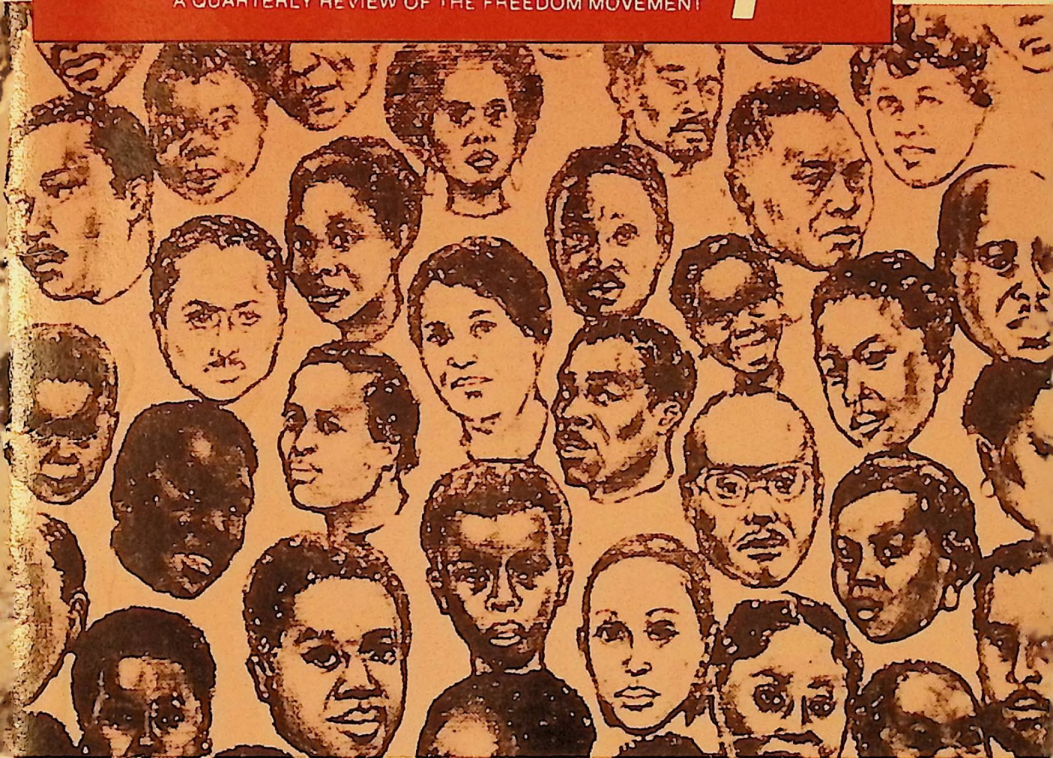


Freedomways

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

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If King Could See Us Now **Margaret Ann Burnham**
Northern Ireland Through Black Eyes **Jean Carey Bond**
Irish and Afro-Americans in U.S. History **Frank Murray**
Class Formation in the Caribbean **Selwyn R. Cudjoe**
Eugene Holmes, Philosopher Rebel **John H. McClendon**

Book Reviews include:

The Heart of a Woman by **Maya Angelou**
In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960's by **Clayborne Carson**
Naked at the Feast: A Biography of Josephine Baker by **Lynn Haney**

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

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THELONIOUS M O N K

October 10, 1917 - February 17, 1982

If King Could See Us Now

by MARGARET ANN BURNHAM

The editors of *Freedomways* submit the following as our editorial for this issue. It is the major portion of an address delivered by Municipal Court Associate Justice Margaret Ann Burnham on the occasion of the City of Boston's Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Observance at the Sheraton-Boston Hotel, January 15, 1982.

SOME TIME AGO, television viewers had the opportunity to see a film on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which concluded with a reenactment of the Memphis events, including that fateful scene on the balcony of the Lorraine Hotel on April 4, 1968. We saw Dr. King and his aides at work in Memphis, trying to find the winning formula for the garbage workers' strike. The situation was tense, not only because of the city's resistance, but because of differences within the black community as to the viability of SCLC's (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) non-violent tactics for this particular struggle.

Dr. King and other SCLC leaders spent many hours in discussion with a local Memphis organization known as the Invaders, trying to dissuade these young people from any activity disruptive of the community march scheduled for April 8. Dr. King had been sorely disheartened by a mini-riot that had scarred the community's earlier effort to march downtown, and he appealed to the Invaders to use their influence with the youth in the community to prevent a repetition.

Those of us who watched the TV portrayal saw that much of the SCLC leadership was there with Dr. King in Memphis. We could identify Ralph Abernathy, Andrew Young, Jesse Jackson, and Dr. King's brother, A. D. King.

But there was one SCLC staff member who was there in Memphis, but who was not shown on the screen and not mentioned in the script. He worked as the comptroller in SCLC's Atlanta headquarters. His name was James Harrison.

Jim Harrison was privy to all of SCLC's financial business, and he sat in at Executive Committee sessions. He arrived in Memphis from Atlanta on Wednesday, April 3, and he stayed through that day. One of his first telephone calls upon his arrival was to the Memphis FBI office, to whom he reported his presence in Memphis.

As much as anything else, this "checking in" was a matter of protocol for Jim Harrison. The FBI was his real employer. They paid

him—and paid him well—for informing on the activities of Dr. King and SCLC.

Jim Harrison, stool pigeon, was part of the FBI “presence” in Memphis when Dr. King was killed.

But he was not the only civil rights worker serving two masters in the Memphis events. Like SCLC, the Invaders had been infiltrated at the time they were negotiating with Dr. King. Unbeknownst to the Invaders, a Memphis undercover police officer was one of the representatives of the group in the discussion with Dr. King. This policeman’s job was to report on the activities of the Invaders to the Memphis police, who, in turn, reported to the FBI. The Invaders, you see, like SCLC, were one of the groups targeted for the FBI’s “Black Nationalist Hate Groups” Counter Intelligence Program or COINTELPRO. They were targeted for disruption by the government, and ultimate destruction.

The story of Martin Luther King’s campaigns has been widely documented. In photos and films, on records, books, and in dramatic representations, Black people have learned the landmarks: From the beginning with Mrs. Parks at Montgomery; to Albany, Georgia; to Birmingham; to St. Augustine, Florida; to Chicago, Illinois; and finally, Memphis. But while his heroic leadership of the non-violent black movement made Dr. King one of the most widely known and loved contemporary figures, there is another Dr. Martin Luther King story that has only recently begun to be told.

This is a story which has been reconstructed only within the last years, from the painfully slow and piecemeal revelations of government documents under the Freedom of Information Act. A book recently published details this story—a story of a different kind of campaign from those we associate with the name, Martin Luther King—the vicious and sordid campaign of the FBI and the forces it influenced in government to destroy the reputation, the organization, and the person of Dr. Martin Luther King. The particulars of that campaign are as horrific and frightening as any ever launched against us by Selma’s Jim Clark or Birmingham’s Bull Connor. It’s an ugly story, but a story we all should know and learn from.

Because it was shrouded in secrecy and protected by the imprimatur of federal authority, that campaign more effectively deferred, damaged and ultimately drowned the dream of Dr. King than any step ever taken by Ross Barnett, George Wallace or Herman Talmadge.

There is now no doubt as to what the FBI’s intentions were regarding Dr. King. Their goal was repeatedly and specifically set out in memo after memo, which traveled head back and forth between the New York and Atlanta offices and headquarters.

In one such memo, written after Dr. King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in August 1963, the Assistant Director of the FBI, William Sullivan, wrote: "We must mark King now, if we have not done so before, as the most dangerous Negro of the future of this nation from the standpoint of communism, the Negro, and national security." He later added that Dr. King was a particular threat because "we are right now in this nation engaged in a form of social revolution."

Even though we cannot say with certainty in what ways events would have been different if Martin Luther King and the masses who marched and prayed and persisted with him had had federal law enforcement completely on their side, instead of waging a filthy, scurrilous, hidden campaign against them, we can be sure we would have inherited a different history.

A very different history.

Surely Birmingham would have been different in 1963 if the FBI had been there to stay Bull Connor's hand, had they stopped the bombing before we lost the four Sunday School worshippers at the 16th Street Baptist Church, had they been there to enforce the federal rights of the thousands who, like Dr. King himself, were herded like cattle into the county jails.

The FBI was on the scene when Dr. King stirred up Birmingham in 1963. But the outlaws they were pursuing were Dr. King and his associates. They had, by that time, tapped and bugged his associates; they had begun COINTELPRO action against him and SCLC; they had publicly defamed him as a "vicious liar."

In 1963, after the March on Washington, the FBI increased its surveillance. They tapped the King home and each of the telephone lines in the SCLC office. These telephone taps were to remain in place for more than four years, supplementing the oral reports of the informant, Jim Harrison, who was first placed on the FBI payroll in 1964. The energies of the FBI were spent listening to the hours of conversation produced by these wiretaps.

While the murderers of Medgar Evers plotted his assassination, while James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were being tortured and murdered by the lawmen of Neshoba County, Mississippi, the FBI busied itself eavesdropping on Dr. King and plotting against the SCLC.

I am not saying Dr. King's voting rights campaign in 1965 in Alabama would have been easy, but it would have been easier had the FBI not been out to destroy him and the movement he led. I have in mind the cattle prods, first introduced as a weapon against non-violent demonstrators by Selma's Sheriff Jim Clark. I can see the tear gas canisters, thrown by Alabama State Troopers at the Pettus

Bridge into the crowds of marchers, "gas so thick you could almost reach up and grab it." I am remembering Jimmie Lee Jackson, savagely shot in the stomach by an Alabama trooper and killed in Marion, Alabama, in the course of a police riot which was the response to a voting rights demonstration. And Viola Liuzzo, and Boston's own Reverend James Reeb, whose lives were lost in the Selma campaign.

I have in mind the courageous men and women who lined up one day after another before the local registrars, at the risk of their jobs, their land, their lives. They were told they couldn't register without having someone vouch for them, yet there were no registered Negroes to vouch for those who weren't registered.

In those difficult Selma days, when the Movement stood at a crossroad, the clear, baritone voice of Dr. King was so often what inspired lagging spirits, what quieted those impatient with non-violence, what captured the movement's visions and made sense of its dreams.

This was the voice the FBI worked unrelentingly to silence. The taps at the King home and the SCLC offices in New York and Atlanta did not satiate the appetite of these spies. They placed phone taps and bugs in hotel rooms across the country, from Hawaii to New York to Florida, wherever Dr. King stayed. They transcribed the taped conversations of Dr. King, his friends and associates, and they circulated these transcriptions throughout the government from the White House on down. They rented office space across from the SCLC Atlanta headquarters to better track the activities of that organization.

Their objective was clear. In 1963, the top agents all met to, as they put it in a memorandum, "explore how best to carry on our investigation. . . to neutralize King as an effective Negro leader." The men of the FBI left this meeting vowing to obtain evidence to use "at an opportune time in a counter-intelligence move to discredit. . . King. . . We will. . . expose King as an immoral opportunist who is not a sincere person but is exploiting the racial situation for personal gain. . . ." The FBI agreed to pursue these angles:

- What are the possibilities of using Mrs. King?
- What about King's housekeeper: In what manner can we use her?
- What are the possibilities of placing a good-looking female plant in King's office?
- Do we have any information concerning any shady financial dealings of King, which could be used to our advantage?

Upon hearing that Dr. King had an invitation to meet with Pope Paul VI, the FBI hurriedly contacted New York Cardinal Spellman to get him to intervene with the Vatican to stop the meeting. The

Cardinal did speak to the Vatican but Dr. King had an audience with the Pope notwithstanding the FBI's efforts to sabotage it.

Upon hearing that Dr. King had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, J. Edgar Hoover commented that "King could well qualify for 'top alley cat' prize," and he tried to prevent the award. He met with reporters shortly before Dr. King's trip to Oslo and told them that Dr. King was "the most notorious liar" in America, that he was "one of the lowest characters in the country," and that he had "ties to communists."

Nor did the Bureau restrict itself to break-ins, buggings, and public defamation of Dr. King. It employed a sack full of dirty tricks designed to force him to surrender his leadership. Assistant Director Sullivan supervised some of these acts of sabotage. He described the objective this way:

"King," Sullivan wrote, "must at some propitious point in the future, be revealed to the people of this country and to his Negro followers as being what he actually is—a fraud, demagogue, and moral scoundrel. When the true facts concerning his activities are presented, such should be enough, if handled properly, to take him off his pedestal and to reduce him completely in influence. . . . When this is done. . . the Negroes will be left without a national leader of sufficiently compelling personality to steer them in the proper direction. This. . . need not happen if the right kind of a national Negro leader could at this time be gradually developed so as to overshadow Dr. King and be in the position to assume the role of leadership of the Negro people when King has been completely discredited."

When he wrote this in 1964, Sullivan had in mind a person who would be "right" to replace Dr. King. Samuel Pierce, he suggested, was such a person. Mr. Pierce, then a New York lawyer, is presently President Reagan's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Throughout 1964 and 1965, while violence threatened civil rights workers at every turn, Assistant Director Sullivan and his associates escalated their plot against Dr. King. In November 1964, observing that Dr. King's reputation was growing around the world, Sullivan authored an anonymous poison pen letter, inviting Dr. King to take his own life.

He wrote: "King, look into your heart. You know you are a complete fraud and a great liability to all of us Negroes. . . . You are no clergyman and you know it. . . . You could not believe in God. . . . King, like all frauds your end is approaching. . . . You are finished. The American public, the church organizations that have been helping. . . will know you for what you are—an evil, abnormal beast. You are done. . . . There is but one way out for you. You better take it before your filthy, abnormal, fraudulent self is bared to the nation."

With this letter, Sullivan included excerpts from tapes collected from the wiretaps of Dr. King and his associates. These were tapes concerning Dr. King's private life which were of no valid public interest.

Martin Luther King, Jr., did not kill himself when he got Sullivan's missive. We know precisely what his reaction was, because we have the FBI tapes of conversations Dr. King had when he received the letter. He knew immediately who was responsible. And he determined that the FBI would not blackmail him, or break his spirit or his commitment to his people.

What would Dr. King say today about the plans of the present Administration to restore the FBI to its previous authority, and its newly adopted executive order which gives the CIA authority to conduct this same type of operation on American citizens?

We cannot say for sure, but we can speculate about how differently history would have been written if the FBI had focused on the nightriders of St. Augustine, Florida, instead of Dr. King. We do not know it for a fact, but we suspect James Meredith might not have been shot in June 1966 as he marched through his home state of Mississippi had the FBI been protecting him instead of hounding Dr. King. We wouldn't swear to it, but it's a fair bet that the Chicago marchers Dr. King led for an open housing policy might have met their goals without the bloodshed of Cicero and Gage Park had the FBI been breaking up the racist gangs instead of breaking into the homes and offices of the non-violent demonstrators.

Perhaps the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party would have won its challenge at the 1964 Democratic Party Convention if the Johnson Administration had not been supplied, illegally, by the FBI with tapes of every single strategy meeting the MFDP had in Washington.

It would have been a different history. We don't know, but perhaps we would not now be forced to speak of the "legacy" of Dr. King.

But Dr. King is gone, and we must rely for guidance in today's difficult days on the rich legacy he has indeed left us. A legacy of words and deeds, a legacy of Christian morality not merely delivered from the pulpit, but applied in the streets of the secular world. How would he look at today's world, and what strategies for struggle might he propose?

Dr. King would surely be gratified by one of the most concrete successes of the movement, the high level of black voter registration and participation in the South, and the resulting black political representation at all levels of government. The Selma campaign, with all its police violence, planted the seeds for these developments.

The voting rights movement and the federal legislation protecting those rights, particularly the Voting Rights Act of 1965, changed the face of the South, and in this Dr. King would no doubt see the flowering of seeds he planted from Selma to Montgomery.

But how surprised he would be to learn of the current efforts to disenfranchise black communities throughout the South today. How distressed he would be to hear the temporizing going on in the hallowed Senate halls on the question of extension of the Voting Rights Act. And how urgently he would press to assure that extension is passed.

Dr. King faced the Ku Klux Klan many times in his career. They marched openly in Montgomery in 1956 to intimidate the bus boycotters. Three thousand Klansmen gathered openly in Albany, Georgia, in 1962 to scare those demonstrating for open public accommodations. It was after a Klan meeting in Birmingham in 1963 that the home of Dr. King's brother and the SCLC headquarters at the Gaston Motel were bombed. In St. Augustine, Florida, in 1963, the Klan kidnapped the leaders of the local movement and were on the verge of incinerating them when the Sheriff arrived. In Selma, they openly joined ranks with the state troopers attacking the marchers at the Pettus Bridge.

How dismayed Dr. King would be to hear of the growth of the Klan today throughout the country, from New Orleans to Connecticut and of their paramilitary camps. What would he say about the dissemination of Klan literature in the public schools of Boston and Cambridge? Would he not warn us that this violent face of racism is only a signal of deeper troubles? Would he not urge that the *Klan* be investigated by the federal law enforcement authorities?

When then-Governor Wallace stood in the schoolhouse door in Alabama in 1963, vowing "Never," Dr. King was there. What would Dr. King say today of the federal abandonment of this battleground? Of the Reagan Administration's foul effort to march backward into the infamous days of legally sanctioned segregated education, requiring *us* to subsidize the "right" of Jim Crow schools to propagate racism. What would Dr. King say of this new step toward legalization of discrimination, this insult to his memory, just a week before the national celebration of his birthday? Would he perhaps lead us to the streets again, tell us to get on our "marching shoes"?

