for the African" and among the European imperialists, the concept of "Africa for the African" anticipated the African revolutions that would put an end to Africanism of the "talented tenth" of Du Bois and of Nat Turner for partial self-determination of the League of the German colonies. (my emphasis) It was the first time that a Negro organization was established on a country-wide basis. At its height in 1920-1921, it claimed six million. It was overwhelmingly protestant. Marcus Garvey had appealed to the Negroes over the heads of the established Negro leaders who lived in a world far removed from the established order. It was precisely to this great unrest that the Harlem Renaissance and what became known as the "New Negro" owe their existence. The mass movement gave the "talented tenth" their voice and not the other way around. (22)

It was not the failure in Garvey's scheme, like the money collected for the Black Star Line, that made Du Bois, along with almost all other Negro intellectuals, actually sign a petition addressed to the United States Department of Justice, demanding his deportation. It was that the American Negro intellectual had never been able to break through to the Negro masses. "Garvey must certainly had. In retrospect, W. E. B. Du Bois finally saw it and had to write: "It was a grandiose scheme, utterly impracticable as a feature; and Garvey proved as not an enlightenmer, but a master of propaganda. Within a few years of his movement, his newspaper and plans, reached Europe and Asia, and penetrated every corner of Africa.

To other intellectuals, like Ralph Bunche, Garvey remained beyond comprehension even as he was dropped on the Garvey theatricals, the black man of America was exactly where Garvey had found him, though a little bit sadier, perhaps a bit poorer—if not wiser. (25) Dr. Bunche, clearest, was no wiser.

(20) Black Stars by Edmund Quincy, ed. (University Press, 1961), p. 12. Marcus Garvey, "The Story of My Life," 1897, p. 12. The Negro's Struggle for Freedom. Marcus Garvey, "Africa for the African," 1923, p. 12. Marcus Garvey's "Africa for the African." Garvey's scheme, like the money collected for the Black Star Line, that made Du Bois, along with almost all other Negro intellectuals, actually sign a petition addressed to the United States Department of Justice, demanding his deportation. It was that the American Negro intellectual had never been able to break through to the Negro masses. (22) Garvey must certainly had. In retrospect, W. E. B. Du Bois finally saw it and had to write: "It was a grandiose scheme, utterly impracticable as a feature; and Garvey proved not an enlightener, but a master of propaganda. Within a few years of his movement, his newspaper and plans, reached Europe and Asia, and penetrated every corner of Africa.

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(23) In Black Mass Convent organizes Garvey's "Wondership" which dwindles off the Negro Race of the World. Garvey's scheme, like the money collected for the Black Star Line, that made Du Bois, along with almost all other Negro intellectuals, actually sign a petition addressed to the United States Government, demanding his deportation. It was that the American Negro intellectual had never been able to break through to the Negro masses. (22) Garvey must certainly had. In retrospect, W. E. B. Du Bois finally saw it and had to write: "It was a grandiose scheme, utterly impracticable as a feature; and Garvey proved as not an enlightener, but a master of propaganda. Within a few years of his movement, his newspaper and plans, reached Europe and Asia, and penetrated every corner of Africa.

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3. Marxism

"When in 1920 the American government started to investigate and to suppress radical propaganda among Negroes, the small radical Negro groups in America realized the truth of the old saying, 'publishing the fact that the Socialist and the Communitarian standing for the emancipation of the Negroes and the oppressed of all nations could do nothing for them. Then, I think, for the first time in America began the process of a new understanding of the National Question and asked 'all spheres, particularly those who have definite information on any of these very complicated questions, to express their opinion and make suggestions for amendments or additions . . ."

Lenin used the word, "national," in its broad sense of oppressed nations and minority groups; and included both national minorities and colonial minorities in the Theses. In his numerous speeches on the National Question, throughout World War I and again in his 1918 Theses after he had gained power in Russia, Lenin emphasized that concrete historical situations, not abstract considerations, formed the focal point of both the theory and the action on the National Question.

The decisive thing was that "all national oppression calls forth resistance of the broad masses of people." It is inefficient to state that revolutionaries would support these movements, he maintained. It is not only a question of support. It is a question of support and the development of national minorities into a full-fledged nation. Lenin stated this in his polemics with some Bolshevik right-wingers who were fighting against his Theses on the National and Colonial Questions and preliminary to that Congress he had included the "Negro in America," and the National Question and asked "all comrades, particularly those who have definite information on any of these very complicated questions, to express their opinion and make suggestions for amendments or additions . . ."

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If the movement developed into diversionary channels, as the Garvey movement did, and if the socialists were unable to make a dent in its ranks, it only proves that the only way to influence masses in motion is by understanding the underlying, economic, philosophic and social causes, not by throwing epithets at them.

Those who failed to understand the principles of the Marxist approach to the National Question apply to the Negro struggle for assimilation into the national culture as much as to the European national struggle for independence from its culture the very ones who were disoriented when the African Revolutions in our era opened both as national revolutions and under a banner of Marxist Humanism and internationalism.

Until the Communists began to vie for this third world in our era, Lenin's 1920 Theses on the National and Colonial Question seemed to have been "lost." Their "rediscovery" of the Theses in Khrushchev's time was for the same purpose as their "application" of it to the American Negro in 1928 when it was slogansized as "Self-Determination of the Negroes in the black belt." This sounded to the Negroes as yet one other form of segregation. By the time of World War II it became outright betrayal.

(Paradoxically enough, the demand for a separate territory for the black nation is the very basis of today's Black Muslim movement. While its origins date back to the remnants of the Garvey movement, it is only recently that they have come to national prominence and claim 100,000 members. Its negative features of their program—of anti-white—that wins them a following. Their positive program—whether it refers to the superiority of men over women, of Islam over Christianity, or their rejection of the very idea of integration—makes them only peripheral to the mainstream of the Negro struggle today rather than at the heart of it.]

(When the Black Muslims try to separate the races again at this stage, they not only cannot compare in mass allegiance with that won by Marcus Garvey at a far different historic period, but they find themselves following some of the caucuses within the unions rather than leading out of the unions. With the rise of the CIO the Negro did become an integral part of the labor movement, and thus the frustrations that persist in the life of a minority in this country are inseparable from the general struggle for a new society here. Greater detail on the Muslim movement is contained in The Black Muslims in America, by C. Eric Lincoln, Beacon, 1961. See also their official newspaper, Muhammad Speaks.)
PART V

from Depression through World War II

The dream part of American civilization, with its mass production, "non-entanglement in Europe," and just era hallucinations about the "new capitalism" whose prosperity would be endless because its "exceptionalism" made it immune to economic crisis, came crashing down on everyone's head with the economic collapse in 1929.

Production had come to a near-steady state. The unemployed reached fantastic proportions—17 million. Fully one-third of the nation—the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, had to admit—was ill-fed, ill-housed, ill-clad. It was also ill-paid when it did work. For the conditions of labor, with the introduction of the hollies in the 1930's, had worsened. It remained what Marx had described the English factories had been—a House of Terror. Its barrow-like life made the more unbearable with a speed-up Marx had never witnessed in his lifetime. What, above all, President Roosevelt did not admit was this: the workers' dissatisfaction with capitalism was total.

No one any longer believed what the rulers told them—whether that concerned "peace, prosperity and progress" or the speed of the production line or custom. Along with the rest of white America, labor may have been blind to the Negro as the touchstone of American Civilization. But with the Depression in the early 1930's, labor experienced a dislocation with capitalist society, that it included the craft unions and the semi-skilled classifieds to keep themselves isolated from the overwhelming majority of the labor force— the semi-skilled and unskilled. Along with the desperation of capital, craft unionism had to go.

1. The CIO Changes the Face of the Nation and Makes a Break in Negro "Nationalism"

New unions and new forces emerged in the upswell of the 1930's to give birth to the CIO. This was not simply a trade union organization that finally established industrial unionism in the United States. The speed with which this was done—1932-1937—when in Europe it had taken decades—brought it to the state of organization of Europe's socialist trade unions. And, though each had spontaneously arrived at a new method of struggle, the point is that the simultaneousness of the SIT-DOWN electrified the world of labor and shook capitalism to its very foundations.

Everything was now about the CIO (40). For the first time, on a national scale, white and black labor had united to gain union recognition. For the first time, organized labor struck where it hurt capital most, in all the major industries—rubber, coal, steel, auto. For the first time, employed and unemployed did not work at cross purposes. On the contrary, the unemployed would often, along with another new phenomenon—women's auxiliaries—join the picket lines while the workers sat down inside. For the first time, control over the conditions of labor—the recognition of the union—predominated over all other demands, even of wages. Nowhere more than in America had the capital outcry about the "invasion of private property" produced a greater militancy than among the workers who insisted on sitting down at those machines they had always worked but never controlled.

The CIO changed the industrial face of the nation. It created a break also in the "nationalism" of the Negro.

Black Labor and Talented Tenth (49)

Just as during the first phase of "Nationalism," when the Negro worker found himself opposed by his "talented tenth," so this time too. The time it couldn't find "liberty." Although it itself has nowhere enough capital or power similarly to do the exploitation of labor, that is vitally itself just with the crumbs from capital's table, the talented tenth nevertheless could not be kept from the argument that "the best Negro of the Negro" as the most "prejudiced" among the whites in the labor. There is nothing new about this argument; it has been passed around by the democracy from time immemorial. (41)

Not all the talented tenth and established Negro organizations opposed black labor making common cause with white labor. There were notable exceptions, the most outstanding being the Pittsburgh Courier. Both its editor, Robert E. Park, and columnist, George S. Schuyler, in 1937, not (40) Black Workers and the New Order, by George S. Schuyler, 1937, pages 1-4. (41) In Negro, by Joel Selman, League for Industrial Democracy Pamphlet, New York City, 1937. See also THE CIO and the Negro, by F. M. Pearson, Washington, D.C. 1939.

(42) In this context, the individual Negro encounters C. L. R. James, America, pages 155-162.}(23)
only did the best reportorial job on the organization of the movement toward white and black solidarity, but leaned out against established Negro leaders. Considering Schuyler’s present reactionary stance, it is important to see how differently he spoke under the impact of the CIO:

“Nowhere were the ‘educated’ climate cooperating with the spirit to do all the work of organization, save in a few notable instances and there by now and then as a last ditch.... Their derision of the struggling Negro workers in this crisis constitutes one of the most shameful chapters in our recent history. The new position Negro labor has won in this past year has been scored in spite of the old leadership. It has been won with new leadership, militant young men and women from the ranks of labor and shrewd black veterans of the pick and shovel and the black factories.”

It is true that, without the Negro, the CIO could not have organized the steel industry where Negro labor was plentiful. It is yet true that labor’s unity was a feat that could never again be controverted, not even when the Negro again strikes out on his own during World War II and presently.

2. March on Washington

The outburst of World War II in 1939 and the gearing of the American factories for war output very nearly wiped out unemployment—white unemployment. But nearly 25 per cent of the Negro work force remained unemployed in 1940. The very fact that, both South and North, the Negro had become urbanized and urbanized only sharpened his sense of oppression as a national minority. The very fact that, both South and North, the Negro was winning more his ghettonization and unemployment outside the more familiar Negro centers, the great contrast among the Negroes did not go unheeded by the American Negro press and Negro leaders.

A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, organized a March on Washington Movement. This all-Negro mass demonstration planned to mobilize 100,000 for its march on the nation’s capital. Under its pressure President Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 8802 which barred discrimination in war industries. While this small victory for Fair Employment Practices Act did stop the March on the capital, it did not stop the movement as an organization. During which, they then proceeded to transform itself into a Committee to End Jim Crow in the Army. (42)

Again, the winning of some of his demands only sharpened the Negro’s sense of lacking all rights. In housing, especially, conditions became unbearable as more and more thousands of workers, white and Negro, moved into the industrial centers. Neither the CIO, which by now had about one and one-third million Negro members, nor the March on Washington Movement in a narrower field, had addressed what the Negro was fighting for—full democratic rights. They seemed impossible to achieve.

However, this time, far from either joining any “Back to Africa” movement or taking the defensive when attacked byKKK and such racist elements, the Negroes began to offensiv. In the year 1942 there was an outbreak of mass Negro demonstrations in New York, Chicago, and Detroit. It was the year also of the first great wartime strike among miners which, inevitably, had a Negro leader in the Negro unions. The American Negro took the offensive and showed great determination in what he attacked.

Something new occurred also in the sense that there were instances of white political leaders in Detroit, where the CIO and other Negro unions have won rights and Negro work in and out of industry. Although all, none dared attack it as unpatriotic. None that is except the Communists.

3. The Communists Oppose the Independent Negro Movement

At the beginning of World War II, the slogan of the American Communists was “The Yankee Are Not Coming.” They tried duplicating the treachery of the Stalin-Hitler pact by joining with the fascist “American Friends—No Communists, anything at all which would keep America from winning the war on the side of the Allies was justifiable. If they opened anything at all in the original organization of the March on Washington Movement, it was that it was not militant enough because it allowed itself to be led by A. Philip Randolph. All this was changed overnight when, in June, 1941, Germany invaded Russia. The imperialist war was now declared by those quick-change artists, who undeniably followed Russian foreign policy lines, to have become “a war of national liberation.” They began demanding the immediate establishment of a “second front”—everything that is, except the Negro in the United States.

Now they began to attack A. Philip Randolph as a veritable “subversive” and the March on Washington Movement as being “too hasty a project.” By its fight for jobs for Negroes, said the Communist Party’s Vice-Presidential candidate and Negro Leader, James Ford, it was “creating and using dangerous means in the cause of the Negro people and utilizing their justified grievances as a weapon of opposition to the war effort.”

These “justified grievances” didn’t seem to worry, in the area of Communists, even as mild a program as that of the NAACP. As that the Gestapo in the United States.

Many spokesmen of the Communists and what they had done on such cases as the Scottsboro Boys in the South were taken attack. As George Schuyler put it: “Whereas in the one time they were all for stopping production because of Jim Crow employment policies, low pay or bad working conditions, they are now all-out for the Government policy of the wartime strikes and have actually endorsed labor conciliation, i.e., human slavery. Everything must be done to save Russia even if Negroes’ rights have to go by the board.” The Communists proceeded also to rewrite Negro history. Robert Minor, in “The Heritage of the Communist Political Association,” discovered that “the abolition of nation oppression is a bourgeois-democratic reform” and therefore is achievable
Within the framework of American capitalism so long as the "Negro people pursue the correct course—the Frederick Douglass course of full support of the war..."

Outside of the slanderous statement about that great Negro Abolitionist, Frederick Douglass, as if he uncritically supported the Civil War, the Civil War did finally come into a revolutionary war which abolished slavery. It thus merited also the support of the international working class, which was given by the International Workingmen's Association headed by Karl Marx. World War II, on the other hand, resulted in an imperialist war, as was evident by the type of support given it by American Communists. They came out (1) in support of the no-strike pledge by the trade unions, not to mention being for company incentive plans; (2) against any independent activities by Negroes for their right either on the job, or in the army, or nagatives; (3) helping railroad the Trotskyists to jail under the Smith Act; and (4) vying with the N.A.A.C.P. in "patriotism," that is to say calling "subversive" all who disagreed with them. Even the N.A.A.C.P. had become too militant for them.

(Above all, Frederick Douglass was a leader of the Abolitionist movement which did not stop its independent activity during the Civil War. Though he unequivocally supported Lincoln when he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, here is how he described Lincoln at the unveiling of the President's Monument to Lincoln: "It must be admitted, truth compels me to admit, even here in the presence of the monument we have erected to his memory, Abraham Lincoln was not, in the fullest sense of the word, either our man or our model. In his interests, in his associations, in his habits of thought, and in his prejudices, he was a white man, he was pre-eminently the white man's President, entirely the President of white men... You are the children of Abraham Lincoln.

How Much Has The South Changed?