Dr. King helped make economic justice a national issue. He dramatized the damning poverty of those on the Southside of Chicago when he took up residence in a tenement with his family. He came to Boston in 1965 and he led 18,000 people in a driving rain to the Boston Common, where he warned of the bitter despair and anger caused by racism and poverty in Roxbury. He brought the

tactics of non-violence to the issues of poor housing and joblessness. He perceived that civil rights were an empty promise as long as the Memphis garbage workers had no economic rights.

He once remarked: "A vast majority of black people in the United States are smothering in the midst of an affluent society. . . . Most of the poor people in this country are working every day, but earning so little that they cannot begin to function in the mainstream of economic life of our nation. They're working on full-time jobs for part-time pay. We've got to do something about joblessness, and we are going to Washington to demand an economic Bill of Rights."

Dr. King was there during one president's New Frontier, which he remarked had rather narrow borders, and during another's War on Poverty, which he saw eviscerated with the bulging Vietnam war budget. What would he say of today's "New Beginning," a New Beginning which has left more than one of every three black and brown teenagers unemployed? What would he say to the nine million Americans looking for non-existent jobs? Of black joblessness which is higher than any he could ever have imagined?

The decimation of Vista, Legal Services, Medical Assistance, Social Services, Social Security? He, who went to Memphis to struggle for a decent wage, what would he say about the degrading and insidious Workfare Program, forcing welfare mothers to toil for no pay at all? Of the proposals to reduce the minimum wage for those under 19? What would he make of this New Beginning? Wouldn't he counsel that we move back into the streets to demonstrate our opposition and resistance? Wouldn't he tell us, as he told those in Albany, "Get on your walking shoes; walk together, children, and doncha get weary!"

Dr. King had a particularly keen sensitivity to the needs and interests of black children, and to their desire to participate in the liberation struggle. In the 1963 Birmingham mobilization, he organized a march of 6,000 children, ranging in age from 6 to 16. This entire crusade, including the youngest among them, were arrested and carted away in wagons as they marched and sang from 16th Street Baptist Church into town. People around the country were scandalized at the "use of children" by Dr. King. But these critics fell silent when Dr. King asked them: "Where were you with your protective words when down through the years Negro infants were born into ghettos, taking their first breath of life in a social atmosphere where the fresh air of freedom was crowded out by the stench of discrimination?"

What words could Dr. King find to describe the plight of black children today, one million of them out of school, thousands of others unable to read, write or compute? A black teenager three

times as likely as a white youth to be unemployed? The black infant mortality rate in 1978 about the same as the white infant mortality rate in 1950?

What would he say to those of us trying to bridge the communication gap with young black men who are angry and unresponsive to any sense of community or morality, and for whom we have so little hope to offer? The thousands of young people who aren't making it in Massachusetts, those who've been written off, and who are sending us back a costly message of violence and crime? What would he say of those who would meet violence only with more violence and would bring back the death penalty, a punishment historically reserved for the poor, the despised and particularly for people of color? What of the season of suffering our children today must endure?

He wanted only to be remembered as a Drum Major for Justice: "Say that I was a Drum Major for Justice; say that I was a Drum Major for Peace. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. . . . I just want to leave a committed life behind."

What would this Drum Major for Justice and Peace, this most remarkable 20th-century Christian philosopher say, were he to learn of the perversion of Christianity today by the "Muddled Majority"? Of their vision of the Prince of Peace as a warmonger, their view that the wrath of Jesus was reserved for the poor and not the money changers of the Temple? Would he not loudly condemn it as a dangerous betrayal of the Christian gospel?

The Drum Major for Peace condemned the war in Vietnam long before it was popular to do so, and for this he was roundly criticized by some Blacks and whites alike. Some Negroes advised him that the Negro ought not to speak out on such a controversial matter, for fear of risking his own issues, and the white press offered the advice that foreign affairs were not the business of a civil rights leader.

Dr. King wasn't silenced, and, as always, his was one of the most brilliant voices on the issue of the war. It was a prophetic voice when he said, of Vietnam:

Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and a brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. . . . I speak for the poor who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home and death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as an American to the leaders of my own nation. The great initiative in this war is ours. The initiative to stop it must be ours.

How could we begin to tell our Drum Major, who warned us so

prophetically of the social costs of militarism, about the crisis we face today? About President Reagan's proposed five-year budget that is three times the size of the Vietnam War expenditures from 1965 to 1969? That we face the challenge of production of a whole new generation of terrifying nuclear weapons—MX, Trident, Cruise, Pershing, Neutron bomb—and that there is no end in sight?

Of the frightening brinksmanship that passes for foreign diplomacy from the White House? Of the involvement in El Salvador, taking money from poor Americans in a rich country, giving it to rich El Salvadorans in a poor country and calling it foreign aid?

Dr. King's courageous and early opposition to Vietnam must surely point the way for all of us, but especially we who are black, and who therefore, as he foretold, have the most to lose from militarism. Guns or butter is an issue of our survival, today and tomorrow. We cannot leave it for whites to determine.

As a world citizen, Dr. King would have been heartened upon hearing of the European demonstrations against nuclear weapons. In spirit, if not in body, he would have been among the half-million who marched in Amsterdam. He certainly would have been with the half-million of us who went to Washington on September 19, and he would have been pleased at the new alliances and activism that demonstration portends.

And he no doubt would have been heartened by today's thousands of voices within the religious community who, as Archbishop John Roach recently expressed, have begun to act on the belief that the church "needs to say 'no' clearly and decisively to the use of nuclear weapons." Perhaps in this most life-threatening area, above all others, we need to heed the legacy of the Drum Major for Righteousness.

Happy Birthday, Dr. King. It is not easy to honor you. We know we do you no honor by simply subscribing to your dream. We do you no honor by abiding by your lessons when it is politically expedient to do so and ignoring them when it is not. We do you no honor by paying lip service to your life's work and no more. We honor you, Dr. King, by action, in the right times and in what our enemies will call the wrong times. The battlefronts are many. May we have the fortitude and strength to do you true honor on all of them at this critical moment in our country's history.

Northern Ireland Through Black Eyes

By JEAN CAREY BOND

THE LARGE BLACK MAN in the embroidered dashiki and crocheted skull cap strikes a chord on his well-traveled guitar and invites the youthful audience to join him and his companions in singing one last song—"We Shall Overcome." The man does not have to lead the song for the youngsters know it well, every note, every word. They sing passionately and with less solemnity than we used to sing this anthem in the days of lunch-counter sit-ins and Freedom Rides and Bull Connor's dogs.

The time is December 1981, and the place is a community center in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The 200 or so singers, whose voices almost drown out the powerful baritone of the Black man on stage, are Irish. From whence spring their feelings of camaraderie with us, a delegation of mostly black Americans who rarely encounter such kindred spirits in a group of white folks?

Part of the answer lies in a play called "Plastic Bullets," put together and performed by the young people that night at the community center. It tells about the children and adults who have been mortally wounded in the streets by so-called "non-lethal" weapons, weapons rejected by Northern Ireland's British occupiers for use in their own country, but considered apt for controlling the predominantly Catholic, anti-colonialist communities of Belfast and other Northern Irish cities. The dramatic scenes, music, recitations and slides recall some of the theater the U.S. civil rights era produced. Watching the play, one wondered if the plastic bullet is not a fitting contemporary symbol of Britain's centuries-old oppression of the "inferior" Irish people, and of the double indemnity visited upon Northern Ireland's minority Catholic population.

The answer is written, too, in the physique of West Belfast, by all appearances deserving of its title, Catholic ghetto. Low-slung, ancient-looking brick dwellings dominate the area's streets, grim in their uniformity, familiar in their aspect of poverty. Occasionally, the old stone gives way to concrete or that low-budget brick so com-

Jean Carey Bond, an Associate Editor of Freedomways, traveled to Northern Ireland with a seven-person delegation to meet with Catholic civil rights activists and representatives of social and political organizations. The trip was sponsored by the New York H-Block/Armagh Committee. Independent producer St. Clair Bourne is completing a film of the delegation's visit, to be called "The Black and the Green."

mon to the public housing projects of Harlem and the South Bronx. Shops are sparse and seem to be mostly of the "mom-and-pop" variety, with an occasional fast-food franchise thrown in (vinegar on your chips, luv?). The street lights are few and dim; buses pass only once in a blue moon and are jammed. Vintage black taxis pass frequently on planned routes, picking up passengers until they're full. They are owned and operated by a community cooperative as an alternative form of public transportation because the authorities have a habit of terminating service whenever the people decide to protest their condition boisterously in the streets. Other, more deadly vehicles are also evident: Armored Saracen tanks manned by British soldiers, who look like Darth Vader come to life in their helmets with wrap-around visors.

Garrisons of the resident police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), heavily season the landscape, encircled by barbed-wire fences. One of these is the infamous Castleraegh, referred to by the locals as the neighborhood torture center. *We had been to Long Kesh that morning (known officially as the Maze Prison). Unable to enter the prison, we had stood in the visitors parking lot, bearing witness you might say, while sentries watched us from their guard towers. As our van traversed the few miles back to town, we looked at the passing scene and were silent for the most part. Our driver saw the roadblock before we did. He said the prison sentries had alerted RUC headquarters about us. They knew we were coming. Don't tell them who you're staying with, he said—no names. They stopped us, with automatic rifles drawn, and ordered us out of the van. The young officer in charge was arrogant and abusive to the point of parody. He strutted, he glowered, he threatened like cops do throughout the world who believe that the uniform and gun provided them by the state mandate any and all forms of intimidation. After examining our passports, he searched the van for about fifteen minutes—even reading a diary that he found in the glove compartment. When he opened the hood to look at the engine, he cocked his rifle. After grilling our driver for a few minutes in a nearby armored truck, he told us to drive on.*

The wall murals adorning West Belfast also reply and are as eloquent as the area's prison-like character is profane. "Blessed are those who hunger for justice," reads one mural, referring to the hunger strike that claimed the life of Bobby Sands and nine of his fellows last fall. Another: "You can kill the revolutionary but never the revolution"; and another: "Victory to the IRA." The colors are vibrant, the lettering precise. They were painted with great care by teenagers.

We hear another piece of the answer in our hosts' descriptions of

the stereotypes directed at them by many Britishers and Protestant Irish, and we are overcome by a feeling of *déjà vu*. "Catholics are lazy and dirty." "All *they* know how to do is breed children." "Irish culture is backward and of no consequence," etc., ad nauseam. How does this discrimination work, we ask, when all of you are white? How does one tell a Catholic from a Protestant or a "Brit"? If you live in Twinbrook, we are told—that's Twinbrook Estates, where Bobby Sands' family lives—you are marked. When you apply for a job, they look at your address and at the name of the school you attended, and they know. You don't get the job.

The overriding reason for the warm reception accorded our delegation is the credit assigned by the Catholic people of Northern Ireland to the 1960's civil rights movement in the U.S. for inspiring the current phase of their struggle to end Britain's colonial domination and the 50 years of sectarian discrimination and repression which have accompanied it. A glance at the history of the North as a distinct entity within the Irish nation may place in context the events of recent years.

In the wake of a rebellion triggered by the Easter Rising of 1916, the British government signed a treaty with the Irish agreeing to grant four-fifths of Ireland a modicum of independence in return for its continued control of the nation's northeast portion. This scheme was insisted upon by Protestant loyalists, who are descendants of the colonial army that Britain installed in Ireland over 200 years ago, and who constituted a majority in the northeast (Ireland as a whole is overwhelmingly Catholic). Hence, a state was gerrymandered in the north—where the ancient kingdom of Ulster had been located—to insure as large a Protestant majority as possible. From 1921 until the 1960's, the loyalist Protestants ruled virtually unchallenged and enjoyed favored status over the Catholics in all areas of public life. They owned 92 percent of the land, could cast multiple votes in elections commensurate with their property qualifications, and were the first in line for housing and employment. In short, all economic and political power, as well as social access, was vested in the Protestant sector.

Catholic resistance to this exclusive state of affairs took the form of sporadic armed actions by the Irish Republican Army (IRA). However, by the mid-1950's the imprisonment of many IRA leaders and despair in the organization's ranks had left it in disarray.

A new era dawned in 1968, when a group of middle-class Catholics and Protestants, taking heart from the example being set by Afro-Americans in the U.S. southland, founded the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association. The focus of the organization's program was the abolition of discrimination in housing, employment

and the judicial system. The contempt and indifference which greeted their efforts prompted a series of non-violent demonstrations which, in turn, were met with officially sanctioned retaliation by violence-prone loyalist mobs.

In 1969, a protest demonstration in Derry, 30 miles northwest of Belfast, was greeted by a police orgy of beating, looting and burning. At the same time, Belfast Catholics came under siege from "Orange" mobs, police and "B" specials.

As the specter of civil war loomed on the horizon, the British government dispatched troops to Northern Ireland. It would soon emerge, however, that the British military's assignment was not to protect the beleaguered Catholic community from abuses of Protestant power or to help create conditions in which the legitimate grievances of the Catholic population might be seriously addressed. Rather, it was to preserve a status quo that was inherently unjust, with the army proceeding to perpetuate injustice by singling out the Catholic community as the focus of its efforts to restore "order." House-to-house searches were (and still are) conducted only in Catholic areas; anti-riot weapons such as tear gas were used only against Catholics, and curfews were prejudicially enforced.

Predictably at this time, given the stark vulnerability of the Catholics to assault by a variety of forces, the Catholic ghettos now became breeding grounds for a resurgence of the IRA. A sizable faction in the renascent organization felt that its primary function should be to defend the Catholic population. But the leadership thought otherwise, citing a lack of organizational strength and adverse social conditions as reasons for assuming a different posture. In January of 1970, a split occurred that placed a significant portion of the IRA's rank and file on the side of waging an armed struggle against the British military and protecting the inhabitants of the Catholic ghettos—thus was born the Provisional IRA (Provos) as distinct from the "Officials."

As violence escalated during the following year, the internment era opened, so named because the British colonial regime set up internment camps to house hundreds of men and women who stood accused of being IRA leaders or troops. Internees were subjected to various forms of physical and psychological torture, including electric shock, ear-shattering high-frequency sound waves, mock executions, methodical beatings. As official violence increased in and outside of the camps, supplemented by intensified mob action by the loyalists, so too did violence and protest by the oppressed, anti-colonialist community increase. A climax was reached on January 30, 1972, at Derry, where British soldiers fired on a peaceful, anti-

internment demonstration, killing 13 people and wounding 27. The Irish call the day "Bloody Sunday."

Meanwhile in the internment camps, prisoners charged with anti-British activity were protesting the conditions of their confinement and, soon after "Bloody Sunday," were granted what they had long been demanding: status as political prisoners. Thus recognized by the British authorities, they were allowed to associate freely within the camps, to wear their own clothing instead of the prison uniform, to conduct education programs and to refrain from prison labor. Political prisoner status obtained until March 1, 1976, when it was abruptly rescinded by the British government.

Stripped of the status by which Britain had acknowledged the meaning and objectives of the activities for which they were incarcerated, the prisoners soon began to demonstrate the hardening of will that this new treatment would engender in them. It began spontaneously with prisoner Kieran Nugent's refusal to wear the now-required prison garb. Wrapping his nude body in the one blanket consigned to each internee, he declared that he would no longer recognize British judicial authority. Hundreds followed suit, becoming known as the "blanket men." Harassment, beatings, painful body searches and other humiliations and abuse on the part of the prison authorities escalated, straining the endurance of the men in the H-shaped cellblocks of Long Kesh and the women in Armagh. *Tony was as warm and attentive a host as anyone could be, and he took good care of Kathy and me throughout the delegation's visit to Belfast. At the apartment in Twinbrook Estates that his friend had vacated to accommodate us, he slept on the living room floor under two overcoats. Only a few months prior to our coming, he had been released from Long Kesh where he had served four years "on the blanket." Tony laughs a lot, especially at his own jokes. But his eyes fragment the laughter into slivers. The first time I noticed was at the nightclub—a nationalist hangout—where we had gone to hear a popular group sing Irish freedom songs. He stares, rarely blinking. He stares, not into space but through time. Tony is still in Long Kesh, perhaps for life.*

Highlighting this period was a hunger strike, from October to December 1981, called by men and women prisoners to dramatize their plight. Support for the strikers grew and became widespread in both the north and south of Ireland, with broad-based solidarity committees being formed nationwide. They were named H-Block/Armagh committees, the New York-based, North American version of which sponsored our delegation's trip to the north.

Details of the British government's response to the protest, under

heavy pressure from the prisoners' burgeoning body of allies, are too numerous to elaborate here. Suffice it to say that appearances of progress towards a substantive resolution of the salient issues were ultimately shown to be illusory.

The process that pervaded the Northern Ireland scene during the years 1976 to 1981 was dramatic and heart-rending, its best known component being the five-month strike in 1981 whereby ten very young men, through sheer force of will, hungered themselves to death. That self-imposed ordeal thrust Northern Ireland into news headlines throughout the world. In addition to being a tragic episode, it was also a controversial one. Some critics, out of their opposition to the Provisional IRA's guerrilla campaign, saw the strikers' demands as a tactic designed solely to legitimize Provo violence and to enhance the nationalistic image. Supporters of the hunger strike argue that it was initiated spontaneously by the prisoners independent of any outside political direction. Other critics felt that such an action diverts attention and energy away from the "real" issues—social and economic justice for all. Supporters reply that these issues cannot be separated from the question of a reunified, independent Irish nation; that the deprived, brutal conditions of the Long Kesh and Armagh prisoners mirror the condition of their compatriots in the ghettos of Belfast—hence, the resonance of the strike action.