We are at best only his stepchildren; children by adoption, children by force of circumstance and necessity. But... we extort you to despise not the humble offering we this day uncivil to view; for while Abraham Lincoln saved for you a country, he delivered us from a bondage, according to Jefferson, one hour of which was worse than ages of the oppression your fathers rose in rebellion to oppose.)

During the 1943 mass demonstration, the Communist Congressman Benjamin A. Davis appeared with Mayor LaGuardia in Harlem and on the same platform spoke against the N.A.A.C.P.

According to Earl Browder: "The immediate achievement in this period under the present American system of complete equality for the Negroes has been made possible by the crusade and by the character of this war as a people's war of national liberation." And just in case there was any illusion about the "complete equality for the Negroes" requiring any activity, the Negro Communist, Davey A. Wilkerson, spelled it out for all as no move, and no less, than the "full support of the win-the-war policies of our Commander-in-Chief..."

So eager were the Communists in their support of the Roosevelt Administration that they spoke not only of "war-time only" but post-war plans. We don't mean those of the Cold War that they did not anticipate. No, in that same 1944 pamphlet, What The Negro Wants, Wilkerson wrote "To draft idealistic war plans for the Negroes..." draft. idealistic war plans for the Negroes..."

Shades of the Bourbon South!

No wonder the Negroes by the thousands—for they had joined the Communist Party during the 1930's—flew to their Communist Party wards and were not again fooled by the new change in line that came with the Masonic Cold War, "which made the American Communists once again, (for how long?) come out "for the Negro liberation."
PART VI

the Negro as Touchstone of History

Rip Van Winkle awoke after twenty years; the old radicals awoke from their torpor on 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, as they did at the outbreak of the Civil War when Marx considered their high-sounding "Marxist" opposition to wage slavery "as well as chattel slavery as no more than exception from reality. After Marx's death, Friedrich Engels, his life-long collaborator, was so aroused against the American socialists for isolating themselves from the existing trade unions, that he wrote a friend that Bismark's anti-socialist laws "were a misfortune, not for Germany, but for America to which they consigned the "Kniest:""

Insofar as American Marxism is concerned, the Negro Question, could not be separated from the question of the Emancipation of Labor in this country. The existing trade unions escaped the wave of the Negro strike in the early 1920's. Neither the actual struggles led by Marcus Garvey, nor the public writings of Lenin on the National Question, could arouse them from their torpor on the Negro Question.

By 1941 the policy of leninist American Communists bore no resemblance whatever to the Marxist theory of liberation either on the question of the emancipation of labor or the self-determination of oppressed nations. Long before this transformation into opposite, however, Claude McKay rightly accused American Communists of being unwilling "to face the Negro Question." In a word, they too are products of the bourgeois society in which they live and thus do not see in full the contradictions of American Civilization; its Achilles heel is enshrined not in the present class struggle, but in the specifics of the "additive" color in these class struggles. Precisely because of this the theory of class struggle must be as comprehensive as when Marx first unfurled the banner of humanism.

From 1848 Marx, at one and the same time, fought capitalism and "vulgar communism." His exposition at its root—not alone in ownership of property or even in exploitation of labor, but also in the features of its philosophy, "popular culture," political superstructure. It is this total underlying philosophy of the ruling class which assumes the "validity" of a law of nature. (44) If it must be abolished, uprooted. Abolition of the profit motive and transformation of production into state property could not achieve this unless what was most degrading of all in class societies—the division between mental and manual labor—was abolished and a new society established on truly human foundations.

Because slavery stained American civilization as it wrought freedom from Great Britain, the Negro gave the lie to its democracy. At first he was alone in so doing. But with the birth of Abolitionism, and for three stormy decades thereafter, American civilization was placed on trial by whites as well as Negroes who together focused on the antagonism between the ideal of freedom and the reality of slavery. The Negro became the touchstone of this class-ridden, color-conscious, defined civilization which had an ever-expanding frontier but no unifying philosophy.

To achieve unity between North and South not only did a Civil War become inevitable but it was compelled to unfurl a new banner—Emancipation Proclamation—before it could win this long, bloody war. Thereby it also proved that, at bottom, the sectional struggle was in fact a class struggle. For those who thought that this truth was limited to the struggle between North and South, but did not hold for the "clandestine" Western democracy, where "everyman" could become a property owner, an independent farmer, the agricultural crisis of the 1880's and 1890's came as a greater shock than the Civil War.

Frontier Illusion

For the first time since this country achieved its independence, it became clear to all that capital, rather than the pioneer on the covered wagon, put its mark on this nation. The theorem of the frontier—the historian, Frederick J. Turner—rightly records this mark upon the expansion westward which dominated the development of this new nation "conceived in liberty":

"But when the arid lands and the mineral resources of the Far West were reached no capital was possible by the old individual pioneers methods. Here expansive irrigation works must be constructed, cooperative activity was demanded in utilization of the water supply, capital beyond the reach of the small farmer was required... Iron and coal mines, transportation facilities, textile and iron manufactories are concentrated in a few corporations, principally the United States Steel Corporation. The world has never seen such a transcendental capital and so complete a systematization of economic processes."

What Professor Turner does not record is that, with the destruction of Populism, the frontier dream "passed into" monopoly capital. That is to say, from being the distinguishing mark of the American Civilization, the frontier disappeared as a way out from the class-begotten civilization. Monopoly capital and its thrust into imperialism, in no doubt, did mean for the white working people what it meant for the Negroes the total collapse of their aspirations. That's precisely why the Negro remained the Achilles heel of this civilization.

But white material progress and "reforms" may have helped sustain an illusion long since passed among the rest of the population, the frontier became an illusion, not the reality of American Civilization which by the turn of the century took its place alongside the other capitalist civilizations carving empires out of the African, Asian, Middle

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(44) See chapter on "Exploitation of Communists" in Capital, by Karl Marx, Vol. I.
Eastern and Latin American countries. What is pivotal to the study of the role of the Negro in American civilization is that, at each turning point in history, he anticipates the next stage of development of labor in its relationship with capital. Because of his dual oppression, it could not be otherwise.

1. Urbanization of Negroes

Take the present shift of the Negro struggle from the North to the South. Although at the moment it seems predominantly student youth in leadership, this new force did not arise vacuo. It arose within the context of a growing urbanization and industrialization of the South. The most important effect of the post-war industrialization of the South has been that capital is no longer the main source of Southern wealth. Although cotton remains the bread most important crop in the United States, the South is permeated with the ideology stemming from its economic and social basis which has dominated the South from 1790 to 1940—cannot hold on to the quasi-feudalistic relations when its economic base has passed. Of 12,685,000 production workers in the United States in 1930, three million were in the South (including the border states), and in the deep South there were two million production workers.

By 1980, there was an increase of half million production workers in the United States (total: 14,195,000); the number remained substantially unchanged in the Southern border states, but in the Deep South there was a 10 per cent increase, or 2.2 million.

The urbanization of the Negro when, for the first time in history, there is a slight majority of Negroes living North, has meant a phenomenal shift from country to city with the South. Between 1920 and 1960 the move of the Negro population from rural to urban as it fell in rural areas from 37 per cent to 27 per cent, indeed, 50 per cent, North and South, according to the 1960 census, the Negro is more urbanized than the white: 72 per cent for the Negro against 70 per cent for whites. The trend has continued.

This movement of the country to city shows itself in yet another way, which is to consider the labor force 14-years old and over. (In this case, the term "non-white" includes also American Indians, Orientals, etc., who total less than one per cent of the population, even after the inclusion of Alaska and Hawaii since 1960.)

In 1960, this age group numbered almost 40 per cent of the total non-white population, or about six million out of eight million. Of these, more than four million, or 60 per cent were urban, and of the non-white million out of 19 million, or 32 per cent were rural. By 1980, the group had dropped to 35 per cent of the total of non-whites, or 7.5 million out of 20.5 million; but its urban-rural ratio had increased to 78 per cent urban as against 22 per cent rural, or 5 million to one-and-a-half million. In 1960, 17 per cent of this group worked in agriculture; ten years later it was only 7 per cent. That 83 per cent of the non-white labor force over 14 years of age is either working or looking for work in America's cities is the impertative human motive force behind the unfolding struggle in the South.

If the great strength and surge of the Negro struggle from the post-World War II years to the post-World War II years was centered in the North—and at the beginning of World War II, it was Far West (45)—the great strength and surge of the past decade has been in the South where the Negro masses are remaining to fight for new human relations in the very heart and stronghold of American repression. The new stage of Negro struggle that began with the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott movement revealed the proletariat stamp in the organization of the protest—105,000 Negroes walked for one year—and in the creative self-activity of organizing its own transport and weekly mass meetings to assure and develop their own working existence.

The new stage of struggle deepened when high school and college youths in Greensboro, North Carolina, on February 1, 1960 sat down at a department store's segregated lunch counter. (46) From an entirely different source, it was as spontaneous at the refusal of Mr. Rev. Parks to move to the back in the Montgomery bus. The move from these struggles reached, when the Freedom Riders did daily originate North and included whites as well as Negroes, was inspired by the movement in the South. The South, not the North, led. The committees which sprang up to coordinate the work followed, rather than led, these spontaneous movements which were outside the scope of the established organizations.

This is true not only in relationship to the still-born of the CIO called "Operation Dixie," but also of the Negro organizations from the NAACP to the CORE from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). All followed the spontaneously emerging movement. These united either the but boycotters of 1955-6 of the Freedom Riders of 1961. As the move

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concerned with white labor, much less the Negro, though numbers nearly two millions within the AFL-CIO and many more unorganized outside. The Negro is still the last to be hired and the first to be fired. The duality of this era of politicization—automation—daily throwing people by the thousands and tens of thousands into a permanent army of unemployed intensifies the Negro's feeling of frustration both against capitalism and the labor bureaucracy. In its report of August 1962, the Bureau of Labor Statistics says that, as compared to a 46 per cent of the white labor force being unemployed, the Negro unemployment number 11.4 per cent. But it is precisely theseiations and precisely among Negroes where the Negro is most numerous and most integrated that the American worker has, ever since 1916, raised the most fundamental question of any society: what kind of labor must man perform, why must there be such a division between thinking and doing, between work and life.

This search for a philosophy of life, that is to say a link between theory and practice, resolved a world-shaking impetus from the African Revolutions which showed the inevitability of the Freedom NOW movement.

### 2. The Two-Way Road to African Revolutions

The most exciting chapter in human affairs since World War II was written by the African Revolutions. The people's conferences, in 1958 when Ghana was the only independent Pan-Africanist state, but the making of a Negro International.

Tiny Guinea, often thought of as France's under her freedom and thereby reaffirmed that the greatest force for the recognition of human being. In less than a decade no fewer than 22 African nations won their independence.

The banner under which this freedom from colonialism has been achieved is Pan-Africanism—this is not a purely African phenomenon. It has had a major development, in which the American contribution is important. Where standard history texts, in India and the United States, still dwell in detail on the old World war trade of rum, molasses and slaves—between Africa, the West Indies and the United States—it is the superfluous triangular development of internationalism, passion in action and ideas which is the dominant force today.

All the "utopian" ideas that have since become facts, underlying philosophies of actual revolutions—from the theory of Negritude to the slogan of "Popular Unionism"—from nationalism to an international of the Negro; and from freedom to Pan-Africanism, have had their origin in this vital traffic between the United States, in India and the United States. With human relations spanning the continents, came also the wave of Negro history. As the historian, Carter C. Woodson, put it, "The race has a past and it did not begin on the cotton and sugar plantations of America." Greater than the intellectual interchange are the roots of the history of Negro struggles in this country—from the time of slave revolts to Populism—which inspired such revolts in Nyasaland as the Chibembo Rising of 1910.

(47) As we saw, the greatest man movement among Negroes in the United States was led by a West Indian, Marcus Garvey. Whether many ideas came to Africa from actual slave revolts and continuous struggles since the end of slavery in this country, or was transmitted through intellectual channels—and the Negro colleges played no small part in training many of the present leaders of the independent African states—it would be the point beyond recognition to try to attribute to the Negro America the actual world-shaking events that the Africans themselves participated in during the 1950's. The absurdity of such a claim would be seen once we move from what was British Africa to what was French Africa, and attempt to give France credit for the revolt of Soweto in South Africa because he participated in Paris congresses.

No, in stressing the exchange of ideas we do not mean to impose a one-to-one relationship—that is a direct, immediate, invariable, or automatic connection—between ideas and revolution either in the past or presently either in the United States, the West Indies or Africa.

The Underlying Humanism

The historic greatness of today's development, no matter what the roots are, from the spontaneous, the dialoging, the political maturity of our age and our world. It is not just black, or even colored, but white as well. Nor is it directed only against Western imperialism as the East German and Hungarian Revolutions for freedom from Russian totalitarianism showed.

The shock of recognition comes from the Humanism underlying all revolutions in advanced as in technologically underdeveloped countries, the United States or Africa, Asia or Latin America, the Middle East or Western Europe. The nationalism of such words as "Bhure," "Hitler," "Bophuthatswana," "Freedom Fighters," have merged into the world-wide Freedom NOW.

Recently, NBC interviewed some newly-arrived African students. One Nigerian student was asked: "But you happened to choose this country although a philosophy had also been offered you in London where there is less discrimination than here. What is it that the African does get as a good education in Great Britain and enters the career service?" But the common education in the United States—precisely because any Negro, the African included, encounters discrimination in Africa on a revolutionary and that is what I want to be." The African student summed up the two-way road from and to African Revolutions more lucidly than all the standard history texts and the current liberal journalistic reports. Also pointed is the stage we may call "What Happens After 1970?"—what happens after independence? Is it an end of "artistic" rivalry,

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(47) We have cited ourselves, of necessity, to the events of the African Revolutions which relate to the presence of the African student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Negro Student Union is part of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, an organization of more than 250 campus groups in the United States. The NC Negro Student Union is in direct communication with the NC NAACP, the NAACP of NC, the Congress of Racial Equality, the American Society for African Culture, New York, New York.
than imperialism, to take over? Is the relationship between Africans and Negro Americans as rank and file, to be subject to the world's governmental aid programs? And are ideas to be fated into the narrowed concept of the African people?

What Happens AFTER?

Of the African socialists, Sekou Touré is one who appeals most to the left in both Africa and the United States because of the historic sweep of his death and the promise of his views for his little country's "No!" to the mighty (but not almighty) De Gaulle. In 1962 he is satisfied with the world which is shying and its challenging philosophy:

"The rhetoric resulting from all human knowledge has no nationality. The ridiculous disputes about the origin of such and such a discovery do not interest us since they add nothing to the value of the discovery. It can there be said that African unity offers the world a new humanism essentially founded on the universal solidarity and cooperation between people without any racial and cultural antagonism and without narrow egotism and privilege. This is above and beyond the problem of West Africa and as far removed from the quarrels which divide the highly developed countries as are the conditions and aspirations of the African people."

The condition in the African masses—all peoples are capable at any time of administering themselves and of developing their personality. There are no minor peoples except under slavery or foreign oppression.—he said. The sweep of Lenin on the eve of the Russian Revolution when he maintained that "only from below" can the revolution become invincible. But, in the "redolence of its African personality. In contrast to the discovery of the genius of the Russian proletariat as "serfdom," the beginning of the international revolution, this great African leader excludes all oppression. "African masses, the masses of the black brotherhood, are certain that the permanent personality, her civilization and her proper structure, to become an integral structure of all her system of states or ideologies whatever."

At his speech at the Constitutive Congress of the Party of African Federation where he steered out "Marx's positive contribution. They are the philosophy of Humanism, economic theory, dialectic method." and of these he chose the Humanism as the most basic. More recently (May 1962) his statement about the affinity of Russian Communist and American capitalism was both true and hilarious: "The program of the 22nd Russian Communist Party Congress is like that of the United States—completely materialistic—a civilization of fridges and TV. You have Communism, you have American free enterprises, and you have the plan in Western Europe."