As it happened, support for the hunger strike and the prisoners' demands overshadowed detractors.

Visiting Belfast as we did, in the recent aftermath of the hunger strike, our delegation was struck by the community's unflagging, though anguished, solidarity with and respect for all of the prisoners in Long Kesh and Armagh, and by their belief that the ultimate sacrifice of Bobby Sands and nine others had not been a misguided and futile "tactic." Rather they see it as an eloquent statement of faith and commitment to justice made by courageous young men on behalf of a desperate people.

Just how desperate is suggested, in part, by the following:

- The British colonial regime has imposed a body of laws which, in effect, legalize repression and inhumanity. Example: A person may be "lifted" off the street without explanation and detained incommunicado for up to seven days at Castlereaagh. In detention, the person may be dealt with in any way the authorities see fit; most frequently, the person is compelled, by means of harassment and/or torture, to "confess" to whatever charge is made. He/she is then taken before a special court and tried, not by a jury, but by a single judge. An incredible 93 percent of persons so tried are convicted, and 80 percent of the convictions are based on a single piece

of evidence—the defendant's forced confession. There are also instances of children being "lifted," detained and intimidated with the aim of turning them into informers. Representatives of the Association for Legal Justice informed our delegation that scores of ghetto dwellers are arrested daily without notice to their families or friends. The ALJ attempts to log these arrests, assists families in determining the whereabouts and status of their kin and publicizes human rights violations. Out of the more than 600 lawyers who practice in Northern Ireland, only 13 have been willing to touch ALJ cases.

- Ballymurphy, a Catholic section in Belfast visited by our delegation, is considered one of the most depressed urban areas in Western Europe. Housing is abysmally constructed, services are meager—for example, street lights were not provided because the authorities thought they would inhibit night raids into the neighborhood by British troops. As well, the residents must pay part of the cost of constructing and maintaining such facilities as schools and community centers. Social problems abound, severely taxing the resources of a handful of volunteer community workers, and two of the few "good" clergymen who worked among the people were recently murdered. Some industrial tenants whom the residents succeeded in attracting to the area, where the long-term unemployment rate is 50 percent, were evicted by the British army; and their premises converted to a military fort. Ballymurphy, like all of West Belfast, is under electronic surveillance. Ballymurphy looks and feels like apartheid. *The housing development called Devis Flats is the kind of place that must have looked shoddy even when it was new. Surveillance towers stand within it, permitting the British soldiers stationed in them to oversee activity on the exterior walkways that encircle the low-rise dwellings. Five people, we were told, have been shot on the walkways by the soldiers. Arriving at Devis at 2:30 A.M., we slept in the tiny apartment of Tony's friend. Upon awaking later in the morning, we met the little boy of the house, ten years old. "Our section is the only part of Devis the Brits can't see from the towers," he told us, as he grappled with Rubic's cube and his dog at the same time. When he left the room, Tony told us that the dog was a new one. The soldiers had thrown his other dog down a stairwell, killing him.*

- We were told that contrary to the impression created in U.S. news reports, the IRA does not come even close to holding the record for acts of political violence in Northern Ireland. The victims of such violence are overwhelmingly Catholics and some Protestants thought to be nationalists, suggesting that the perpetrators are members or supporters of Ian Paisley's paramilitary Ulster Defense

Association (UDA). Over 600 people not known to have been affiliated with any nationalist group have been killed by loyalists according to Silent Too Long, an organization of 300 members founded in August 1981 to publicize this situation. Moreover, the extreme rarity of arrest and prosecution of suspects invites the conclusion that the British forces and local police tolerate or even comply with loyalist violence against Catholics. Indeed, the authorities' position on this matter is perhaps summed up in the fact that the UDA is recognized by Britain as a legal entity, while the IRA is outlawed.

The British government's treatment of the men and women in Long Kesh and Armagh is consistent with the conditions cited above. A colonial regime, by its very nature, seeks to criminalize the political struggle against its authority, portraying those it unjustly dominates as the outlaws in the hope of masking its own crimes against a whole people. The irony is that Britain's long and public record of crimes against the Irish people was not obscured but even illuminated by Margaret Thatcher's hauteur in the face of Bobby Sands' righteous agony.

The historic and current experiences of the Irish people we talked with are key to their perceptions about the nature of their struggle. Theirs is a "Third World" struggle, they told us, a fight against British colonialism in particular and imperialism in general—a fight for self-determination. Their allies, they said, are the Black people of South Africa, the Palestinians, Afro-Americans.

A just struggle, by whatever name, continues in Ireland. The IRA, with its political arm Sinn Fein, is central to it but there are other forces as well. For example, there is the Irish Republican Socialist Party, co-founded by the internationally known Bernadette Devlin McAliskey. In the wake of the hunger strike, the prisoners in the north are still subject to the authorities' whims—a concession granted here, a privilege withheld there. Nationalists are still drawing inordinately long prison sentences for actions which, if committed by supporters of the status quo, are likely to go unpunished. (Bobby Sands was serving fourteen years for having been in a van with three people in which a single revolver was found.) While observing the Irish struggle from afar, we would do well to heed the words of a member of our delegation, James Dunn: Amid U.S. media distortions of what is going on in Northern Ireland, we must not allow ourselves to forget who the criminals really are.

The Irish and Afro-Americans in U.S. History

by FRANK MURRAY

The negro is something like the Irishman in his blundering good nature, his impulsiveness, and improvidence, and he is like a child in always having had someone to think and act for him.¹

THE ABOVE STATEMENT, from the diary of a Georgia slave-owner's daughter, is not especially surprising in its racist sentiments about Black people. One wonders, however, how many Americans of any color or creed are familiar with the attitude expressed by the writer towards the Irish, an attitude that pervaded U.S. society from the late 1840's to the dawn of the 20th century. Indeed, even the present generation of Irish America, for the most part anonymously ensconced in middle and working class life, can hardly imagine, nor does it choose to recall, the reality of its ancestors as outcasts in the U.S. whose status—despite their white skin—closely resembled that of Afro-Americans. Something may be learned by all of us in recalling the 19th-century Irish experience, for U.S. society's customary exploitation and derogation of immigrants in service to private economic aims are the flip side of a coin whose face is the enslavement and derogation of Africans for the same ends.

The 18th-century principles of humanistic enlightenment, which inspired the content of the United States Constitution, and the economic and social system of slavery and immigrant labor formed a dichotomy that became so deeply entrenched in the fabric of the nation that its impact is as timely as the latest battle for civil rights or tomorrow's editorial denouncing illegal aliens. From the inception of the nation, Afro-Americans, along with a continuing wave of European immigrants, have served as the muscle and gristle for the expanding power and industry of the United States. Across the generations, the principles of human equality and respect for the individual have been at war with economic expediency.

When a potato famine struck Ireland in 1845-46, what had been a small but steady stream became a raging flood of Irish immigrants to the U.S. totaling two million by the end of the century.

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Although most of these people were peasants who had farmed small plots for English landlords in Ireland, their primitive farming techniques and reliance on the potato as the subsistence crop made them ill-suited and ill-disposed to farming in the New World. Thus, most filled the slums of the newly industrializing coastal cities, especially Boston and New York, where their labor was in great demand. Oscar Handlin comments:

Therein lay the significance of the Irish in the city's [Boston's] economic life. Before their arrival the rigid labor supply had made industrialization impossible. It was the vital function of the Irish to thaw out the rigidity of the system. Their labor achieved the transition from the earlier commercial to the later industrial organization of the city.²

He observes further:

An analysis of Boston's work force in 1850 documents the concentration of newly arrived Irish in hard labor and domestic work. Almost half of the Irish working population were laborers and another 15 percent were domestic servants. No other group in Boston was so limited in the jobs they filled, not even Black Bostonians (of whom only one-fifth were laborers). No other group depended so much on unskilled work.³

Nor, one might add to complete the equation honestly, did U.S. industry depend on another group so much as on the Irish to work its factories and dig its canals for subsistence wages. But while ads recruiting workers in Ireland to dig canals and build railroads would lure young men to the U.S. by promising them meat three times a day and a reasonable allowance of liquor, Americans were repulsed by the new arrivals.

Though the Irish were indispensable as workhorses, their strange accents, superstition and degrading poverty made them pariahs in WASP society. "Nativist" groups such as the No-Nothing Party saw them as a threat to stability and a wart on the pure U.S. visage. When, as in New York in the 1870's, they constituted 25 percent of the population but 70 percent of those on the relief rolls, they were seen as sychophants whose lack of education and culture made them a drain on society.⁴ Thus, they quickly became the objects of discrimination.

In order to exploit a people's labor, one must believe that somehow these people, if not the creators of their own abject condition, deserve no more than what they have because they are inferior. The Puritan heritage of 19th-century America provided a convenient rationale for the practice of making "money out of men."⁵ The

marriage of the mercantile aims of economic success with the Calvinistic doctrine of God's "elected" individuals neatly explained away the inequities of 19th-century U.S. life. Max Weber's study, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, depicts clearly the religious justification for economic exploitation:

A specifically bourgeois economic ethic had grown up. With the consciousness of standing in the fulness of God's grace and being visibly blessed by Him, the bourgeois businessman, as long as he remained within the bounds of formal correctness, as long as his moral conduct was spotless and the use to which he put his wealth was not objectionable, could follow his pecuniary interests as he would and feel that he was fulfilling a duty as he was doing so. . . .

Finally, it gave him the comforting assurance that the unequal distribution of the goods of this world was a special dispensation of Divine Providence, which in these differences, as in particular grace, pursued secret ends unknown to men.⁶

The sight of intemperate and ragged Irish on the streets of Boston and New York might prove unpleasant for the Yankee businessman, but he did not regard their abject condition as in any way a moral reflection of his own business practices. Rather it reenforced his conception of the natural order of things. Surely these followers of the Pope could not be among God's "elect," their depressed condition being merely the evidence of this "fact." Adequate wages and improved living conditions would be wasted on the depraved Irish who seemed to thrive in filth and drink or gamble away what little wages they earned.

After two hundred years of practice with African slaves, U.S. business leaders could easily deny the Irish their humanity in order to rationalize oppressing them. *Harper's* magazine and the cartoonist Thomas Nast took great pleasure in presenting the simian-like "Paddy" as a blundering fool who was a danger to society when drunk and a harmless ignoramus when sober. The *New York Independent*, in 1863, offered this description:

He [the Irishman] is a creature with all the brutal passions and instincts of a man in the first savage state, with some vague intelligence of the material strength of civilization and power to use it, but without any of the higher intellectual and moral qualities which belong to the age.⁷

That the above portrait was not merely an anomalous diatribe by a "nativist" journal but mirrored the pervasive view held by WASP society is evidenced by an entry in the diary of Phillip Hone, one of

New York's social elite and mayor of the city in 1825-26. He wrote:

Irishmen [are] the most ignorant and consequently the most obstinate white men in the world and I have seen enough to satisfy me that, with few exceptions, ignorance and vice go together.⁸

The poverty of the Irish was seen as simply indicative of their inability to uphold the precepts of industrious commercial effort and righteous moral behavior decreed by the Protestant ethic; thus they did not deserve to reap its economic bounty. Moreover, their high criminal rate was interpreted as both a cause and a justification of their low social condition. When, in 1888, Mayor Abram S. Hewitt was requested to fly the Irish flag atop City Hall on St. Patrick's Day, he trotted out the criminal record of the Irish as more than sufficient reason to deny the request:

The Irish furnish more than double the number of inmates [in jails and charitable institutions] which would naturally belong to their percentage of the population. . . . The facts above stated when properly considered, should impose a modest restraint in claiming new privileges.⁹

WASP America assigned to Irish people and Afro-Americans common moral and intellectual weaknesses which apologized for the rock bottom social and economic status of both groups: Hence, the bumbling Black and the ignorant Irishman became a leitmotif for elite 19th-century social commentators. English author Frances Kemble, in an 1839 diary entry, cites the commentary of a Georgia plantation owner on both groups:

In the afternoon we paid a long visit to Mr. C. [a plantation owner]. It is extremely interesting for me to talk with him about the Negroes. . . . He thinks them very like the Irish, and instanced their subserviency, their flattering, their lying, and pilfering, as traits common to the characters of both peoples.¹⁰

Northern abolitionists, on the other hand, could refer to the Irish as proof that the white man could stoop to lower depths of degradation than could the African. Thus, an abolitionist volunteer who arrived in Port Royal off the Georgia sea coast to manage the newly freed slaves in 1862 records the poverty of the slaves but tempers his disgust with a comparison to the living conditions of the Irish immigrants:

We drove through the negro quarters, or "niggerhouse," as they themselves call the whole settlement, and they flocked to

the doors to look at us, bowing and smiling as we went by. There were eight or ten separate houses just raised from the ground so that air could pass underneath, and, as we looked in other doors, apparently with very little furniture, though in some we saw chairs which were evidently Massa's. Dirty and ragged they all were, but certainly no more so than the poor Irish, and it seemed to me not so dirty.¹¹

Another volunteer to Port Royal is evidently amazed that the former slaves were not about to let themselves starve to death as he came upon their newly planted crops. He was not as sanguine, however, about how the Irish would behave in the same circumstances. In a letter, he writes:

Think of their [the former slaves] having reorganized and gone deliberately to work here some weeks ago, without a white man near them, preparing hundreds of acres for the new crop! The Irish wouldn't have done as much in the same position.¹²

Evidently the childlike mentality of the Irish would have left them no option but to starve to death out of ignorant indolence—an unlikely prospect since most had fled to the “land of milk and honey” to avoid just such a fate. The volunteer's amazement at the slaves' ability to think and work for themselves, and his doubts about similar Irish abilities illuminate the paternalism underlying the attitudes of many northern abolitionists towards both Blacks and Irish immigrants.

Judging by the constant complaints of slave and factory owners regarding the unreliability and inefficiency of slaves and Irish labor, one must wonder why either group was tolerated in the country. But the answer, discussed earlier, is simple enough—economic expedience. Slavery made profitable sense on southern plantations, and dirt cheap Irish labor was the same. The slave system, of course, guaranteed the availability of a permanent work force to cope with large-scale farming and its seasonal variations. But ironically, southern slave owners were often so cautious about destroying their own property that they assigned the most dangerous work to a free Irishman rather than to a slave. A dead slave meant the loss of an investment, but a dead Irishman was as replaceable as a worn-out horse-shoe. F. L. Olmsted, in a diary he kept of his southern travels, found the economic value of the Irishman compared to the slave set down in no uncertain terms by a Virginia slave owner:

He [the owner of a large Virginia plantation] had had an Irish gang draining [a tobacco field] for him. He thought a negro could do twice as much work, in a day, as an Irishman. He had

not stood over them and seen them at work, but judged entirely from the amount they had accomplished; he thought a good gang of negroes would have got on twice as fast. He was sure they must have "trifled" a great deal, or they would have accomplished more than they had. . . . I asked why he should employ Irishmen, in preference to doing the work with his own hands. "It's dangerous work. . . , and a negro's life is too valuable to risk at it. If a negro dies it's a considerable loss you know."¹³

The Irish, with the painful memory of their desperate existence in Ireland indelibly etched on their bodies and souls, were grateful for any work that would insure food and shelter for their families. Work of any kind was looked upon as a great opportunity compared to the threat of death from starvation and want of work they had experienced in Ireland, with its periodic famines and continuous British indifference. However, when Irish workers attempted to improve their position through collective strike action, the owner's ace-in-the-hole was, of course, the even cheaper labor of freed Afro-Americans. Often, when Irish laborers struck for better wages and conditions, Blacks would be brought in to break the will of the strikers:

. . . characteristic of Negro-white relations was the deterrent effect of the employment of colored workers in labor disputes involving the Irish. The use of Negroes as strike-breakers inflamed the smoldering passions of the races. When in 1853 the Irish laborers at the Erie railroad struck for a \$1.25 a day and a working limit of ten hours, Negroes allegedly armed with revolvers were hired in their places.¹⁴

U.S. business saw to it that the Afro- and Irish American perceived each other as dangerous competitors for the scraps at the nation's economic banquet table.

The degrading competitive position in which the two exploited groups were compelled to confront each other led to inevitable hostilities, most notable perhaps being the New York City Draft Riots of 1863, but which sporadically made headlines throughout the 19th century. Afro- and Irish Americans were kept separate on large work sites to avoid such confrontations, as Fanny Kemble reports in her diary:

Now you must not suppose that these same Irish free laborers and Negro slaves will be permitted to work together at this Brunswick Canal being built in Georgia in the 1860's. They say that this would be utterly impossible; for why? there would be tumults and risings, and broken heads, and bloody bones, and all the natural results of Irish intercommunion with their fellow creatures. . . for, say the masters, the Irish hate the Negroes even more than the Americans do. . . .¹⁵

Kemble also noted the parallels in the Irish and black experience and posited some reasons for the mutual antagonism that characterized relations between the two groups:

Doubtless there is some truth in this Irish hostility toward Blacks; the Irish labourers who might come hither would be apt enough according to a universal moral law, to visit upon others the injuries they have received from others. They have been oppressed enough themselves to be oppressive whenever they have the chance; and the despised and degraded condition of the Blacks, presenting to them a very ugly resemblance to their own home, circumstances naturally excite in them the exercise of the contempt and disgust of which they themselves are very habitually the objects. . . .¹⁶

In fact, the experience of the Irish as the first large group of Europeans to encounter exploitation and hostility in the land of "successful revolution," accented by conflicts with Blacks, would prove to be prototypical for succeeding legions of white immigrants "on the run" from poverty and oppression. Though each new ethnic wave encounters new conditions in the U.S., a standard formula remains: First, the immigrants are exploited for their labor and resented for their differences. Secondly, while as "outsiders" they are to be treated no better than the resident "aliens"—Afro-Americans—they must not look for unity with their natural allies in a common fight for dignity and equality; rather, after a few generations of degradation and ethnic cleansing, they may become part of "us."

As later generations of Irish have put some suburban green grass and job security between themselves and their precursors' struggle for survival, the tendency has been to point the finger of shame at other groups which must now enter the battle for dignity and justice fought by their antecedents. James T. Farrell's *Studs Lonigan* accurately captured this phenomenon in its depiction of Irish hostility towards other ethnics who symbolized the misery from which many Irish are only a generation removed:

"Another black skunk," Red said, pointing to a young Negro ahead of them. . . .

"They're ruining the neighborhood. That's why Jim and I have been trying to convince the old lady to sell the building before it's too late. Property values are going to pot here. You can tell it, when there's a saloon on Fifty-eighth Street, and beer flats all around, and flats and buildings being made into rooming houses. . . ." Tommy lamented.

"It was the Jews who did it. . . . It's a lousy thing if you ask me, Jews ruining a neighborhood just to make money like Judas did. It's greed all over again, the greed of the Jews," Kelly said.

"Why don't the Jews all go back to Jerusalem where they belong?" Tommy said.¹⁷

This ethnic hostility, a poisonous seed nurtured on fear, has infected each white ethnic group's climb out of poverty and discrimination in the U.S. It is as if one must ingest the venom of ethnic hatred as a rite of passage into respectability and cultural homogeneity. Richard Hofstadter makes the following observation:

To an extraordinary degree class conflict in American history has been overshadowed by ethnic-religious, and racial conflict. Intermittent group warfare has been our substitute for, or alternative to, class war, and class war itself, when it has flared up, has seldom taken place in a clear atmosphere, unclouded by our racial-ethnic antagonisms and by our complex hierarchy of status based upon religious-ethnic-racial qualities.¹⁸

In the U.S. ethnic and race hatred often substitutes for pride in one's own culture and traditions. Economic progress is thought to be insured through the exclusion of others from access to opportunity. Thus, the children and grandchildren of "Paddy" can look with liberal pity or frightened disgust on the sons and daughters of "Sambo," forgetting the time when they were kinfolk under the skin.

An indication of the intensity that marked relations between the Irish and Afro-American peoples during the 19th century is the role of the Irishman in Afro-American folklore. In that rich treasury, no ethnic character appeared more frequently than the bumbling, backward Irishman. Moreover, it is not difficult to understand why he was portrayed as a buffoon: In Irish Americans, Blacks found a white people who, given their real-life position in society as competitors in the labor market, could be viewed eye to eye. (Ex-slave J. Vance Lewis notes, in his autobiography, the Afro-American saying: "An Irishman is only a Negro turned inside out. . .")¹⁹ Thus, Blacks conferred on the Irishman the function of providing comic relief from the pain and bitterness of their own condition. Indeed, he was a perfect foil: Reviled by other whites, he was unprotected in the face of black ridicule. Blacks could malign him with impunity, feel superior to him and, using him as a surrogate for all whites, strike back at their racial oppressors through humor.

Meanwhile, WASP society was holding both groups up to ridicule, with caricatures of the black man and Irishman being the most popular features of 19th-century minstrel shows. "Paddy" and "Sambo" found themselves in competition again since no entertainment was thought to be complete without scenes of their comic childishness and foolery.

The comic buffoon, with his inability to cope and constant efforts to avoid being duped by those wiser than he, is an element in the folklore of almost all cultures. In Afro-American folklore, the most common image of the Irishman was the ignorant "greenhorn" who was totally bewildered by his environment and ignorant of the ways of both nature and humans in the United States. (Black people, being wedded to the soil, would naturally have found ignorance of the workings of nature humorous.)

An oft-repeated tale was "The Irishman and the Pumpkin." In this tale, an Irishman sees a man driving along the road with a load of pumpkins in his wagon. When the Irishman stops to ask the man what the pumpkins are, the man tells him that they are mule's eggs and if he would sit on the egg for a time it would hatch. The Irishman buys a pumpkin and sits on it. He falls asleep and falls off. The pumpkin rolls down a hill and into some bushes where a rabbit is resting. The frightened rabbit runs from the bushes. The Irishman then returns to the man who sold him the pumpkin and says: "I want another egg. The first one hatched into a mighty fine colt, but it ran so fast that I couldn't catch it and I would like to buy another."²⁰

Irish naiveté in the workplace was also a frequent target for Afro-American humor. Tales were often told of Irish foolishness and incompetence in performing the menial jobs for which both groups competed. The following is a typical example of this genre:

This lady had an Irish maid, you know, had just come from Ireland over here. So she say she was gon' serve dinner, and it was some kind of a dish she wanted—she didn't want it dressed, you know, she wanted it raw. So she said, "Nora, such and such a dish, I want you to serve it undressed this evening."

So when it comes dinner time, Nora comes out there with just shimmies and another lil' piece, say, "Missis, I done took off everything but two pieces. I'll quit my job before I'll take anything else off."²¹

The Irish grew famous in black folklore for their indolence, a reputation in which Blacks, who competed with the Irish for jobs, obviously had a vested interest. The following tale sums up the rather low esteem in which the Irish were held as economic competitors. But it also reflects the rage felt by Black Americans, who have watched white immigrants by the millions pour into the U.S. with few resources and, within a generation or two, shorn of their accents and otherwise Americanized, pass into the "mainstream" and surpass Black Americans economically.

I'shman from Old Country, came here from Iceland [sic]. He

got a job as a hod carrier, carrying bricks and mud, on a two story building, had to go up a ladder. He wrote a letter back to his brother saying, "Come at once, I've got a good easy job, a dollar nine cents an hour carrying brick and mortar on the second floor. The other fellow does all the work so come at once. Your brother Pat."²²

There was, however, another side to the portrayal of the Irish in Afro-American folklore. Black Americans recognized the similarities in the scorn heaped by U.S. society on both groups; thus, a number of jokes and tales were told that depicted the exploited Irishman evening the score with his tormentors. In these stories, the Irishman is lent some old-fashioned Black American mother-wit to outfox "the man." Here, the Irishman bears a striking resemblance to the fabled crafty slave, John, who was always able to outwit his master and survive. An example is the South Carolina tale of an Irishman who is condemned to death alongside a Black man and a Dutchman. Allowed to pick the tree on which they are to be hung, the Black man chooses an oak, the Dutchman a pear tree, and the Irishman a gooseberry bush. Informed that it will not be large enough, the Irishman replies, "By Jesus, me wait till it grow."²³

A final story also implies recognition that the Irishman was forced to drink from the bitter cup of intolerance and prejudice. In the story, three Irishmen confess to a murder they did not commit. The black storyteller, who knew more than he cared to about U.S. justice, concludes: "They knew too much about America after all. They knew just enough about America to get hung."²⁴ The history of Black people in the U.S., and the knowledge they need in order to survive are sharply illuminated in this simple tale.

By the end of the 19th century, the condition of Irish people changed dramatically. Irish America, with its heavy concentrations in large urban centers and strong representation in a burgeoning union movement, began to grasp political power. The doors of the middle class began to open to them, though often only after the twist of an arm or the greasing of a palm. Elimination of the brogue and a change of curtains all but completed the metamorphosis—"Paddy" was permitted to graduate, leaving "Sambo" to contend with the immigrants who would follow. By the end of World War II, large numbers of Irish Americans had crossed the ethnic sea separating them from the opportunity to go for the economic spoils of U.S. society.

And what about Black America? Perennially burdened by the politics of color, Blacks have seen only a few of their number grasp the possibility of success as our society defines it.

NOTES

1. Eliza Frances Andrews, *The Wartime Journal of a Georgia Girl, 1864-1865* (Macon, Georgia: The Ardivan Press, 1960), p. 340.
2. Oscar Handlin, *Boston Immigrants* (Cambridge, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1941), p. 82.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 340.
4. Edward Wakin, *Enter the Irish American* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), p. 45.
5. Ferdinand Kurnburger, *Der Amerikamude [Picture of American Life]* (Frankfurt, Germany, 1855).
6. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1958), pp. 176-77.
7. *New York Independent*, XV (July 23, 1863), p. 4.
8. Allan Nevins, ed., *Diary of Phillip Hone, 1828-1851* (New York, 1936), p. 190.
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10. Frances Kemble, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation in 1838-1839* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 322.
11. E. W. Pearson, ed., *Letters from Port Royal* (New York: Arno Press and the *New York Times*, 1969), p. 18.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
13. Frederick Law Olmsted, *A Journey to the Seaboard Slave States: In the Years 1853-1854, With Remarks on Their Economy* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1904), pp. 100-101.
14. Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City, 1825-1863* (Port Washington, New York: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1949), p. 105.
15. Kemble, pp. 123-24.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
17. James T. Farrell, *Studs Lonigan* (New York, Avon Books, 1977), p. 411.
18. Richard Hofstadter and Michael Wallace, eds., *American Violence: A Documentary History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 13.
19. J. Vance Lewis, *Out of the Ditch: A True Story of an Ex-Slave* (Houston, Texas: Rein and Sons, 1910), p. 16.
20. "Irishman Stories," *Southern Workman and Hampton School Record*, XXVIII (May 1899), pp. 192-93.
21. Darryl Cumber Dance, *Shuckin' and Jivin': Folklore from Contemporary Black America* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1978), p. 161.
22. Richard Dorson, *Negro Tales from Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and Calvin, Michigan* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1958), p. 253.
23. Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), p. 304.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 304.

Dr. Holmes, the Philosopher Rebel

by JOHN H. McCLENDON

THOUGH HE WAS relatively unknown, the philosopher Eugene C. Holmes was a central figure in black intellectual history. The nature of his contribution to that history and to the Afro-American liberation struggle, as well as the character of his philosophical outlook, are the subjects of this essay. I will seek to show that Dr. Holmes was, philosophically, a dialectical materialist who was essentially concerned with a philosophical examination of black intellectual inquiry.

Holmes was born in Paterson, New Jersey, on October 12, 1905, and died of cancer in 1980.¹ His undergraduate years were spent at New York University, where he began to explore the field of literary criticism. During this time, he published his first article in the August 1932 issue of *Opportunity*, "Jean Toomer: Apostle of Beauty."² After completing his work at New York University, he pursued graduate work in philosophy at Columbia University while also serving as an instructor of philosophy at Howard University. His interest in literary criticism no doubt played a part in his selection of Howard's Philosophy Department because Alain Locke, chair of the department, was the leading critic of black literary expression of the time.³

Holmes began the formal process of training to become a professional philosopher during "The Great Depression," that economic crisis of U.S. and world capitalism which had a profound impact on intellectual, theoretical and ideological formulations. At Columbia, he came under the influence of John Dewey and pragmatism, the leading expression of bourgeois philosophy. On the other hand, at Howard, primarily through the Division of Social Science, he established a relationship with a number of black intellectuals who were increasingly influenced by Marxism. William Alphaeus Hunton, Doxey Wilkerson, Abram Harris and even Ralph Bunche were involved in a left critique of capitalism, racism and bourgeois scholarship. Thus, from 1932 to 1942, the year Holmes completed his doctoral dissertation, his philosophical outlook was forged in the context of the struggle between dialectical materialism and pragmatism.⁴

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It is important to note that pragmatism as a philosophical school of thought had decidedly attached itself to the populist, and later the progressive, movements, which gave it the appearance of being in democratic opposition to monopoly capitalism. In the period of the Depression, pragmatism was to lean even more leftward, with philosophers such as Sidney Hook, a student of Dewey, even trying to merge pragmatism with Marxism. But despite this left form, its content remained bourgeois through and through. Roosevelt's New Deal, with its subsequent "Welfare State" compromises to the working class, found in pragmatism the philosophical rationale for reformist measures. Pragmatism's methodology of trial by error and piecemeal approach to particular problems were the theoretical underpinnings of New Deal legislation. Its denial of the necessity of a generalized conception of material reality as an objective phenomenon and, in place of that, its emphasis on individual problems, suited the reformist policies of the liberal, democratic bourgeoisie. Rather than seeking an explanation of capital crisis in general with revolutionary change as its logical consequence, pragmatism sought ways to insure the survival of capitalism through reforms.⁵

Eugene Holmes was critical of pragmatism, and he rendered a critique of it in his doctoral dissertation. This dissertation, printed privately in 1942 and titled *Social Philosophy and the Social Mind: A Study of the Genetic Methods of J. M. Baldwin, G. H. Mead and J. E. Boodin*, was a short but comprehensive tract detailing how ruling philosophies had been transformed into a new type of liberalism that espoused a naturalistic, evolutionary theory of a society. Darwinism and pragmatism, wedded as a social philosophy under the banner of science, had rejected both theological/Hegelian idealism and Spenserian speculative philosophy for a behaviorism grounded in the "new" psychology of James and Dewey. The "genetic" method upheld evolution but saw the dialectic between "organism" and "environment" from the viewpoint that both were fundamentally social entities. Politically, this viewpoint amounted to a philosophical apology for bourgeois democracy. Holmes, in his critique of this philosophical trend, stated:

During the period before the World War, the leaders who made democracy synonymous with a republican form of government did not realize that it was not in reality the democracy it professed to be. Philosophers had adequately explored the philosophies of democracy, but they were not critical of these philosophies.⁶

Eugene Holmes was not your typical "ivory tower" philosopher. He was an activist/scholar whose chief aim was to unite the scientific

world outlook of dialectical materialism with the practical struggle for black liberation and socialism.

His entire academic career was at Howard University, where he taught for 38 years in the Department of Philosophy. He succeeded his mentor and colleague, Alain Locke, as chair of that department and held the position for 18 years. He retired with emeritus status in 1970.⁷

The radical posture of Howard scholars led to a reluctance (especially during the 1930's and 1950's) on the part of large foundations to give grants to the university for social science research, and there were even governmental attempts to attack Howard for alleged communist influences. Yet in spite of McCarthyist hysteria, the Division of Social Science sponsored a conference, "Academic Freedom in the United States," in 1953 and a lecture by W. E. B. Du Bois in 1958. The Du Bois lecture characteristically upheld peace and socialism and condemned the execution of the Rosenbergs. For almost four years prior to its presentation, this lecture was the object of government pressure. Eugene Holmes, as a member of the Division of Social Science (the Philosophy Department was included in this division), played no small part in conducting these programs. Indeed, he was a contributor to and editor of the proceedings of the Division's conference of 1955 on "The New Negro Thirty Years Afterwards"—a tribute to Alain Locke.⁸ The influence of Locke on Holmes, after many years of collaboration as colleagues, explains why he wrote several articles and gave many public lectures on Alain Locke's philosophy. He even wrote a manuscript on Locke, *Alain Leroy Locke—Life and Times*, which he hoped would be published by Howard University Press. However, to my knowledge the manuscript remains unpublished.⁹

Holmes published in a wide range of scholarly journals. Of special significance is the fact that along with writing in "traditional" scholarly journals such as *Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* and *American Journal of Physics*, he sought to reach a more politically oriented audience by publishing in the Marxist journals *Science and Society* and *New Masses*.

Because Holmes had an abiding interest in the application of dialectical materialism to the black experience, he contributed three articles to *Freedomways*. His first essay, "The Legacy of Alain Locke," appeared in the summer of 1963 and displayed his keen awareness of the dynamics and nuances of black intellectual history. In the essay he combined an historical approach to the role Locke had played in the Harlem Renaissance with literary criticism of the Renaissance writers, giving special attention to the social-historical basis of the poetry and novels of that period. And while Holmes ex-

toll the positive role of the Renaissance, his materialist perspective led him to criticize its socio-economic basis. He stated:

The post-war decade which ushered in the Harlem Renaissance was the age of triumph for big business and the consolidation of industry and monopoly capitalism on a world-wide scale. This was conducted by white capital with Negro and immigrant labor, a mass of cheap and potentially efficient labor, unlimited natural power and a use of unequalled technique, reaching all of the markets of the world and leading to the emergence of America as a force in twentieth-century world imperialism.¹⁰

Holmes was equally critical of the class character of the Renaissance movement and its incipient bourgeois nationalism. He wrote:

... there was being cultivated a middle-class nationalism within the protective folds of the capitalist ethos. The majority did not rebel, but rather hearkened to the voice of bourgeois authority. American capitalism had prospered in the redivision of the profits and spoils of the war. In too many instances, the "New Negro" had served in too large a measure as a means of amusement, to be fawned upon and idolized. Many of the New Negroes were unwilling victims of an inverted racialistic nationalism, looking upon themselves as having arrived, and priding themselves that they could sing, paint and write as well as their white-skinned patrons.¹¹

Eugene Holmes' next article for *Freedomways* appeared in the special issue devoted to the dean of black scholarship, W. E. B. Du Bois. In "W. E. B. Du Bois—Philosopher," Holmes initially gives a biographical account of Du Bois' early development as a student and scholar. Declaring that "literally and historically, there had not been any *philosophies* of freedom up until Du Bois" (italics mine), Holmes recaptures Du Bois' analysis of the black liberation struggle from slavery to Reconstruction, emphasizing his class approach.¹²

Holmes accentuates the point that Du Bois was a materialist, philosophically, and a scientific historian and sociologist, and that this orientation led him to struggle for equality, democracy, peace and the destruction of imperialism. He cites the fact that Du Bois was among the first U.S. scholars to teach a course on Marxism at a U.S. university and discusses how Du Bois' scholarship and life's work pointed to the necessity for socialism.¹³

His last contribution to *Freedomways* was "Langston Hughes, Philosopher-Poet" in the Spring 1968 issue. Holmes highlights the fact that the art of Hughes grew directly from the masses, describing him as a social poet who "eschew[ed] all of the old formalism of traditional poetry. He was disposed always to link this profession

with his people and to use this poetry as a weapon in his activist alliance with the oppressed."¹⁴ For Holmes, Hughes' understanding of the dialectic of an aesthetic theory of black art was demonstrated in his use of the life experiences of ordinary Black people as subject material, uncovering its universal content. While Hughes was not expressly concerned with the elaboration of this theory (Holmes thought this was more a concern of Locke and Du Bois), he was, nevertheless, a critical figure in inspiring the Black Arts movement of the 1960's.¹⁵

The other philosophical domain explored ably by Holmes was the philosophy of science. His work on the highly complex topic of space and time displayed his mastery of higher mathematics, physics and the history of philosophy. Holmes' writings on the topic of space and time numbered three articles. They were "The Main Philosophical Considerations of Space and Time" which appeared in the *American Journal of Physics* (December 1950), "The Kantian Views of Space and Time Reevaluated" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (September-June 1955-56), and "Philosophical Problems of Space and Time" in *Science and Society* (Summer 1960). The objective of each was to confirm materialism's consistent link with the evolution and advancement of science. Since the technical scope and depth of these articles do not permit a full exposition of their contents here, a summary must suffice.