"Each ideology has a truth, but only in part. Where is the ideology which is not all materialistic, which permits room for spiritual? That is our ideology. I think I should say in all just that we use the socialist method which preserves liberty. That is why here in Senegal it is the direction of the plan. (21) Culturally, we are not Negro blending on that of Europe. Here (turning to the wall of his presidential palace) is a beautiful painting that is authentically African, the Bouquet art de Paris."

"I think that the division between Monrovia and Conakry is a superfluous division. We are for the unity of the two African Rivers. The unity they use now is that of East and West, but in Africa the problem is not one of state capitalism. The problem which is as supreme is the new cultural existence. We want a direction which is African. The division between Monrovia and Conakry is not the real problem. The real problem is a struggle between the USA and the USSR."

When President Sekou Touré calls for full re-Africanization, the problem is one of Négritude. But Africa is essentially greatly retarded and the need is for the scientific technology that Europe has, the efficiency of the Americans. We have a dual problem, that of development and the problem of Négritude. It is a problem of method. It is necessary to have a method to approach this reality."

"Négritude isn't pure resurrection. It is a modern adaptation of African history and culture. We take the technique of Europe in order to create a new civilization for the African of the 20th century."

"There is a socialization, but the socialism in Europe is German because the African reality and Europe is dependent on spiritual. In Marxism there is determinism, scientific and directive reason and humanism.
revolution is scientific and it is philosophic. Einstein is 20th century, but so is the artist 20th century. The art product is more than scientific. Communism is the whole truth. It is abstract and scientific. In this, capitalism ressembles communism.

The trouble with President Seghers's humanism is that it is general and abstract where it should be concrete and specific. The fundamental difference between Seghers's socialism and that envisaged by Marx does not reside in the difference between "spiritualization" and "materialism" but between theory and practice. The tragedy of the African Revolution stems from the fact that its leaders are so weighted down by the consciousness of the backwardness of the technology, the need to industrialize, and rapidly, that they turn for aid almost exclusively to the powers-that-be in the technologically advanced countries, instead of the proletariat in those lands. Naturally, we do not oppose any African country accepting aid from any source whatever; be it the Seghers France, Kennedy's America, or Khrouchtchev's Russia. Western imperialism has plundered Africa for centuries, plundered it both of its manpower and its natural resources. It is high time for at least some of this African wealth to return to the country of its real origin. This, however, is not the point at issue for Humanism. The point at issue is the relationship, first to one's own people, the very ones who made independence possible, second, to the underlying philosophy of freedom and not the degeneration of a changing battle dependent on the relationship of forces with the enemy; third, above all the right of the proletariat which is equally desirous with the African people for an end to the crisis-ridden, capitalist world that presently hobbles for nuclear destruction.

Freedom NOW

The ideology, the Freedom NOW, which elicited the emotional creativity of the masses that re-shaped Africa, and thus the world, in less than a decade, will surely need a more international front for the forward move of humanity. This is an inescapable feeling when, daily in Africa, one meets young Africans who are increasingly concerned with new human relations, new world relations, that is to say, a totally new human dimension. In the Ghambia, for example, new world relations meant to the youth, not government-to-government, but people-to-people. The Young Workers Movement wanted to hear about socialism the world over and they spotted the Freedom Riders in the United States as well as the Zenga
dah of Japan, the Socialists of Great Britain as well as the Norwegian Youth Congress. Here is a country where, with the elections in May, 1953, was the last of the British colonies in West Africa to have taken the first step toward self-government. It looked up to independent Africa and wanted to be part of Pan-Africanism, but also did not dare to admit that Pan-Africanism had become an umbrella for a competitive variety of African movements. The Gambian youth asked, with true humility, couldn't they, just because they were the last to gain freedom in West Africa, not separate Black Africa from the socialist movement — from the working people in America, Europe, Russia, the Orient — to create a new world on human beginnings?

The same thought has been expressed repeatedly in the United States by the courageous young Freedom Fighters in their unflagging struggles against the Southern racist. As we wrote in "SOUTHERN SOUTH U.S.A.

"The exame..." (News & Letters, Feb., 1961), we wrote: "Just as the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955 was followed by a sit-down by Africans, a year later, in Johannesburg, South Africa, so the current Southern U.S.A. sit-ins..."

"Let's Give This Go a Try!"

Picture reprinted from News & Letters, November 38, 1958
PART VII

Facing the Challenge, 1943-1963

1. The Self-Determination of People and Ideas

A new stage of Negro struggle opened the same year as the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Many a radical who acknowledges the high stage of world development by the outbreak of the latter, refuses as much as to mention the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the same breath. For those who think that the malady is due to the fact that the Hungarian Revolution culminated in such recognizable proletarian forms of struggle as Workers' Councils as against Montgomery's continuous mass meetings are blind entirely to the underlying philosophy of both—a new type of humanism—which likewise remains unrecognized by these self-proclaimed "vanguardists."

The truth is that old radicals are forever blind to the positive, the subjective new dimensions of any spontaneous struggle. Each struggle is fought out in separateness, and remains isolated. While the way in hell may be paved with little rocks, the way to a new society must have totally new foundations not alone in action but in thought. The Second American Revolution was left unfinished by the Emancipation Proclamation which straddled the fence between human liberation and a union of slaves. It will be kept to the same state of suspended animation by all who think that the struggle is to high administrative posts of a few Negroes—can meet the challenge of 100 years of struggle for Freedom NOW.

The President may make headlines in April, 1963, by his 1960 election campaign by a soliciting phone call to the mentioned Martin Luther King. All the more stunning then is the true measure of tolerance: the Administration's tolerance in making attacks against the voter registrants in Mississippi and Alabama. In today's understanding of the bounds we see more than the shades of Simon Legree chasing Little Eva across the ice. We see the killer dogs of Hitler's Storm Troops and of the Communist "vapor" guiding the Butts well.

As the Freedom NOW movement expands from the struggle for registration to the fight for voting rights, it unites the active support of Northern artists: comedians Dick Gregory in Greenwood, Miss.; Michigan painter G. Ray Kerkui in Oxford, Miss.; Al Hibbler in Birmingham, Ala.

Parallels and Turning Points

The Birmingham outbreak is not only the latest incident in which Sen. Shuttlesworth continues to play a leading role. It is the beginning of a new fundamental chapter in the freedom struggle because it involves the South's most industrialized city.

American civilization has been on trial from the day of its birth. It hallowed alarms of democracy have been found wanting from the very start of the labor and Negro struggles at the beginning of the 19th century. The first appearance of trade unions and workmen's parties in the United States paralleled the greatest of the slave revolts and the emergence of the Abolitionist movement. This parallelism is the characteristic feature of American class struggle. Only when these two great movements collide do we reach decisive turning points in United States development. In drawing together all the lines of theory and struggle for freedom which have gone into the making of the American mind, we have seen such a climax in the rise of the CIO and the inevitable break from the Garvey movement, on the one hand, and from the exclusiveness of the old coast unions on the other.

The AFL-CIO's current failure seriously to relate its struggles with those of the Southern student youth is not only a result of the organizational failure of "Operation Dixie," but of the lack of a unifying philosophy. At some time it must be clear to the young Freedom Fighters that the many separate organizations in their struggle also lack a unifying philosophy. It is wrong to think that a "coordinating committee" is all that is needed. The great forces of student youth have now been enlarged by the adult Negro workers in Greenwood and Birmingham to write today's dramatic page in Southern history. Yet this is only a manifestation of the vast forces gathering below the surface to change all of American civilization on trial. What is needed is an understanding of the underlying struggle of the Negroes is not still another organization "to coordinate" the work. What is needed is a new humanism.

It is the unifying philosophy of Marxist-Humanism, which, in the years of our existence, has enabled us not only to follow, support and participate in the Negro struggles, but in some ways to precipitate the experience. As one of our Freedom Riders said in our pamphlet, FREEDOM RIDERS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES:

"The self-determination of the Negro problem has always been the most critical of the United States. Civil Rights is the name of Freedom in this country for both black and white. It is the struggle of all students and workers. Since the mid-50's there has been an explosion of Negroes expressing such creativity and determination to be free NOW. This is why I think that whether the Freedom Riders continue or whether the struggle to end segregation and discrimination ends here and for all takes a different form, the fight for freedom will not also until we have torn up the old, from root to branch, and established truly new human relations based on new beginnings. I think that the Freedom Riders, and whatever may come after them, are a form of just such new beginnings?"