Starting with the materialism of the Egyptians, Holmes posited that their conception of space and time derived immediately from the necessity of production. Egyptian materialism was, thus, restricted to practical requirements, rather than being more generalized like the materialism of the Ionians. Although more recent research by black philosophers such as Lanciany Keita, Henry Olela and Ed Phillips has taken a different view of the relationship between Egyptian and Greek materialism, Holmes' efforts to locate Egyptian advances in philosophy and science within the history of materialism's development were pioneering steps.¹⁶

Holmes' knowledge of the history of philosophy and his penetrating insight into the dialectical unfolding of the contradiction between philosophical materialism and idealism, on the one hand, and subsequent conceptions in science, on the other, are evidenced in his cogent discussions of Ionian materialism, Euclidean geometry, Cartesian idealism, Kantian dualism and Newtonian physics. The main thrust of his critique, following in the philosophical tradition of Lenin, was that neo-Kantianism's emergence as a philosophy of science was an idealistic effort to sum up recent advances in science. For Holmes, a deeper cognition of the material world—that is, a new conception of space and time—could only be rendered through

an epistemology grounded in dialectics.¹⁷ A mechanistic materialism could not explain wave/particle and space/time as a continuum. Holmes ostensibly sided with Marx, Engels and Lenin in upholding the position that dialectical materialism was the only ontological and epistemological basis for science.

The struggle around scientific theory and research, expressed in the materialist/idealist debate, had profound philosophical implications. Holmes accepted that dialectical and historical materialism formed an integral world view. According to this view, the scientific cognition of nature, society and thought itself is governed not only by the particular laws of a specific science; i.e., physics, biology, history or logic, but additionally these particular laws are more concrete expressions of the generally lawful motion inherent in material reality. Since nature, society and thought are intrinsically tied and the unity of the world is a manifestation of its materiality, specific scientific investigation produces broad philosophical generalization and abstraction—which make possible a more comprehensive cognition of objective reality. Thus, general philosophical categories and laws which operate as scientific abstraction ultimately give us a deeper approximation of objective truth.

The Idealists, on the other hand, especially those of the neo-Kantian and positivist schools, have used the findings of specific sciences to try to refute the existence of an objective reality and/or our ability to have real knowledge of it. Dr. Holmes' contribution to the philosophy of science was his militant defense of philosophical materialism, a somewhat unique posture in the black philosophical tradition. He stood as the only professionally trained black philosopher of his time who subscribed to dialectical materialism.

It may be asked, why was Holmes attracted to Marxist philosophy? Why did he stand apart from other black philosophers? Substantive answers to these questions would, of course, demand a full-blown biography of Dr. Holmes, which is beyond the scope of this essay. Noteworthy, however, is the fact that Holmes' activist/scholar orientation led him to associate with like-minded thinkers, all of whom were deeply engaged in the black liberation movement. One of Holmes' friends was Alphaeus Hunton, a founder of the Council of African Affairs, an anti-imperialist organization seeking the independence of Africa from colonialism. Hunton worked with Paul Robeson and W. E. B. Du Bois, both of whom were Marxist scholar/activists, on the executive committee of that organization. Holmes' close collaboration with such activists stimulated his study of dialectical materialism. To Holmes, the function of philosophical exposition was not merely to gain professional recognition; rather, he saw it as an intellectual weapon in the liberation struggle. Moreover, he

attempted to bring philosophy into the orbit of black intellectual inquiry and, so doing, spoke to a broader audience than technically trained philosophers.¹⁸

* * *

A paper entitled "A General Theory of the Freedom Cause of the Negro People," presented by Holmes at the American Philosophical Association Convention in December 1965, was probably the best expression of his social philosophy. He began by defining freedom as a socio-historical category, holding that humanity's quest for freedom from nature; i.e., the ongoing effort to transform nature, has always taken place in the context of political and social relations. He contended, further, that achievement of the objective of human emancipation from exploitation was a real possibility in the present historical epoch. Yet, there would be no true human liberation without the liberation of Black people.¹⁹

Holmes explained that the existence of slavery, both ancient and modern, was the material foundation for the struggle to attain freedom, and that the tradition of reactionary philosophers and philosophies could be traced historically to the persistence of the "master/slave relationship." He denounced the philosophies of Plato, Cicero, Paul, Augustine, Aquinas and Calhoun as either lending justification to slavery or failing to condemn it. He described John C. Calhoun as the only philosopher produced by the ante-bellum South.²⁰

He gave an historical materialist account of U.S. history, analyzing the collapse of Reconstruction and the anti-Black backlash which followed both World Wars, as well as castigating both conservative and liberal ideologists for their racism. Central to Holmes' discussion was the contention that black progress was the result of the determined struggle of Black people. He welcomed the 1960's upsurge of the black movement and supported the stand of SNCC and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. He remarked caustically that the South was "a wasteland of the denial of opportunity" and added, "much of America is a wasteland because of the ghetto-like practices of educational segregation. . . ."²¹ He observed that the black community was not without a class structure and derided the black middle-class. Holmes saw in the Black Arts movement of the 1960's a similarity in purpose to its antecedent movement of the 1920's. Both, he said, gave Black people the opportunity to be "active creators. . . in a new cultural development."²²

Thus, while he was a philosopher who belonged to the tradition of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Du Bois, and Bernal, Dr. Eugene Clay Holmes was also a thinker who gained his intellectual insights as much from

the persistent and militant struggle of his people as from the libraries of academe.

Unquestionably, his passing is a serious loss to our intellectual tradition and to our struggle for liberation. And though many are unaware of his death, the real tragedy is that even more are ignorant of his eloquently committed life. This by no means definitive essay has been offered in memory of a fallen comrade who readily understood the dictum:

Philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The task, however, is to change it.

NOTES

1. For biographical data on Holmes see Jaques Cattell Press ed., *Directory of American Scholars* (New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1974), p. 193. For an announcement of his death, see *Jet* (July 31, 1980).
2. Eugene C. Holmes, "Jean Toomer: Apostle of Beauty," *Opportunity*, Vol. 10, No. 8 (August 1932), pp. 252-54. In the biographical sketches of Contributors, Holmes is identified as "a graduate student in literary criticism at New York University." However, the *Directory* indicated he was an undergraduate at New York University.
3. Locke was generally regarded as the mentor of the young black writers of the Harlem Renaissance and the foremost critic of black literary expression. See Eugene C. Holmes, "Alain Locke: Philosopher, Critic, Spokesman," *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 54, No. 5 (February 28, 1957), pp. 113-18.
4. For a good account of some of the intellectual output during the 1930's at Howard, see Michael R. Winston, "Through the Back Door: Academic Racism and the Negro Scholar in Historical Perspective," *Daedalus*, Vol. 100, No. 3 (Summer 1971), p. 317.
5. C. Wright Mills, *Sociology and Pragmatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 317.
6. Eugene C. Holmes, *Social Philosophy and the Social Mind: A Study of the Genetic Methods of J. M. Baldwin, G. H. Mead, and J. E. Boodin* (New York: Privately printed, 1942), p. 73.
7. Consult the *Directory*, p. 193.
8. See Rayford W. Logan, *Howard University: The First Hundred Years* (New York: New York University Press, 1969), pp. 362-63, 490, 439-40, 485. Holmes was co-editor with Rayford W. Logan and G. Franklin Edwards of *The New Negro Thirty Years Afterwards: Papers Contributed to the Sixteenth Annual Spring Conference of the Division of the Social Sciences* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1955). Holmes paper in the *Proceedings* was "Alain Locke—Philosopher."
9. Holmes had cited this manuscript as a publication in the *Directory of American Scholars*. This writer is personally aware of the fact that it was under consideration by Howard University in 1974.
10. Eugene C. Holmes, "The Legacy of Alain Locke," *Freedomways*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Summer 1963), p. 297.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 301.
12. Eugene C. Holmes, "W. E. B. Du Bois—Philosopher," *Freedomways*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Winter 1965), pp. 43-44.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.
14. Eugene C. Holmes, "Langston Hughes, Philosopher-Poet," *Freedomways*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (Spring 1968), p. 146.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 148-51.
16. The most extensive exegesis of Holmes' Space/Time research has been done by a former student of Holmes, Percy E. Johnston in *Phenomenology of Space & Time: An Examination of Eugene Clay Holmes' Studies in the Philosophy of Time & Space* (New York: Dasein Literary Society, 1976); see Eugene C. Holmes, "The Main Philosophical Considerations of Space and Time," *American Journal of Physics*, Vol. 18, No. 9 (December 1950), p. 561. For recent work on the relationship of Egyptian to Greek philosophy, see Henry Olela, "The African Foundation of Greek Philosophy" and Lanciany Keita, "The African Philosophical Tradition," both in Richard A. Wright, ed., *African Philosophy: An Introduction* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1979). Additionally, consult Edward P. Phillip's "Can Ancient Egyptian Thought Be Regarded as the Basis of African Philosophy?" *Second Order*, Vol. 3 (1974).
17. Holmes' "The Main Philosophical Considerations of Space and Time," p. 564. The remainder of my elaboration is a philosophical summary of the essential points argued by Holmes in his defense of materialism.
18. Holmes' specific relationship to Hunton, Du Bois and Robeson necessarily involves more biographical research. But all of them were closely associated with *Freedomways*. Not mentioned in the text of this essay is that Holmes had published an essay in 1935 in which he ostensibly identifies with a Marxist critique of literature. See Holmes' "The Negro in Recent American Literature" in Henry Hart, ed., *American Writer's Congress* (New York: International Publishers, 1935).
19. Eugene C. Holmes, "A General Theory of the Freedom Cause of the Negro People" in Percy E. Johnston, ed., *Afro-American Philosophies: Selected Readings from Jupiter Hammon to Eugene C. Holmes* (Upper Montclair, New Jersey: Montclair State College Press, 1970), pp. 18-19.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Class Formation in the Caribbean

by SELWYN R. CUDJOE

PART OF the problem in trying to understand the manner in which a nation of people is really formed — bereft, that is, of what E. P. Thompson refers to as a "patina of clichés" — is the inability of humanists, scholars and social scientists alike to depict a people's development in terms of their social wholeness, recognizing that they are the products of an entire age and are subject to all of the economic, social, cultural and psychological forces which comprise that age. Too often, scholars tend to gloss over the emotional sufferings, triumphs, exploitation and class conflicts (both internal and external) of working peoples as they pursue their neat and tidy historical and literary generalizations toward the end of merely confirming predetermined conclusions.

E. P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*,¹ which examines the development of English working people with great clarity, can serve as a prototypical study. His perceptive insights about the manner in which groups of people construct their identity may serve as a fitting preface to a discussion of class formations in the Caribbean:

If we stop history at a given point, then there are no classes but simply a multitude of individuals with a multitude of experiences. But if we watch these men over an adequate period of social change, we observe patterns in their relationships, their ideas, and their institutions. Class is defined by men as they live their own history, and, in the end, this is the only definition.²

Such are the intentions of Walter Rodney's *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905*, Bridget Brereton's *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad, 1870-1900* and David Nicholls' *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour and National Independence*. Each attempts to examine patterns of social relationships among certain groups within the Caribbean.

Rodney's work, published posthumously after his brutal assassination by the Burnham government on June 13, 1980, follows in the

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tradition of *The Making of the English Working Class*, especially in its arrangement of ideas and some of its conclusions. Avoiding many of the dangers cited above, it provides an important examination of its subject during the period 1881 to 1905. In an exemplary fashion, Rodney analyzes the social and economic dimensions of the Guyanese—the nameless and the named, the East Indian and the African, the middle classes and the peasants—as they *made themselves* and *were made* in the almost uninhabitable terrain of Guyana. What Rodney calls the “minutiae” of peasant life, the struggles they undertook at the very rudimentary level of existence (holding back the sea-water to prevent it from “overswamping” them) and their continued opposition to the planter class. His conclusion about peasant development:

Peasant history (with the rare exception of peasant revolts) proceeds not from one great turning point to another but through a series of cyclical patterns, reflecting the dominance of the environment, the stagnation in technology, and the slow rate of change in the overall social structure. These characteristics direct that historical reconstruction should accord due attention to the minutiae of difficulties in the peasant existence. Moreover, the awareness and discussion of these difficulties reached a high point during the 1880s and 1890s, even if the problems themselves were typical of those that went before and after.³

Rodney shies away from depicting these folk as being “victorious,” “gallant,” etc. He is at pains to emphasize that people “make” their history as they confront the “objective conditions” of their lives. In the case of the Guyanese, the psychological and social dimension of their personhood is shaped as they confront a hostile environment and the merciless exploitation of the planters. They planted their yams, eddoes, cassava; they refused to work on the sugar cane plantation and bargained for wages; at times, they fought each other in the mistaken belief that their fellow workers were the source of oppression; at other times, they had to make compromises just to ease their frustration. Yet, through it all, they struggled to affirm their humanity and to establish themselves in their new environment.

Necessarily, the text climaxes with the important 1905 revolt, in which Rodney finds articulated a kind of nascent sense of class consciousness:

Riots and disturbances punctuate the history of the British West Indies. Most were minor phenomena with little significance beyond the small circle of lives touched by a brief explosion of social violence. But there were times when the disaffection was

more wide-ranging and the scale of violence larger; and when the level of consciousness and organization of the participants carried these elements forward into a moment of challenge to colonial authority. In different degrees, these characteristics were present in the riots of November-December 1905 in the county of Demerara.⁴

Rodney's case, then, is that the period 1881-1905 was one in which, to use Marx's phrase, the Guyanese working people became "a class for itself." Rodney might have used the phrase "the development of the Guyanese working class," but he cautions:

The social situation of the early twentieth century was still fluid. In its analysis, one must utilize the terms "working class," "working people" and "the people" to refer (in that order) to entities within larger entities, among which the contradictions were not fundamental.

Finally, the text is strong in its economic and historical analyses but deficient in its lack of a psychological argument and in the area of culture, in which Rodney acknowledges that: "Only the opening up of culture [sic] history can definitely indicate what made the working people exercise particular choices at given moments: what made them long-suffering or impatient or what transformed them from apathy to combat."

Clearly, both Rodney and Thompson understood that, to a large degree, history and economics are only part of the articulation of a people's development. Their culture and their psychology are other important phenomena through which we can understand the authentic manner in which a people realize themselves in a particular time and place. Wilson Harris's, *Eye of the Scarecrow* (1965) is relevant in this regard as a work that attempted a psychological reconstruction of the development of the Guyanese for the period 1920 to 1964.

The Guyanese Working People, however, is not necessarily Rodney's best or most original work, even though it is replete with evidence of superior scholarship. And while it certainly surpasses his polemical works (I mean "polemical" in its best sense), *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972) and *The Groundings with My Brothers* (1969), it does not achieve the distinction of his first work — *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545 to 1800*.⁵

Significantly, the genesis of both *The Guyanese Working People* and of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* can be found in *Upper Guinea Coast*, in which Rodney argues that:

It was the European commercial system which expanded to embrace the various levels of African barter economy, and to

assign them specific roles in global production. This meant the accumulation of capital from trading in Africa, and above all from the purchase of slaves and their employment in the New World. It is essential to stress that all changes on the coast occurred without prejudice to this over-all conception. Indeed, as the following chapters will reveal, the most significant changes on the Upper Guinea Coast demonstrate how African society became geared to serve the capitalist system.⁶

In reverse, this formulation describes how Europe underdeveloped Africa. Similarly, *The Guyanese Working People* is foretold in Rodney's contention that:

The noble was a social being apart from the masses of the people, and a recognition of this fact is basic for an understanding of much that occurred on the Upper Guinea Coast between 1545 and 1800. In terms of the ancient influences from the interior, new intrusions usually meant change at the level of leadership, that is to say the Mande and Fula were partially to replace the old ruling class of the littoral. But even more important, in its contacts with the Europeans, the African society of the Upper Guinea did not present itself as an undifferentiated entity. The patterns of trade often transcended tribal divisions, but never the distinction between *fidalgo* [the noble of the region] and plebian.⁷

The contradictions between the planters and the workers, as well as the differentiated nature of the workers, became Rodney's main concern in *The Guyanese Working People*. And it is the social relations which ensue from these factors that Rodney attempts to delineate in that work.