2. The New Voices We Heard

We have heard the new voices ever since 1943. the year of birth of the National Resistance Movement in Europe, the year of the miners' strike and Negro demonstrations in the United States. For the first time in American history,
right in the midst of a war, a section of the proletariat and a minority grouping representing one-tenth of the nation, were saying: ‘Our main enemy is within; all our money is at home; all our friends have been bought with it; all our data is secret.’ Whereupon the American Communists, having put the same platform as the Nazis and the established forces of ‘law and order,’ proved that the demonstration ‘history will repeat itself’.

The Negro intelligentsia, on the other hand, deal to the new voices, were busy constructing theories and data. As soon as the Swedish scholar, Bruno Bilde, put forward his study of the Negro intelligentsia, titled ‘An African Dilemma,’ the dilemma was clear: the most brutal form of observation and the most archaic form of ideology are not compatible. The only proposal that would, at first, nourish economic sustenance, this economic roof, deeply embedded in the system, may yet feed one, national life, it said then, its class interests, upon him to produce so important, as indicative of a solution, as to turn the American tragedy into a Swedish farce.”

According to News & Letters, the work did not appear until June, 1955, some of us who founded News & Letters had developed these Marxist-Humanist views of the role of the Negro in American history in 1942 and because we consider it as part of our present heritage, the views quoted here from ‘An African Intellectuals in Dilemma’ were reprinted in News & Letters, February, 1942.

Too obvious to need to be told is that what was crucial in the situation were not ‘value premises’—either the immoral ones of the white South or the moral ones of the Swedish Gunnar Myrdal.

The way, the only way, a historic tradition can pass on to the new generation is by being fed and enriched on economic roots deeply embedded in the community. And it is not ‘rebirth’ each time, a primitive economy, in fact, a non-dependent Western civilization, that has produced a new national life, it said in 1942, as it did at the turn of the century, from imperialism. However, Myrdal, who himself is a student of Gunnar Myrdal, did not recognize that the Negro is the child of a race which has been oppressed for centuries, that the Negroes were not only products of a society, but products of all the races that have been influenced by it.

In the 1950’s, when once again the Negroes were about to rise up, their class interests were not simple, their class interests were not ‘rebirth’ either. It was not a matter of a new economy, but a matter of a new society, a new civilization. It was not a matter of a new society, but a matter of a new civilization. It was not a matter of a new economy, but a matter of a new society, a new civilization. It was not a matter of a new economy, but a matter of a new society, a new civilization.

But Myrdal at least did see that not only is there nothing to fear from such professorial radicalism but that a study of the new Negro leader that was part of a mass movement, Marcus Garvey, could not be repressed. Why, Myrdal himself had not undertaken extensive historical investigation for a study lasting four years covering 1,400 pages of texts, into which the Carnegie Corporation sank a quarter of a million dollars, may remain inexplicable to most readers. But we correctly concluded that: ‘To anyone who is concerned about the Negro question today, this neglect of the Garvey movement has just about reached its end.

There is striking in the Negro people in the United States today a racial consciousness which has at present found its most extreme expression in the writings of Richard Wright, Wilfred N. Kerr—chairman of the Lynx Committee to Abolish Segregation in the Armed Forces, and Marcus Garvey. These are people on the horizon which can be grazed over the peril of the labor movement.”

3. What We Stand For—and Who We Are

“The self-determination therefore which alone the idea is, to hear itself speak.”—Hegel.

Because we did foresee the prospects on the horizon of the Negro’s national and international development, we foresaw the dynamism of ideas which would rise both from the American class struggle and from the African independence movements. Thus, in 1960, when once again the Negroes were about to rise up, their class interests were not simple, their class interests were not ‘rebirth’ either. It was not a matter of a new economy, but a matter of a new society, a new civilization. It was not a matter of a new economy, but a matter of a new society, a new civilization. It was not a matter of a new economy, but a matter of a new society, a new civilization.

This time, however, the worker was not to be kept out of the struggle under any condition. As was searching for unity within himself all his talents, and during the depression. As one New York paper put it:

‘There is a time for praying. We do not pray for Sunday. There is not a time for praying. We do not pray for Sunday. There is a time for praying. We do not pray for Sunday. There is a time for praying. We do not pray for Sunday.’

Bunche is critical not only of the economic, political and social status of the Negro but of all existing Negro institutions that strive to ameliorate this condition. He calls them ‘philosophic and programmatic puppets.’ In his pamphlet, A World View of Race, he came out with a

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thinking. The time is now. What I want to know is: when and where and how will the working man — all working men — take such confidence in their own abilities to make a better world that they will not let others do their thinking for them?

This desire to break with those who want to do the thinking for the workers—the labor leaders made into labor bureaucrats—led to the break between the rank and file and John L. Lewis. When he asked them to return to work, they remained out, demanding answers to the new war killer, the continuous miner. They didn’t win. It is true, but the process of doing their own thinking on the question of Automation started something entirely new on the part of workers to all other industries, and not only on the question of labor, but on civil rights and African revolution, war and peace, on new human relations.

Consider this discussion in an auto factory in Detroit as we recorded it in our pamphlet, Workers Battle Automation:

"Three years in a row Automation has reduced the number of weeks we worked. It gave you time to think. The other day I read where a student in California said that it didn’t really bother him to lose his first H-bomb. Once it’s released, we will have one-half hour away from total annihilation."

A Negro then began talking about the last war: "You don’t think I would have gone to war if I had a choice. I didn’t want to give my life. I almost dropped dead when they swore me in. I almost said, "No."

"I couldn’t say I had a recognition in this country. I’m not listed as a first-class citizen. Other people came here and they get first-class citizenship. We’re born here, my mother and her mother before her and she could list four generations before that. Still we’re not first-class citizens."

As a Russian American, I was just thinking of myself as a man. They’re interested more in how many guns we were strictly segregated. Even if you went to the front line you were segregated right next to whites and sleep in the mud with them, but when you get back to the States, you are considered a second class citizen.

"I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else. I know they may be segregated here, but we have a chance to be improved one hundred percent. It makes you think what the country is doing down South."

In another section of the same pamphlet, we wrote:

"It has been said that ‘Revolution is evolution in motion’. It is true to say that evolution has now reached that point of change where mass production, in a way that will leave the European, quixotic, and the like as part of the ‘grand old men.’ The truth of the world in the year 1959, with the Hungarian Revolution and its Workers’ Councils behind them, facing guns and demanding that their voices be heard are putting Marxism-Humanism into practice.

“A new man will emerge. A new society.

“It will be a one in which we can hold, hold it in my hand or in mine— I believe it to be so close.

“At the moment I think the form of organization of the workers is all in their thinking. They are telling the thinkers that they will not let others do their thinking for them."

A New Unity, a New Humanism

Unfortunately, it is not possible to believe workers have thought of their own. Much less is it possible of listening to them. This is not restricted to the United States. Until 1953, no one heard that totalitarian regimes outside of the horror it live under them, concerned their invisibility and success in brainwash-
In the five years since Marxism and freedom appeared, the freedom movements have given ample proof of the humanist surge of masses in action seeking to reconstruct society.

Today, as in the days of the abolitionists, we see the new beginning. It is high time now to proceed to a middle, a theory, and an end—the culmination of the creative drama of human liberation into a new society freed from exploitation and discrimination and the wars that go with it. Only then can all men's innate talents fully develop and man gain a new dimension that puts an end once and for all to his pre-history in class societies. The ideal and the real are never as far apart as the abolitionists, in and out of power, would make it appear. Whether we take the 200 years of American development, or the last 50 years of world development, one thing is clear: the turning point for the reconstruction of society occurs when theory and practice finally evolve a unified organizational form. We have reached the turning point.

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2. Black Caucuses in the Unions

Charles Danby

The whole new stage of black revolt that has now moved directly into the factories has to be seen as part of the long, long history of black caucuses. To understand both today and tomorrow, you first have to know what the black caucuses were yesterday, when they sprang up spontaneously at the end of World War II.

I remember the first strike I ever had. It was over the discrimination against black women workers in our shop. It was during World War II, when I was at Briggs and I was so soun in the shop that I didn't even know what a strike was. I was working in the dope room, where you put glue on the airplane wing. You had to paint on so many coat of glue and then it was kicked and painted again. The room was sealed and ventilated through some kind of fans in the ceiling. The fumes and odor were so bad we had no appetite left by lunchtime.

When I was first hired, there were all white men in the room. But as they hired blacks, the whites were transferred to better jobs. One day they brought in the first black woman. By the end of that week they had brought in about five black women, and there were only one or two white men left. That's when we decided to get those girls out of there. The women had been talking about their husbands who were in the service in Germany—and here they couldn't even get a job in the sewing room next door. That was for white women only. These things just burned us up.

None of us knew anything about the union, but I finally got to talk to our white Chief Steward, who told me the reason there were only white women in the sewing room was because they had so much seniority, 10 or 15 years. We knew they were lying, because some of those girls were just out of high school. So we told the Steward that if he didn't do something about it we were all going to quit at the same time, on the same day. We didn't know it would be called a strike. All we knew was that every factory had "Help Wanted" signs up and if we quit and went together to some other factory, we'd be working the next day.

On the day we walked out, they locked the gates on us. (That was the first we knew that the huge fence around the shop wasn't so much to keep saboteurs out, as to keep us in.) By that time, other workers inside the factory were coming out with us. We didn't even know what they were coming out for. I thought maybe they just had a problem like we did. It wasn't until the company sent for me as the "strike leader" that I realized what we had actually done.

We learned a lot in that strike, including what to expect from the union leaders. It was a Negro committee man who, after the company had agreed to transfer the black women to the sewing room, talked them into going to Mack plant where they would make 15¢ an hour more—but be separated from the rest of us. They didn't know until the fifth day they were there that Mack didn't even have a sewing room and that they were going to work on a press.
The TULC and the "Gentlemen's Agreement"

One stage in the black workers' revolt. In fact, some became workers began to realize that we would have to fight the union bureaucracy as much as we had fought management up to then. This, in turn, was what led A. Philip Randolph to organize the Trade Union Leadership Council (TULC) ten years ago. What workers didn't know was that there was some sort of "Gentlemen's Agreement" between Reuther and Randolph.

UAW members all over the country were attacking the bureaucracy—much as the black caucuses are doing today, except that there was no exclusion of whites such as you find in some of the current black caucuses. Randolph came to Detroit to hold his little convention and ran it just like the UAW conventions, "from the top," evading all the questions the rank and file wanted to discuss.

After the convention, we kept pressing Randolph about the question of discrimination in the shop and he told us plainl y that this was not going to be an organization to take up grievances of black workers on the shop level. All TULC was going to do, he said, was to raise the question of discrimination but writing grievances would have to be done through regular channels. A lot of the workers said, "Hell, this is what we've been doing all the time and nothing has ever happened." But, because they made a big splash in the papers, many black rank and file came around, in the beginning.

The leaders always emphasized that it was not a "black organization." Yet that is just what the black workers wanted to make it—not by excluding whites but by blacks controlling it, for themselves, not for the UAW. As TULC developed, it played around more with community problems than shop problems and when it did raise shop questions, it was more concerned with the building trades or things outside of the UAW than inside it. Reuther has always been a master of substitution—and he managed to teach Randolph the same trick.

After two years there was a tremendous drop in membership, and today, no matter how urgently a meeting is called, you seldom see a rank and file around. Recently they called a meeting, and sent letters to every older black "activist" they could think of. They said they called it to discuss how they could protect themselves from the "vicious racist extremists"—like the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM). But there were more young black workers outside picketing the meeting than older blacks inside attending it.

The whole situation was summed up pretty well when 30 young black workers were fired after a wildcat strike at the Eldon Axel plant and went down to picket Solidarity House, early this year. The UAW sent a black official, Sheldon Tappes, to meet with them. Tappes had to admit that if TULC had done what it was organized for, there wouldn't have been any such development as DRUM. And one of the young black pickets answered "And if Reuther and the other bureaucrats had done what the union was organized for, there wouldn't have been any need for TULC."
A New Stage Today

An entirely new stage was born with the appearance of groups like DRUM within the auto shops. The Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement was organized after Chrysler fired seven of the black workers who had struck the Dodge Main plant last year to protest a speed up on the line, while the UAW Convention was being held in Atlantic City. In July, when DRUM called for a strike to support a list of demands against racism, both by Chrysler and the UAW, the call brought thousands of workers out of the plant and shut down production for two days.

In February of last year, several months before the Dodge strike in Detroit, 500 workers at the Mahwah, New Jersey, Ford plant had shut down production for three days after a racist foreman called a production worker a "black bastard." Out of that spontaneous wildcat, the United Black Brothers of Mahwah Ford was organized. This caucus has just had another wildcat strike over continued racism at that plant.

What is new about these caucuses is that they represent a much more basic opposition than any Reuther has ever before faced. The UAW had, until the appearance of these new caucuses, pretty much eliminated any organized opposition--by any means, ethical or unethical. The bureaucracy has not really had to give a damn about rank and file problems in the shop for years. Now they are facing some real opposition, from below.

In the early stages of the black caucus at Dodge, DRUM raised a proposal that amounted to "dual unionism." They proposed in their paper that all black workers stop paying dues to the UAW and pay them instead to DRUM, to be used in the black communities. Many black workers I spoke with, who were very sympathetic to DRUM's activities in the plant, were opposed to this idea completely. They were all for a black caucus that would fight racism and inhuman working conditions in the plants. They were all for militant black workers taking over leadership in the unions for the purpose of making a complete change at the point of production. But they became skeptical of the objectives behind a proposal like this.

Black workers at Sparrow's Point, a Bethlehem Steel mill in Baltimore, on the other hand, formed a group outside the union, called the Committee for Equality, rather than forming a caucus within the union. They had a specific situation there, in which they could apply pressure on the government to end its multi-million dollar contracts with the company unless the company stopped discriminating. These workers created a "dual union" of a sort but it was tactical in their case. They felt they had to find some way to shake everything up—the racist company, as well as their racist union. And it worked.

The opposition of the black workers is part of the opposition of black people as a whole to white racist America, a movement that has been gaining in momentum ever since 1961.

In 1964, a mass picket line of about 500 got world headlines by surrounding the GM building in Detroit with signs saying "Racism Hurts All Labor," "Automation Layoffs—Lily White Departments—Slow Upgrading—What is my job future?" The demonstration had been called by the NAACP and was distinguished from traditional labor picket lines by the presence of student youth and the singing of Freedom
songs. GM agreed to negotiate and even without the threat of a demonstration, Chrysler and Ford did the same. What happened after the talks is another question.

In 1965, SNCC helped to organize a Mississippi Freedom Union and later a Tennessee Freedom Union. They had found, while trying to work on voter registration, that what black people in the South wanted most was to do something about their $5 a day wages and miserable working conditions. From organized labor all they got was evasiveness.

Later that same year, the grape workers in California began their strike for a farm workers organization with the help of CORE and other civil rights groups. By March of the next year, 1966, the Freedom Union idea moved North to the cities when CORE organized a pilot project in Baltimore—and the Maryland Freedom Union was born. The greatest victory there was the manner in which the unorganized black workers of Baltimore took matters into their own hands when nursing home workers walked out first and then called to tell the "organizers."

That same year, organized black workers were also taking matters into their own hands. When the UAW convention delegates met in Long Beach, California in the summer of 1966, they found black workers from Local 677 of the North American Aviation plant picketing the convention to protest discrimination by their local union against Negroes, women and Mexican-Americans. They said, simply: "We've written lots of letters to Reuther. We even sent them return receipt requested. We have a pocketful of receipts. But no answers."