Upper Guinea Coast (written in 1966 as a doctoral dissertation) and *The Guyanese Working People* both reflect the influence of Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* which deals with the period of the Industrial Revolution. Thompson argues: "I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the 'obsolete' hand-loom weaver, the 'utopian' artisan and even the deluded follower of Joanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of posterity." Rodney, in his turn, seeks to rescue from obscurity the African carpenter and pan-boiler, the East Indian rice-planter and sugar cane field worker, and all of the other nameless peasants and workers who made the history of Guyana what it is.

In comparing *Upper Guinea Coast* with *The Guyanese Working People*, one finds the former to be researched more thoroughly, argued more cogently and less self-consciously knowing than the latter. In *Upper Guinea Coast*, Rodney is the scholar who has stormed

the intellectual barricades. He involves the reader in the unfolding meaning of the work, is more low-keyed and, having indicated his ideological perspective, allows the facts to speak for themselves. By contrast, *The Guyanese Working People* is intrusive, insistent and, as previously noted, less original in conception than his first work.

Most of the conclusions Rodney arrives at in his Chapter 7, "Race as a Contradiction Among the Working People," are quite similar to those Thompson draws in his discussion of the relationship between the Irish and English workers during the Industrial Revolution. Both Rodney's work and Parts I and II of Thompson's study go up to the period when the workers arrive at that point of possessing a well-defined sense of class identity that is ready, as it were, to attain a more highly organized and politically conscious character. Rodney may have intended, in a sequel, to follow Thompson's path by discussing "the working people's consciousness of their interests and of their predicament as a class." At any rate, his last political document, "People's Power, No Dictator" (it is believed that another document may exist on "Constitutional Reforms"), delivered in the form of a speech about a month before his death, offers what can be considered a much more mature political outlook:

A united working class is the base on which national unity is to be built. It is the working class (including housewives and the unemployed) who suffer most under the corrupt dictatorship. It is the working class which has sacrificed most in the struggle for bread and justice. A working-class interpretation must win over the progressive element of other classes and strata. It will have to be made clear that the Burnham dictatorship came forth from a particular economic system—a system rooted in inequality and exploitation. It will also have to be made clear that working people require fundamental changes in the political structure to permanently guarantee rights which they temporarily won in the face of colonialism. *The Guyanese working people, who are in the immense majority, will expect to have their labor power reflected in the power of the state.*⁸ (My italics)

Rodney did not live to undertake the important intellectual task of tracing the development of a political consciousness among the working people and their consolidation as a class. Yet, the clarity, forcefulness and analytical brilliance of *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905* make it an important contribution to the historiography of the region, and it charts a new way of perceiving Guyanese society's development through the eyes of its working people.

Bridget Brereton's *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad* attempts to chronicle certain aspects of the development of Trinidadian society. Published two years before Rodney's work, and adhering to a somewhat traditional mode of historical discourse, *Race Relations* sets out "to examine the nature of society and race relations in Trinidad in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, with special reference to the white, coloured and black groups" and to treat the emergence of the "non-white middle class" as "a crucial theme." Such an emphasis is welcome, but when the existence of this class is assumed to be independent of and unrelated to the central struggle of the working people, then a lot of conceptual and analytical difficulties arise that no amount of polemicizing (of the worst kind) can erase. More importantly, such an approach leads to distortions of the social development process and to obfuscation of the essential dynamics of the working people's struggle.

Brereton belabors the fact that the colonial power exploited the African workers (what else was a colonialist-capitalist regime set up to do?); dwells on aspects of the workers' resistance (the obvious and necessary response to brutality and exploitation); and, in service to her central thesis, argues that education was the most important factor in the formation of a non-white middle class. "Education . . .," she says, "was the crucial factor in the emergence and growth of a coloured and black middle class in Trinidad. [Its] members . . . attached great weight to cultural and intellectual life . . . because they had no other valuable and valued possessions to hold on to." How this class interacted with the laboring masses, from whom it undoubtedly gained its social and political strength, Ms. Brereton does not discuss. Nor does she tell us whether the middle class articulated its position or that of the working people. Yet, she insists that this stratum was of crucial importance ("crucially crucial," as the Rastafarians would say) to the development of the society.

As the text unfolds, it becomes obvious that Brereton's analysis is much too mechanical and contains too many sweeping generalizations about social development and the nature of social relations. Facts are stated fairly clearly, it is true, but without any attempt to interpret their implications. It is not uncommon to come upon information, as, for example, in the following statement, that is unaccompanied by any proposition as to what it meant for the development of the society or the period under discussion:

The members of these Afro-Christian sects [the Shango, the Shouters, etc.] were exclusively lower class and black. Participation in them afforded emotional release from economic hardship, political impotence, and social humiliations. In the

kingdom of God of these sects, the lowly were saved. [I am not too sure what this last sentence means.] Religion provided a haven from rejection by the dominant classes, and an index of status and authority within the black lower class. A related benefit was the support and guidance available in life crises, and the friendship shared with fellow worshippers. The large ceremonies relieved the tedium of daily life. Since these cults were democratically organized, they offered leadership positions to working-class blacks, opportunities not usually available in the orthodox churches. They may have represented a democratic thrust, a desire for social equality, a protest against the Establishment and the European churches with their white priests and ministers.⁹

Surely, these "lower-class . . . blacks" did not practice their cultural rituals *because* they were poor. (I use the term "cultured" to refer to the entire corpus of a people's spiritual or emotional life. For example, voodoo performed the same kind of religio-political function in Haiti as the Shango did in Trinidad and in the other British West Indian islands.)¹⁰ They practiced them because they defined their lives through particular social and cultural activities. Moreover, as Amilcar Cabral has demonstrated with considerable cogency, culture plays an especially significant role within the context of colonial-capitalist societies by allowing the colonized person to maintain his/her dignity and integrity of self while experiencing the ordeal of colonial domination.¹¹

The culture of those people who constitute the majority in a society cannot, then, be seen as a mere secondary phenomenon that is only *accidentally related* to some other *central activity* in the societal matrix. Thus, the culture of a colonial people, viewed in context, cannot be reduced simply to certain "related benefits . . . in life crises" or "a haven from rejection by the dominant class." Their culture must be seen as one of the prime determinants in the construction of a people's social life—a point that Engels emphasized when he argued for the "ultimately" determining role of economics¹² and that Louis Althusser stressed in arguing for the relative autonomy of economic, political and ideological practices.¹³

More specifically, Makhail Bakhtin's study on Francois Rabelais demonstrates that the colonial culture of Trinidad (and of the British West Indies) engendered what can be called a "two-world consciousness," whereby the culture of the working people was radically different and separate from that of the official ecclesiastical order of the Middle Ages:

. . . the former world offered a completely different non-official, extra-ecclesiastical and extra-political aspect of the world, of

man, and of human relations; they built a second life outside officialdom, a world in which all medieval people participated more or less, in which they lived during a given time of the year.¹⁴

The colonial person, it would seem to me, lived in that radically separate and distinct other-world, 365 days of the year. Furthermore, the religious and political dimensions of these early societies cannot be looked at as totally separate entities. How the two worlds of officialdom and non-officialdom vied with each other, and the manner in which they had to accommodate each other in order to exist, mark the territory in which to focus discussion.

It is only in this sense that we can best understand the total onslaught that was made against the culture of the working people of Trinidad (both East Indians and Africans) in the 1880s, the main objective of that onslaught being to make more pliant workers. Thus, Brereton's "civilizing religions" (Christianity) vs. the "barbaric religion" (Shango); or her "civilizing instruments" (the violin and piano) vs. the "archaic instruments" (the African drums), etc., simply express the working out of intense class struggle at the ideological level via the medium of the people's culture. The same thing has been happening in Haiti vis-à-vis voodoo during that nation's entire history of independence.

In this context can be identified the "true" nature of the activities of that "non-white middle class" which is the major concern of Ms. Brereton's text. One can argue that the "formal" political activities of this stratum of society (strictly speaking, this group does not constitute a class) ought to be seen as related to the entire dialectic of the working people's struggle for justice. Thus, even though its members articulated certain political demands or achieved certain professional positions, they functioned primarily as spokespersons of the working class and obtained their positions in employment, not so much because of their education, but because of the constant and effective pressures of the masses of working people. Walter Rodney was certainly much more perceptive than Brereton when he contended that: "In the final analysis, this stratum was what it was because of the immense pressure for change exerted by the dispossessed masses, especially in the sphere of education and in support of openings of employment for their educated sons." This was true in Trinidad as it was in Guyana.

Because Brereton does not take this fundamental connection into consideration, she finds herself in the peculiar position of having to propose that: "race relations in the nineteenth-century Caribbean societies were essentially the relations of white, coloured and blacks" — an untenable position in its omission of the East Indians, who

must figure in any discussion of race relations either in Trinidad or Guyana. Given that the East Indian population amounted to about 44 and 50 percent respectively of the population in Trinidad and Guyana at the end of the century; given the conflicts between the East Indians and Africans; given the conflicts between the East Indians and the colonialist-capitalist class, one certainly cannot support their exclusion from any serious discussion of race relations in Trinidad. Because of this omission, Brereton's whole discussion is weakened, and the East Indians come off in the chapter she devotes to them as being an aberration. So, too, does her chapter on racism and race relations fail in that it does not blend with the text in a persuasive manner.

In view of the above, the latter part of her discussion of race relations is severely problematic and raises the question: What precisely constitutes "race relations" in the first place? Is it merely one degree or the other of affability or non-affability among various groups or is it a question (or a reflection) of the working out of certain well-defined economic relationships? If the latter is true, as I would maintain, then the author should have posited the centrality of the struggle between the colonialist-capitalist class and the workers (both Africans and East Indians) and gone on to demonstrate that race relations (with all of their components such as racism, color prejudice, color distinctions within the race, etc.) are in essence the manifestation of this central struggle as it proceeds in the everyday lives of the people. Accordingly, the spiritual activities which are manifest in the social relations of the Afro-Christian cults ought not to be seen merely as an "emotional release" (carnival's function is said to be as "an escape valve for the masses"), nor can the continued practice of "the ideology of white superiority" by the dominant class be seen simply as the desire to retain "pride in blood and in caste." These practices were all central to determining who got what in the society, and around these issues fierce struggles were carried on. Race relations in Trinidad during the period 1870 to 1900 centered primarily around the workers' attempt to control their labor power and to ensure a more equitable distribution of its surplus value — a struggle to which the "non-white middle class" was almost peripheral.

David Nicholls' *From Dessalines to Duvalier* concerns itself with the role played by race and color in Haiti during the period of its national independence. Avoiding some of the errors of Ms. Brereton's work, Nicholls defines his terms more scrupulously and is careful to point out that "racial and colour prejudice may indeed be explained as ultimately deriving from class antagonism but having developed they may have a momentum of their own" (Louis Al-

thusser's position, as noted earlier). More specifically, he argues, "Much of Haiti's political history in the nineteenth century is to be seen as a struggle between a mulatto, city-based, commercial elite, and a black rural and military elite," the 20th century being characterized by the rise of a black urban middle class.

As Nicholls sees it, much of the history of Haiti can be viewed as a struggle between these two groups, a struggle that was only interrupted during the U.S. occupation (1915-1934) when the groups joined in contesting that foreign intrusion. The rise of Francois Duvalier signalled the breakdown of the mulatto elite and the rise of a black elite, which has ruled Haiti up to the present time. Nicholls says of Duvalier:

His avowed aim throughout his period of office was to achieve what he called a "new equilibrium" in the country, by which he meant a major shift in power from the established, predominantly mulatto, elite to a new black middle class, which was said to act in the interest of peasants and workers from which its members had emerged.¹⁵

Yet despite the conflicts between the mulattoes and Blacks, Haiti remained throughout its history the citadel of black pride, "a symbol of black regeneration." Not only did the Haitians mount the only consistent attacks against the racist European dogmas of the latter half of the 19th century, but they were the spiritual forerunners of the Negritude movement, Pan-Africanism and the Harlem Renaissance. In this regard, Nicholls' discussion of the ethnological movement during the time of the U.S. occupation, and the ever-present impact of voodoo on the social and political development of Haitian society, turns out to be a very important aspect of his book.

Nicholls' analysis is also very strong in its acknowledgment of the admiration felt by many persons of the mulatto-black elite for the authoritarian policies of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco with one of their admirers winding up as a minister in Duvalier's government. And, as Nicholls argues further, the rise and consolidation of Duvalier's power provide a classic example of someone who used the rhetoric of black power as a popular ideology to gain power and then used it against the very people who elected him. His observations in this connection are especially important:

Duvalier's ruthless suppression of groups which might have challenged his position is certainly part of the answer, yet suppression and terror only partially explain his survival. His shrewd knowledge of the mentality and customs of the Haitian peasants and his recognition of the key role played by the middle class were important. A network of information and control

which ran to the furthest corners of the country kept the president in touch with local developments. He frequently called peasants from remote villages to see him in the Palace and would talk to them for perhaps an hour or two. The people he relied on in the country were often *houngans* [voodoo priests] or peasants from that immediate class which has played an important part in the political history of Haiti.¹⁶

In conclusion, Nicholls identifies certain Haitian social and political characteristics which he says are common to post-colonial development in the Caribbean: Authoritarianism, paternalism, irresponsibility, ethnic diversity, economic dependence and cultural imperialism—the last being the presumption of the superiority of European culture. He also cites practices such as violence, decolonization and ethnicity as they conduced to or inhibited the consolidation of national independence in the new Caribbean states.

A problem with Nicholl's text is the fact that even though he tries to be even-handed in his approach, he leans toward certain social and political positions—that is, he takes sides. For example, he argues that the Haitian writers who defended the integrity of African peoples against charges of inferiority in the latter half of the 19th century were

... apologists—not simply because of their polemical orientation, but because of the fact that their purpose was basically to persuade European readers that Haiti was a "civilized" country and that black people are capable of civilization *according to European criteria*. These writers rarely challenged the superiority of European culture and they minimized the role of African elements in the heritage of the Haitian people. It is not until the period of the U.S. occupation that we find an explicit and widespread challenge to European criteria and a positive appreciation of the African contribution to Haitian culture.¹⁷

Might it not be that issues were more crystalized during the latter period, which then allowed the writers to challenge European criteria more fully? After all, that challenge coupled with a new interpretation of the African heritage had not been demanded previously, and undoubtedly the contributions of Africans to world civilization were better known when Jean Price-Mars wrote *Ainsi parla l'oncle* (1929) than before.

I would also question Nicholls' statement that "Marxism was at this time [the forties], and in large part continues to be, a movement among the intellectuals with no large following among the urban and rural workers." Such a comment is intended to derogate the Marxist movement in Haiti. True, the tenets of Marxism have

always been articulated by intellectuals. It is also true that one articulates Marxist doctrines in Haiti only on pain of sudden death, which is surely one reason that there may not be a large Marxist following in that country. Yet, one could not tell how large a following Marxism has in Haiti until what is known as a "revolutionary moment" occurs. Should a popular uprising ensue in Haiti tomorrow, only at that point (and certainly thereafter) could one really be able to tell who and how many the Marxists are.

Prior to the overthrow of Batista in Cuba and Eric Gairy in Grenada, who could really tell how large a following Marxism had in those countries? In the case of Grenada, one is perhaps tempted to argue with Nicholls that there was none, since, unlike Haiti and Cuba, there was not even a history of a Communist Party in that country. But finally, the question is immaterial. What Nicholls' statement suggests mainly is his hostility to Marxism (in which he is well grounded), a hostility that crops up more than once in the course of his analysis of the Haitian condition.

Nicholls' relative non-involvement with the history of the island allows for a certain evenness in his presentation, which is interesting at one level (in that we see the activities of all of the parties as they unfold as factual incidents) and somewhat mischievous at another (in that one is not sure what weight one should give to each incident). His approach contrasts sharply with Walter Rodney's adherence to a working-class perspective in his analysis of the Guyanese situation, wherein historical activity is orchestrated to demonstrate the manner in which working people constructed their lives without distorting the complex play of social forces.

Such a contrast brings us to the seminal difference between the involved and uninvolved historian. Even while Rodney was rummaging through the archives of Georgetown and London, he was participating actively in the effort to reconstruct the Guyanese state. *The Guyanese Working People* was revised in jail while he awaited trial on charges of treason. "People's Power, No Dictator," and "The Struggle Goes On," two of Rodney's last recorded speeches before he was assassinated, are the last brilliant record of one of our noblest sons. Engaged by the struggle for the liberation and development of his people and nation, Rodney did not see history as only an "academic discipline" but, to use George Lamming's words, as an "informing influence" on his life. As he stated in "The Struggle Goes On" (a fitting epitaph):

There are many people who believe that a revolution is about blood. It is true that at times in a revolution blood flows. Very often innocent blood, very often the blood of the best amongst

us. But one must be prepared to take a stand against evil and injustice in the society. We will have to realize that the time is now to make precisely that stand. For too long our nature has been overcome by fear; a justified fear. It is true that there is the fear of losing jobs; the fear of not getting promotion; the fear that your children might be victimized and so on. But there must be a point at which people realize that even that fear has to be overcome. It has to be overcome by a new resolution because in the long run it is not simply that you and I are fighting in individual battles. Far more important is the sense in which we can fight in a collective battle. They can't fire everybody, they can't victimize everybody; on the contrary, they have given us the vast majority whom they have treated with contempt, whom they have insulted every day for 14 or 15 years. When we act together, we will make this little paltry gang of petty dictators go on their way. And we will bring them to task. Because it is obvious that in the end they depend upon the power of the people.¹⁸

Undoubtedly, Rodney's deep involvement with the lives of the people about whom he wrote added a compelling dimension, as well as insights, to his scholarship which the "objective scholar" (whatever that means) does not quite possess. Yet, the case can be made that all of us cannot be active revolutionaries nor committed to the cause of the working class. However, what the three works reviewed demonstrate, each in a different way, is the struggle of working people to be free from all forms of exploitation, the assistance and, in some cases, the non-assistance, which has been forthcoming from the middle stratum, and the persistent intention to dominate on the part of the colonialist-capitalist class. These texts are necessary reading for any scholar who is concerned with the process of class-formation in the Caribbean.

NOTES

1. E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1963).
2. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
3. Walter Rodney, *A History of the Guyanese Working People, 1881-1905* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1981), pp. 75-76.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
5. Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545 to 1800* (London, 1970; prt. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1980).
6. *Ibid.*, p. 199.
7. Rodney, *Guyanese Working People*, pp. 37-38.

8. Walter Rodney, "People's Power, No Dictator" and "The Struggle Goes On." London, rpt., WPA Support Group/UK and Black Liberation Press, New York, 1981, p. 22.
9. Bridget Brereton, *Race Relations in Colonial Trinidad, 1870-1900* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979), p. 159.
10. See Monica Schuler's "Akan Slave Rebellions in the British West Indies," *Savacou*, Vol. 1, No. 1.
11. See Cabral's *Return to the Source* (African Information Service, New York, 1973) and *Revolution in Guinea* (translated by Richard Handyside, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1970).
12. See *Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Correspondence, 1846-1895* (London: Martin Lawrence, 1934), pp. 475-477.
13. See Althusser's *Lenin and Philosophy* (translated by Ben Brewster; London: New Left Books, 1971).
14. Makhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press).
15. David Nicholls, *From Dessalines to Duvalier: Race, Colour and National Independence* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1979), p. 212.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 237.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 128-29.
18. "People's Power, No Dictator" and "The Struggle Goes On," pp. 42-43.

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Book Reviews

LIFE OF A BLACK WOMAN

THE HEART OF A WOMAN. By Maya Angelou. Random House, New York. 272 pages. \$12.50.

VOLUME FOUR of Maya Angelou's autobiography, *The Heart of a Woman*, is filled with numerous personal reminiscences about an exciting time for Black people in the United States. Martin Luther King, Jr., was pressing on civil rights; Malcolm X was on the scene and considered the most radical leader in the country; Abbey Lincoln and Max Roach were a popular jazz couple; Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* was on Broadway; James Baldwin was rocking the boat with *The Fire Next Time*, and Belafonte and Makeba were electrifying audiences on the concert stage. In the midst of it all, Angelou often found herself in the right place at the right time in the company of some famous and unforgettable characters.

Here is an intimate diary that is often gossipy and occasionally frivolous, but at its heart is Angelou's relationship with her son Guy.

During Guy's first nine years of schooling, he lived in five areas of San Francisco, three townships of Los Angeles, New York City, Hawaii and Cleveland, Ohio. He and his mother moved so frequently that, at one point, she was fearful about announcing plans to relocate. Guy contended with the ordinary mysteries of growing up—girl friends, gang fights, pinball machines and hot dogs—but, in addition, he experienced the problems of growing up with a parent who was seeking public recognition.

According to Angelou, many of the decisions, challenges and sacrifices demanded of her were made with Guy in mind, yet in wanting to provide an enriched life for her son, she also wanted to forge a career. The burdens of single parenthood were great, but she and Guy seem to share a compassionate friendship. Even though mother Angelou tried to spin a protective web, her son asserted his independence and accepted responsibility.

One wonders if the son felt intimidated by the mother, whose confident personality seems to have dominated his soft-spoken, nearly timid nature. It may be that Guy becomes subsumed in the narrative by the adventures of his mother. Some of the chronicle is captivating, but Guy's reaction (except to Billie Holiday) and relationship to events are missing. His mother is single, married, divorced, employed, unemployed, joyous and miserable, but we never get a sense of how he feels about or is affected by this ever-

changing landscape. He is Maya's son, but beyond that, who is Guy?

Angelou's concern for her son resounds throughout the volume, yet the tone is apologetic. On a couple of occasions, Guy had to confront problems alone when his mother was working out of town. When she returned home, he was always pleased to see her but didn't want to recount the events which had occurred during her absence. And even though Angelou displays an unflagging strength, whenever there were difficulties with Guy, she questioned her decisions, worried and often sought the opinions of others.

The Heart of a Woman might not qualify as historical documentation, but it provides further insight into the life of a Black woman who has achieved considerable success in marketing the details of that life. For those who enjoy reading about famous characters, there are numerous quotes that lend humor and a sense of intrigue to the narrative.

Nieda Spigner

FLAWED PORTRAIT

NAKED AT THE FEAST: A BIOGRAPHY OF JOSEPHINE BAKER. By Lynn Haney. Dodd, Mead, New York. xiii, 338 pages. \$17.95.

IN THE INTRODUCTION to *Naked at the Feast: A Biography of Josephine Baker*, Lynn Haney admits candidly that she asked "Who is Josephine Baker?" when someone first suggested the idea of the book. Well, after six years of research, including 416 interviews with family, friends, lovers, ex-husbands, employers, employees, acquaintances and fans, here is Haney's 338-page answer. A prodigious research job, yes. But there's a difference between a researcher and a biographer.

Haney, the researcher, presents a carefully detailed chronology of the 68-year cornucopia from Josephine's birth on June 3, 1906, in a St. Louis slum to her death and thronged funeral at Paris' Madeleine, April 15, 1975. The facts unfold with fastidious ease. The impoverished childhood. The first, brief marriage at age 13. The first bitter-sweet taste of theater on the black vaudeville circuit. The disenchanting discovery that those glamorous chorus girls who had dazzled her from the balcony of the Booker T. Washington Theater were really tired women who "danced to keep from starving." *Shuffle Along*. Moderate success as a clown on Broadway, America's entertainment plantation. Paris. "La Revue Nègre." Jo's tearful consent to "save the show" with a nude debut in the "wild orgiastic spasms" of "La Danse du Sauvages." America's "pickaninny" be-

comes France's "Black Venus," symbol of Europe's passion for African exotica. The turning point: Josephine, at 19, becomes a legend.

Unfortunately, the flood of facts is marred by two particularly tragic flaws. First, Haney's ignorance of Afro-American history hampers her treatment of those critical points when Jo Baker's life intersected with important historical events. For example, she would have us believe that in the U.S. in the 1950's, during Josephine's second return visit here, "social issues did not predominate" and "Blacks lived in worried silence." Ignoring the massive Red Channels blacklist of "politically active" entertainers during that decade, she distorts Josephine Baker's outspoken activism by turning it into a lonely, isolated crusade. As if this were not enough, she proclaims that Josephine "beat all of the big-name civil rights leaders of the 1960's to the punch." Hasn't she heard of Martin Luther King's Montgomery bus boycotts? If not, it's certainly too much to expect her to be familiar with the Southern Negro Youth Congress that was active in the late '30's and the '40's. And these are just two of countless organized efforts to defeat institutionalized U.S. racism.

Haney stands on firmer ground, avoiding such heinous crimes as the above, when she deals with theatrical history. Yet, there is one error which could have been avoided easily by a quick glance in Marshall Stearn's *Jazz Dance* or Brockman's *American Musical Theatre* or any other reliable reference book on U.S. theater. *Shuffle Along*, which opened at Daly's 63rd Street Theatre in 1921, was *not* the first all-black Broadway musical. *Oriental America*, produced in 1896 by John Isham, was the first. It was followed by a rash of black shows, including those made famous by the Bert Williams/George Walker team. After their *Darktown Follies* in 1913, the black presence in theater became less prominent. Hoping to reverse that trend, bandleader James Reese Europe urged Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake to get together with Flournoy Miller and Aubrey Lyles. They did, and the result was *Shuffle Along* which spawned a flock of musicals that overwhelmed Broadway in the '20's and '30's.

Haney's ignorance of history—theatrical or Afro-American—isn't the only flaw which mars her impressive catalog of personal data about "La Bakair." There are disturbing, insensitive distortions which cause a potentially poignant portrait to become a grotesque caricature, at times making Haney appear totally out of touch with her subject.

The sad details of Josephine's childhood "fight for survival"—a two-room shack lit by benzene lamps, mattresses "alive with bed-bugs," abuse as a ten-year-old live-in maid, ridicule by classmates because she was poorer, even, than they, and countless other humiliations—are treated as so many delectable spices that "produced an

almost welcome excitement" in an otherwise boring life. This flip-pant attitude and Haney's repeated condescending references to Josephine as "a pet," "a toy," "a little brown wren" and other such diminutives put this reader off. Also, how can she justify saying that when Josephine danced she "evoked, by turns, the image of a small brown monkey and a splendid bird." (This is particularly insensitive since Haney tells us that "monkey" was the derisive term used by "high yeller" *Shuffle Along* chorus girls in ostracizing Josephine.) And how are we to get a true picture of a woman whose emotions are repeatedly trivialized? Was the 15-year-old Jo Baker really "a giggly teenager with a puppy's unremitting need for affection?" Was she later unmoved by "a failed marriage and a lost baby" because, as Haney tells us, "she lacked the capacity for introspection"? Why does Haney endlessly indulge in heresay about Josephine's "spectacular" sex life just after admitting that the stories are more often than not virtually unverifiable or only half true? Why are we told that Josephine was "a beast for sex," "looking for the perfect penis," "preferred coitus standing. . . while dancing"? And from what store of knowledge come Haney's own pot shots? Not having heard of Josephine Baker six years prior to writing this book, does Haney know that "Josephine had a knack for turning swains into loyal allies" because "she didn't take coitus too seriously"?

The only appropriate response to all of this idle speculation is Josephine's own: "To be a curiosity is a painful profession." From Haney, we get scarcely a hint of the woman who would make a comment like that.

Who was Josephine Baker—the woman Picasso painted, Jean Cocteau admired, Colette worshipped and Alexander Calder sculpted? Who was the "ragamuffin" who moved from a St. Louis shack to a 32-room villa in a wealthy Paris suburb somewhere between the tender ages of 15 and 21? In the U.S. Josephine achieved moderate success as, in Haney's words, the "slip-jointed kid dressed like a pick-aninny." In Europe, no longer hemmed in by minstrel show stereotypes, she was able to construct a more glamorous image. Or, as Haney says, "the little brown wren became a bird of paradise." Who was the woman who refused to return to the U.S. for ten years, in spite of generous offers from Ziegfeld and the Schuberts, because she believed she would be expected to play mammy roles? Did she really enjoy being the hotly pursued sexual fantasy of European males or a tonic for the ennui of the upper classes? Was the transformation from frivolous showgirl to World War II Mata Hari for the French Resistance prompted, as Haney alleges, by encroaching middle age? What was the source of the anger that fueled her occa-

sionally misguided political activism? Why did she support Mussolini and the Argentinian fascist Juan Peron? Were her angry outbursts about U.S. racism really "dictated by caprice or her mood of the moment"? Did she adopt her famous multinational family of twelve orphans only out of a fear of loneliness? Was it Jo Baker's irresponsibility or misplaced trust which allowed hubby Jo Bouillon and others to pilfer and steal from her, leaving her bankrupt and eventually homeless?

Of course, thanks to Haney's prodigious research, we have a thorough English-language account of Jo Baker's career. But, considering the fact that Josephine Baker published five autobiographies in France which have never been translated into English, the uniqueness of Haney's book redounds more to the U.S. publishing industry's disgrace than to Haney's credit. What's more, isn't Josephine Baker important enough to deserve a biographer who can tell us who she was rather than a researcher who can only tell us what she did?

Zita Allen

UNIQUE CREATIVE PROCESS

DOUENS. By LeRoy Clarke. KaRaEle Publishers, New York. 120 pages. \$12.00 (cloth); \$8.00 (paper).

THE DIVERSE ARTISTIC TALENTS of LeRoy Clarke have enriched the cultural life of New York City since 1967, when his sojourn there began. As artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem in the early seventies, he began exploring and recording aspects of his Caribbean heritage, his commitment to the task being evidenced in a considerable body of artistic work. In products ranging from massive canvases to sharply defined pen and ink sketches, he has delineated the myths, fables and legends of his native Trinidad—which are ours, too, for our spiritual heritage knows no geographical boundary.

Mr. Clarke brings to his poetry the same aesthetic vision and strength which characterize his work in the visual arts. In the first volume of what is to be a trilogy, *Taste of Endless Fruit* (published in 1975), he expressed his lyric voice in a series of love songs dedicated to black womanhood. In the second and latest work, *Douens*, the epic voice is assumed to tell a tale of historical significance. The hero has moved from a landscape marked by alienation and fragmentation to the geographical homeland, where indigenous myths for survival can be culled. The cohesion which emerges will em-

power the hero to meet the challenge of El Tucuche, the mountain yet to be climbed. With *El Tucuche*, the trilogy will be complete.

The poet explains that in one of the myths of Trinidad, the term "douens" describes children who die before they have been named. Using this as a symbol of spiritual alienation and lack of identity, Clark applies it to his hero, who also seeks a name, an identity.

The poem has five narrative sequences, gaining much of its strength from the cumulative power of its surreal imagery. The opening poem, "Archipelago" is a creation myth which captures, in fierce language, the spectacular and awesome qualities of the chain of islands that are the spiritual and geographical location of the action. Thus are the hero's land identified and his people named. The social conditions forming the backdrop for the hero's experience are reflected in a landscape of fallen trees, cracked bells, temples vacated by the gods and a crumpled rainbow. The narrator comments that, here, "choice died and history pretends amnesia." The hero's task is to remember history and so at the urging of his fisherman father he "seeks the source of rivers."

His search uncovers blight, apathy, deceit, and persecution. By Book Three, the hero is conducting an inquiry—who will rechart the ruin and who will piece together the fragmented tale? Needed for this awesome task is one whose experiences are as fierce as the tale to be told, one who has collected "words like nails/stripped from his own fingers." Book Four describes the emergence of the hero-poet; Book Five hints at the release which occurs, making possible the new vision, the new beginning:

A little voice giggles:

Perhaps this poem
will be finished before the hands of my heart
finally fall off. . .!

Eye replies: if so, there are no barriers now,
only the wet tongues of Blanchisseuse
awaitin my hermitic ash!

In *Douens*, Clarke poeticizes themes he has previously elaborated on canvas. His apparently easy movement back and forth between the two media serves to enhance his artistic endeavors, the one clarifying and enriching the other. *Douens* is explosive in its imagery, dynamic in its language and clear in its vision—all of which qualities derive from the strength of Clarke's unique creative process.

Marcia V. Keizs

DEFINITIVE ANALYSIS

IN STRUGGLE: SNCC AND THE BLACK AWAKENING OF THE 1960's. By Clayborne Carson. Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. viii, 359 pages. \$22.00.

CLAYBORNE CARSON'S weighty study, originally a doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Los Angeles, is a thoroughly documented examination of the turbulent history of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a key organization in the 1960's civil rights movement.

Who were the "New Abolitionists" of SNCC and where are they now? Of course, Angela Davis is still Angela Davis—committed radical and teacher/activist. Others set their "radicalism" aside to become corporate executives, ultra-leftists, Democratic Party hacks. Certainly, this was not the fate of all of the noble SNCC cadre, but clearly forces were at play that drove SNCC members in divergent directions and tore the organization apart.

SNCC's importance as a political organization rested not least in the fact that it rejected the sterile anti-communism which had gripped the NAACP leadership during the 1950's. Like Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), SNCC was able to avoid that quagmire. Still, the Cold War's red scare had its revenge on the young militants. By the time SNCC got off the ground, many of the forces on the left who could have provided counsel, savvy and farsightedness were in exile, dead, jailed, isolated or under virtual house arrest—W. E. B. Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Claudia Jones, Louis Burnham, James Ford, et al.

Carson recounts well the severe red-baiting to which SNCC was subjected by, for example, columnists like Rowland Evans and Robert Novak—authors of the recently published *The Reagan Revolution* (sic)—and other major media figures, as well as the establishment in general. Most of all, he graphically portrays SNCC's many battles in McComb, Mississippi; Nashville, Tennessee; Albany, Georgia; and elsewhere that led to voter registration, desegregated facilities and, not least, Black Pride.

Although Carson's prose tends to be dry as dust, he has provided a work that supplants Howard Zinn's study as the definitive analysis of that hearty band of black and white youth whose courage and activism changed the landscape of this country.

Gerald C. Horne

Recent Books

by ERNEST KAISER

BLACKS IN THE U.S. (also some books about Africa and the Caribbean)

AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA 1981-1982. 11th edition. xxiv, 1383 pp. 28 maps. \$105.00. London: Europa Publications. Available in US from Gale Research, Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226. (A country-by-country survey and reference guide to the region presented in a continental perspective. Has up-to-date, authoritative information on the continent as a whole and on individual nations covering dozens of subjects. Other recent books on Africa are the *1981-1982 African/American Directory* [Cooper/Lang Communications, 600 New Hampshire Ave. N.W., #812, Washington, DC 20037. 433 pp. \$115.00, \$60.00 for non-profit organizations], the first and only reference book on American business interests in Africa. First, there is an alphabetical listing of all of the businesses and organizations interested in Africa with purposes and activities described; then a listing under each country's name of the businesses involved there; finally, the salient facts about each African country. There are also the *1982-1983 American Business Interests in the Caribbean* and the *1982-1983 American Business Interests in Latin America* [\$115.00 each]. And Arthur Gavshon's *Crisis in Africa: Battleground of East and West* [NY: Penguin Books, 320 pp. \$6.95, paper]; Gert Chesi's *The Last Africans* [distributed by Morgan & Morgan, 145 Palisade St., Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522. 248 pp. 148 color plates plus B & W photos. \$25.00] and Chesi's *Voodoo: Africa's Secret Power* [Morgan & Morgan. 276 pp. 128 color plates plus B & W photos. \$35.00]. Donald Paneth's edited *1980 News Dictionary: Facts on File's Illustrated History of 1980* [NY: Facts on File. vi, 394 pp. \$14.95] has quite a lot on Africa, Blacks, etc. John Western's *Outcast Cape Town* [Univ. of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis. 372 pp. Illus. \$22.50] is a case study of the workings of apartheid in the city of Cape Town on the Coloreds, the largest population group there.)