By September, those same NAA workers held the first "civil rights strike" of its kind to protest the discriminatory practices of the company. They wrote me that "One Negro worker who had been trying to be a drill press operator for two years was finally accepted the day after the strike. Another worker who had been told a few months earlier that he had failed (by one point) the test for machine operator's apprentice was told he had been accepted. Another was promoted to assistant foreman, whatever that means. And the company even announced that a Negro top brass was promoted to a $30,000 a year job. Long live tokenism!"

Shop Papers Appear as Diversity Grows

ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS out of that NAA situation was the appearance of a mimeographed shop paper, edited by these black workers themselves, which they called The Protester.

In Detroit, a group of auto workers at the Highland Park Chrysler Plant had come out that same year with a mimeographed shop paper called The Stinger. Another Stinger has just appeared this year at the Mack Avenue Chrysler plant.

The richness and diversity of the black workers' groups is constantly growing. Moreover, there are significant differences between the various black workers' groups that are springing up everywhere. The Mack Avenue "Stingers," for example, though it is edited by black workers, makes a distinction between the "whitesky" who is a rank and file worker, and the "whitey" who is either a company representative or a union bureaucrat. The black editor puts it this way: "It's true that we are fighting discrimination against black workers in the shop as one of the most important questions of our lives. But that isn't the only questi..."
The reason many of the white workers in our shop also read—and even support—The Stinger, is that we are raising the question of the inhumane conditions of all workers in production. Automation speedup and the inhumanity of the company and union bureaucrats is against workers as a whole. That is what The Stinger is fighting, and why white workers have told us they are glad we are distributing it.

There is nothing more stupid than to think that all black workers think alike, or that there is only one face to the whole new phenomenon of the black causes. This was one of the most important points discussed at a conference sponsored by News & Letters in Detroit in January of this year, where black youth, workers, women and intellectuals had a chance for the first time to discuss with each other.

One black auto worker at the Detroit Conference felt that “too much of the activity of some black causes is pointed to getting on supervision rather than elevating labor on the line. The company doesn’t care whether it’s a white man or a black man as long as they get the production out. The company is getting very expert at using black supervisors to fight black workers.”

Some younger auto workers felt that “trying to get a coalition with white workers is impossible because they are hung up in their racist bag.” But a steel worker from the East described the black workers’ organization in his mill which was so effective in ending some of the racist practices there that it was recognized by white workers who had their own problems with the union. When the black workers invited a group of white workers to come with them on one of their marches, the same white workers who hadn’t wanted to associate with “those raving black militants out to destroy everything” suddenly decided maybe it wasn’t such a bad idea, after all, and couldn’t wait for the next march.

The United Black Brothers at Mahwah have also made it a point to appeal to all the workers in the shop. A leaflet issued in their wildcat two months ago put it this way:

Why We Ask Your Support—Because the same thing can happen to you. The company has been laying off men by the dozen, but the lines have not slowed up a bit. You have been given more work, and if you can’t do it, you lose your job or get that off. The supervisors are haranguing the men and calling them all kinds of names such as ‘Dirty Guinea Bastard’, ‘Black GOB’, and ‘Blinking Spick’, to name a few . . . We, the United Black Brothers, demand an end to this new and these guilty of these charges be removed . . . We ask all of you to stay out and support us in this fight!

What Is New in Revolution

The greatest difference between the new causes emerging today and those that appeared before is that most of us who were in black opposition groups up to now thought that the most important thing to do was to throw out the leadership, or change the union structure, or something of that nature. The young people today aren’t thinking that way. They are thinking in terms of a complete change—of revolution.

They are just filled up to their necks with racism. And with the war. One professor from Cornell, during the recent revolt there, reported
talking to one of the black students about their use of guns. He had sympathized with their demands but he had been trying to point out to them how powerful this country is and to warn them that they were facing tremendous oppression if they continued using such tactics. The black student had just laughed in his face: "You're talking about oppression coming upon me! I've been oppressed all my life. It's you and the people who call themselves liberals who are going to feel the oppression that's coming." It shocked the professor, because he knew the black student was right.

Young blacks today aren't joking about the complete change they are out to get. When the group at Dodge named themselves the Revolutionary Union Movement, it was very significant. Young workers called themselves "revolutionaries," other workers would have shied away from them. Today the very word can attract workers.

It is too early to draw any sweeping conclusions about what will happen next with many black groups that exist independently and spontaneously in shops throughout the country. No national cause is on the horizon yet and to give the impression that one already exists much less to imply that DRUM is--as the Guardian did in its March special supplement on the black workers' revolt--is futile self deception.

In the recent shop elections, DRUM lost badly at Dodge Local 1, despite the fact that the membership there is overwhelmingly black. It is true that the union bureaucracy is not telling the whole truth when they claim that they won everywhere. At the Eldon Axel plant, for example, where 65% of the workers are black, ELDRUM ran candidates for only a few positions and, although they lost, black workers are in complete control of the local for the first time. Doug Fraser, Executive Board Member-at-Large for the Chrysler Division, claims that these workers are the "moderates" he was supporting. But ELDRUM supported them, too. And, most important of all, workers know that black workers have never controlled a local before.

The most honest way to judge the response of black workers is to compare the manner in which thousands responded to DRUM's call for a wildcat last year and the way they reacted at a mass meeting called after the 26 workers were fired at the Eldon Axel plant. The meeting was held in a large church and about five or six hundred workers crowded inside. The majority were younger workers but there were many older workers, too. The first thing that struck me was that those in control of the meeting were not workers in the plant or in any plant.

The speakers went on at great length attacking white racism--with the most vulgar name-calling possible. They spent a lot of time clowning and trying to be comedians. Once in a great while they touched on the vital issue of shop problems. Finally, the principal speaker was called. As soon as he got up, he raised his little red book above his head and said, "My Comrades of the Black Revolutionary Movement, how many of you have this book?" He had to ask several times before four or five raised their books in reply. The speaker told the audience that this was what the movement was all about and gave the address where everyone should go after the meeting to get his copy of "Comrade Mao's Thoughts." When he went on to call Mao "our closest ally" many of the workers in the audience began squirming and I felt that this sort of meeting was what labor bureaucrats need to destroy the movement.
It is clear that the labor bureaucracy will try either to crush it or to kill it by "joining" it. It has done that with every spontaneous movement that ever arose, including the unemployed movement of 1899. Many workers are already sure that Reuther's activity with the black hospital workers in Charleston, S.C., was forced on him by what has been happening in his own union. DRUM has not only attacked Reuther and called him a "rascal pig"—but has told why they call him that. He has to try to remove that stigma from his "image."

He has not fooled black workers. Of course, they are only too happy to see him give $10,000 to the hospital strikers. But when they see him marching on a picket line in Charleston or Selma or anywhere else, they know that he hasn't been on a picket line with his own UAW workers for so many years he's forgotten what it's like. Reuther is always glad to integrate anything—outside of his own UAW.

The one thing the young black worker may not fully realize is that every time a black independent movement has appeared, the "politics" who have rushed in to take it over, have helped reactionaries like Reuther to kill it before it can get off the ground. It was true in the first black organization within the union that I was involved with, as early as the '40s. There were about 200 of us, and we "stormed" Lansing and every black worker I knew was enthusiastic about where we were going. But the Communists and the Trotskyists moved in and began a naked fight over control of our organization. It is not so much that the so-called "radicals" come rushing in but every time they come rushing in they want to take control and direct. The same thing is happening today. The only thing the Maoists do differently is to send blacks instead of whites to take control.

The question at this point is: Will the momentum of the movement be great enough to see the black caucuses become a national force separated from the labor bureaucracy and strong enough to keep control in the hands of the rank and file? Or will the bureaucrats and the Maoists succeed in nipping it in the bud?

Everyone in the shop is laughing at the Alliance for Labor Action, which they consider just some more of Reuther's power politics against Meany. They know that Reuther is hoping the black workers in the South will save his neck. Reuther forgets that they have brothers in the North who insist he has to prove his Labor Action at home, in his own union. The black workers have made it clear that they want to stick to shop problems, not get diverted to Reuther's latest schemes for "community organization." That is the message of the wildcats and the shop papers that have appeared in such diverse forms.

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