AFRICAN FURNITURE & HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press in association with the American Federation of the Arts. \$14.95. (This is the catalog of over 250 twentieth-century practical objects used in the daily life of African cultures: implements, furniture, containers, stools, bowls, spoons, headrests, baskets, beds, calabash containers and bottles; a traveling exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum, New York City, July 2-Sept. 7, 1981, showing graceful African craftsmanship and designs. Another exhibit of African art was *For Spirits and Kings* [Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City: Catalog, \$35.00, cloth; \$14.95, paper] with 71 scholars contributing to the catalog. This exhibit had 150 objects of many different types from all over Africa displayed from June to Sept. 6, 1981. *Treasures of Ancient Nigerian Art* [with a catalog] was at the Metropolitan Museum in the fall of 1980.)

The Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum, 7th & Arch Sts., Philadelphia 19106.

OF COLOR, HUMANITAS AND STATEHOOD: THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN PENNSYLVANIA OVER THREE CENTURIES 1681-1981. (This is the beautiful 143-page catalog of a major new exhibition commemorating the 300th anniversary of the founding of Pennsylvania and documenting over 300 years of the Black presence in the development and accomplishment in the state of Pennsylvania. It is a very rich history. The exhibit, on view for one year from Nov. 15, 1981, has broadsides and other rare documents and many early engravings and photographs, pamphlets, books and paintings of Blacks and whites who aided the struggle for black freedom in Pennsylvania. Black Pennsylvania historian Charles L. Blockson was the Project Director and he was definitely the right person for this exhibit. The catalog has an introduction by the well-known black historian Lawrence D. Reddick, a selected bibliography and an index. There is also a beautiful brochure of the proposed National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center Project to be located on the Wilberforce Univ. campus in Ohio [John E. Fleming, Project Director]. The Project has already received financial and legislative support from the state of Ohio and the federal government and is underway. For the brochure, write to The Ohio Historical Society, 1982 Velma Ave., Columbus 43211.)

Alexis, Marcus, George H. Haines and Leonard S. Simon. **BLACK CONSUMER PROFILES: FOOD PURCHASING IN THE INNER CITY.** Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan.

- Allen, Cleveland James. **BRAZILIAN ODYSSEY: MEMOIRS OF A UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIST.** Dorrance & Co., Cricket Terrace Center, Ardmore, PA 19003. viii, 155 pp. \$7.50 (paper). (Dr. Allen is a Jamaican. Before the UN job, he lectured at the Univ. of the West Indies. His Brazilian assignment lasted three years. Other West Indian and Latin American books are Alexander Orloff's *Carnival: Myth and Cult* [Morgan & Morgan, 145 Palisade, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522. 259 pp. 146 color plates plus B & W photos. \$35.00]; and Daniel H. Levine's *Religion and Politics in Latin America: The Catholic Church in Venezuela and Colombia* [Princeton, NJ, Univ. Press. xii, 342 pp. \$22.50, cloth; \$6.95, paper].)
- America, Jr., Richard F. **DEVELOPING THE AFRO-AMERICAN ECONOMY.** Lexington Books, 125 Spring St., Lexington MA 02173. (Black author)
- American Civil Liberties Union. **VOTING RIGHTS IN THE SOUTH: TEN YEARS OF LITIGATION CHALLENGING CONTINUING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MINORITIES** by Laughlin McDonald, director, ACLU Southern Regional Office. ACLU, 132 W. 43 St., New York 10036. 132 pp. (paper). (This is a solid, timely study of the history of disfranchisement, modern enfranchisement, progress under the Voting Rights Act, continuing barriers to equal political participation and recommendations including extending and strengthening the Voting Rights Act.)
- Anderson, Eric. **RACE AND POLITICS IN NORTH CAROLINA: THE BLACK SECOND.** Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press. \$30.00 (cloth); \$12.95 (paper). (A study of a center of black political influence in the late 19th century.)
- Arnold, A. James. **MODERNISM AND NEGRITUDE: THE POETRY AND POETICS OF AIMÉ CÉSAIRE.** Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press. \$25.00. (the first full-length critical study in English of the Martinican writer Césaire, one of the great poets of the 20th century; his relation to the Afro-Caribbean movement of the '20s and '30s, the Harlem Renaissance poets and African writers.)
- Ashe, Arthur (with Neil Amdur). **OFF THE COURT.** NY: New American Library. 230 pp. Illus. \$13.95. (Another autobiographical volume to go with his *Arthur Ashe: Portrait in Motion* [1975] and *Advantage Ashe* [1967] plus Louis Robinson, Jr.'s biography *Arthur Ashe: Tennis Champion* [1969]. There is also the recent *Arthur Ashe's Tennis Clinic* [NY: A Tennis Magazine book distributed by Simon & Schuster. 144 pp. Illus. in full color. \$12.95]. Other sports books are Maury Allen's *Mr. October: The Reggie Jackson Story* [NY: Times Books. Photos. \$10.95] and Lawrence S. Ritter and Donald Honig's *The 100 Greatest Baseball Players of All Time* [NY: Crown Publishers. 273 pp. \$14.95] which has most of the obvious black players plus George Foster still playing but Willie McCovey and Leroy "Satchel" Paige are left out. This book is similar to Maury Allen's *Baseball's 100* [A & W Publishers. \$6.95].)
- Ball, Wendy and Tony Martin. **RARE AFRO-AMERICANA: A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ADGER LIBRARY.** Boston: G. K. Hall. xvii, 235 pp. (Robert Mara Adger [1837-1910], a black Philadelphia activist and businessman, was also a book dealer and collector. In 1938, 320 of Adger's books on Blacks, purchased by a black couple, Dr. and Mrs. Samuel Elbert, were presented, along with 480 other books, to Mrs. Elbert's alma mater Wellesley College. Adger's 1906 catalog of his 320 books is reprinted here. Then there are long annotations for all of his books together with a preface by Wendy A. Ball and a 55-page documented introduction by Tony Martin. The book is basically Ball's bibliographic honors thesis when she graduated from Wellesley. Another known black Philadelphia bibliophile of a later period was William Carl Bolivar.)
- Bates, Timothy and William D. Bradford. **FINANCING BLACK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.** Academic Press, 111 Fifth Ave., New York City 10003.
- Bebey, Francis. **KING ALBERT** (translated from the French). Lawrence Hill, 520 Riverside Ave., Westport, CT 06880. 167 pp. \$5.95 (paper). (A novel about the people of Bebey's native Cameroon. His two previous novels are *The Ashanti Doll* and *Agatha Moudio's Son*. He also wrote *African Music: A People's Art*. Other African books are John Ya-Otto [with Ole Gjerstad and Michael Mercer] *Battlefront Namibia: An Autobiography* [Lawrence Hill. vii, 151 pp. \$12.95; \$6.95]; and Mochobi Mutloatse's edited *Forced Landing, Africa South: Contemporary Writings* [Ravan Press, London. 208 pp. 1981].)
- Beckham, Barry. **DOUBLE DUNK.** Los Angeles: Holloway House. 250 pp. \$2.25 (paper). (A novel about a black Harlem basketball player. Young black writer Beckham's other two novels are *My Main Mother* [1969] and *Runner Mack* [1972].)

- Berlak, Ann and Harold. **DILEMMAS OF SCHOOLING**. NY: Methuen, x, 299 pp. \$19.95 (cloth); \$8.25 (paper). (A fresh approach to integrating the everyday activity of teachers with current economic, cultural, ethical and political questions. Other recent books on education are Robert Benjamin's *Making Schools Work: A Reporter's Journey Through Some of America's Most Remarkable Classrooms* [Continuum Publishing, 575 Lexington Ave., New York 10022. 200 pp. \$12.95] about Beasley Academic Center, Chicago's black South Side back-to-basics school and the Garrison School in the South Bronx, New York, etc.; Cynthia Stokes Brown's edited *Alexander Meiklejohn: Teacher of Freedom* [Meiklejohn, Civil Liberties Institute, Box 673, Berkeley, CA 94701. ix, 281 pp. \$13.95; \$7.95]; William M. Cruickshank, W. C. Morse and Jeannie S. John's *Learning Disabilities: The Struggle from Adolescence Toward Adulthood* [Syracuse, NY, Univ. Press. \$18.00; \$8.95]; and Miriam Wolf-Wasserman and Linda Hutchinson's *Teaching Human Dignity: Social Change Lessons for Everyteacher* [Education Exploration Center, Box 7339, Powderhorn Sta., Minneapolis, MN 55407. xvii, 331 pp. \$15.95; \$8.95], a remarkable book for teachers covering all of the various problems in the classroom and for parents too.)
- Bermanzohn, Paul C. and Sally A. **THE TRUE STORY OF THE GREENSBORO MASSACRE**. Cesar Cauce Publishers, P.O. Box 389, 39 Bowery, New York 10002. 254 pp. \$3.95 (paper). (In Greensboro, N.C., on Nov. 3, 1979, the authors witnessed the murder of five of their close friends by the Klan and Nazis. Paul Bermanzohn was shot in the head and partially paralyzed. One year later, six Klan and Nazi assassins were set free to murder again after a Greensboro court returned a "not guilty" verdict.)
- Berry, Leonidas H. **I WOULDN'T TAKE NOTHIN' FOR MY JOURNEY: TWO CENTURIES OF AN AFRO-AMERICAN MINISTER'S FAMILY**. Chicago: Johnson Publishing Co. 461 pp. \$14.95. (Six generations of the Jenifer-Berry-Harris-Jordan clan are described in the saga of this African Methodist Episcopal minister's family. The central figure is Rev. Llewellyn L. Berry who pastored in Virginia and North Carolina and was for 21 years Secretary of Home and Foreign Missions of the A.M.E. Church. Chicago author Berry is the eldest of Rev. Berry's children, a pioneer in the field of gastro-intestinal endoscopy, now nearing 80 years of age. This book sums up 200 years of American history.)
- Berry, Mary Frances and John W. Blasingame. **LONG MEMORY: THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN AMERICA**. NY: Oxford Univ. Press. xxi, 486 pp. 55 illus. \$19.95. (Using memoirs, novels, songs, folklore, newspapers and other sources, the authors survey family and church, sex and racism, politics, education, criminal justice and black nationalism by presenting them through the eyes and minds of the black people of U.S. history. Berry and Blasingame are well-known black historians.)
- Bethel, Elizabeth Rauh. **PROMISELAND: A CENTURY OF LIFE IN A NEGRO COMMUNITY**. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press. xvii, 329 pp. \$16.95. (Promiseland, a community in South Carolina, was born in 1870 as a settlement of black farmers, tenants and sharecroppers, many of whom owned the land they farmed. Now it is a community of black laborers, clerical workers and self-employed, skilled blue-collar workers who own the same land that formed the basis of that first community.)
- THE BLACK WORKER: THE ERA OF POST-WAR PROSPERITY AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION, 1920-1936 (Volume VI)** edited by Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis. Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press. 610 pp. \$22.50. (This volume is composed of documents drawn from private correspondence, the AFL archives, and contemporary newspapers and magazines. Forthcoming volumes are: VII, *The Era from World War II to the AFL-CIO Merger, 1937-1954*, and VIII, *The Era Since the AFL-CIO Merger, 1955-1980*.)
- Blasingame, John W., Mae G. Henderson and Jessica M. Dunn (editors). **ANTISLAVERY NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS. Volume III, 1836-1854: AN ANNOTATED INDEX OF LETTERS IN THE FRIEND OF MAN, PENNSYLVANIA FREEMAN, ADVOCATE OF FREEDOM AND AMERICAN & FOREIGN ANTI-SLAVERY REPORTER**. Boston: G. K. Hall. xvi, 557 pp. \$60.00. (See Vols. I and II of the *Antislavery Newspapers and Periodicals: An Annotated Index... in Freedomways*, Vol. 20, No. 4, 1980, p. 313. There is also Donald M. Jacob's *Index to the American Slave: A Composite Autobiography* [George P. Rawick's 41-volume collection of slave narratives and interviews, 20,000 pp. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. xviii, 274 pp. \$45.00]. Jacobs also did the index to *Antebellum Black Newspapers* [Greenwood Press, 1976]. Other recent books on

slavery are Fred Bateman and Thomas Weiss's *A Deplorable Scarcity: The Failure of Industrialization in the Slave Economy* [Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press. \$19.00]; Vincent Harding's *There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America* [NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. \$19.95]; Willie Lee Rose's *Slavery and Freedom* edited by William W. Freehling [NY: Oxford Univ. Press. \$17.95]; Louis Filler's *The Rise and Fall of Slavery in America* [Jerome S. Ozer Publisher, 340 Tenafly Rd., Englewood, NJ 07631. \$9.95; \$5.95], a reprint of a 1972 book titled *Slavery in the United States of America*; Don E. Fehrenbacher's *Slavery, Law and Politics: The Dred Scott Case in Historical Perspective* [NY: Oxford Univ. Press. \$16.95], an abridged edition of the 1978 book titled *The Dred Scott Case: Its Significance in American Law and Politics*; and James A. Rawley's *The Transatlantic Slave Trade: A History* [NY: W. W. Norton. \$24.95].)

- Blau, Zena Smith. BLACK CHILDREN/WHITE CHILDREN. NY: Free Press. \$19.95.
- Blockson, Charles L. THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN PENNSYLVANIA. Flame International, P.O. Box 5336, Jacksonville, NC 28540. vii, 227 pp. \$12.00 (cloth); \$6.95 (paper). (Black historian Blockson gives us here the first county-by-county study of the Underground Railroad in Pennsylvania showing Pennsylvania as the key state of Underground Railroad activities. This plus his list of black Underground Railroad operators document in great abundance that the free Blacks of Pennsylvania and the black churches there were the primary cause of the success of the secret Underground Railroad. It has been thought that white Abolitionists, mostly Quakers, were the main operators in Pennsylvania. Another recent book on the Underground Railroad is black writer James A. McGowan's *Station Master on the Underground Railroad: The Life and Letters of Thomas Garrett* [1977] about a white man through whose house in Wilmington, Delaware, more than 2,700 runaway slaves passed on their way to freedom. Also black author Horatio T. Strother's *The Underground Railroad in Connecticut* [1962]; William Ferguson's *A Black Underground: The Underground Railroad in Philadelphia, 1836-1854* [master's thesis, Penn State Univ., 1972] plus one old general book on the Underground Railroad by the Black, William Still, and three old books [one general and one each on Vermont and Ohio] on the U.R. by the white author Wilbur H. Siebert. White author Larry Gara's *The Liberty Line: The Legend of the Underground Railroad* [1967] deprecates and tries to reduce the U.R. to almost nothing. Blockson's other two books are *Pennsylvania's Black History* [1975] and *Black Genealogy* [1977]. See also Afro-American Historical and Cultural Museum in this list for the catalog of an exhibit directed by Blockson on the black experience in Pennsylvania over three centuries, 1681-1981.)
- Borchert, James. ALLEY LIFE IN WASHINGTON: FAMILY, COMMUNITY, RELIGION AND FOLKLIFE IN THE CITY, 1850-1970. Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press. 384 pp. \$18.95. (A book about some Blacks in Washington, DC. Other related studies are Paul H. Furfey's *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto* [1972], Elijah Anderson's *A Place on the Corner* [1978] [about Chicago's South Side] and Elliot Liebow's *Tally's Corner: A Study of Negro Street Corner Men* [1967].)
- Botsch, Robert Emil. WE SHALL NOT OVERCOME: POPULISM AND SOUTHERN BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press. xv, 237 pp. \$19.50. (Interviews with ten white and five black furniture workers in a North Carolina mill town. Botsch samples their attitudes toward work and race. Other books on labor are Earl Dotter's *In Mine and Mill: A Photographic Portfolio of Coal Miners and Textile Workers* [NY: Pilgrim Press. 20 plates. 11 x 17. \$15.00] about South Carolina mining and cotton mill workers including some Blacks; Trudy H. Peterson's *Farmers, Bureaucrats and Middlemen: Historical Perspectives on American Agriculture* [Washington: Howard Univ. Press. xvii, 357 pp. \$19.95]; *Images of Labor* edited by Moe Foner [NY: Pilgrim Press. 94 pp. 32 color plates. 9 x 12. \$29.95; \$16.95] with art by black artists Jacob Lawrence, Benny Andrews and Audrey Flack's Sojourner Truth plus many white artists; part of the Bread and Roses Project of District 1199 of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees; Curt Schleier's *The Team that Runs Your Airline Flight* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press. 91 pp. \$9.50] and Mary Price Lee's *The Team that Runs Your Hospital* [Westminster. 88 pp. \$9.50].)
- Bradley, Michael. THE BLACK DISCOVERY OF AMERICA. Personel Library. \$14.95. (A history of voyages by ancient West African mariners.)

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