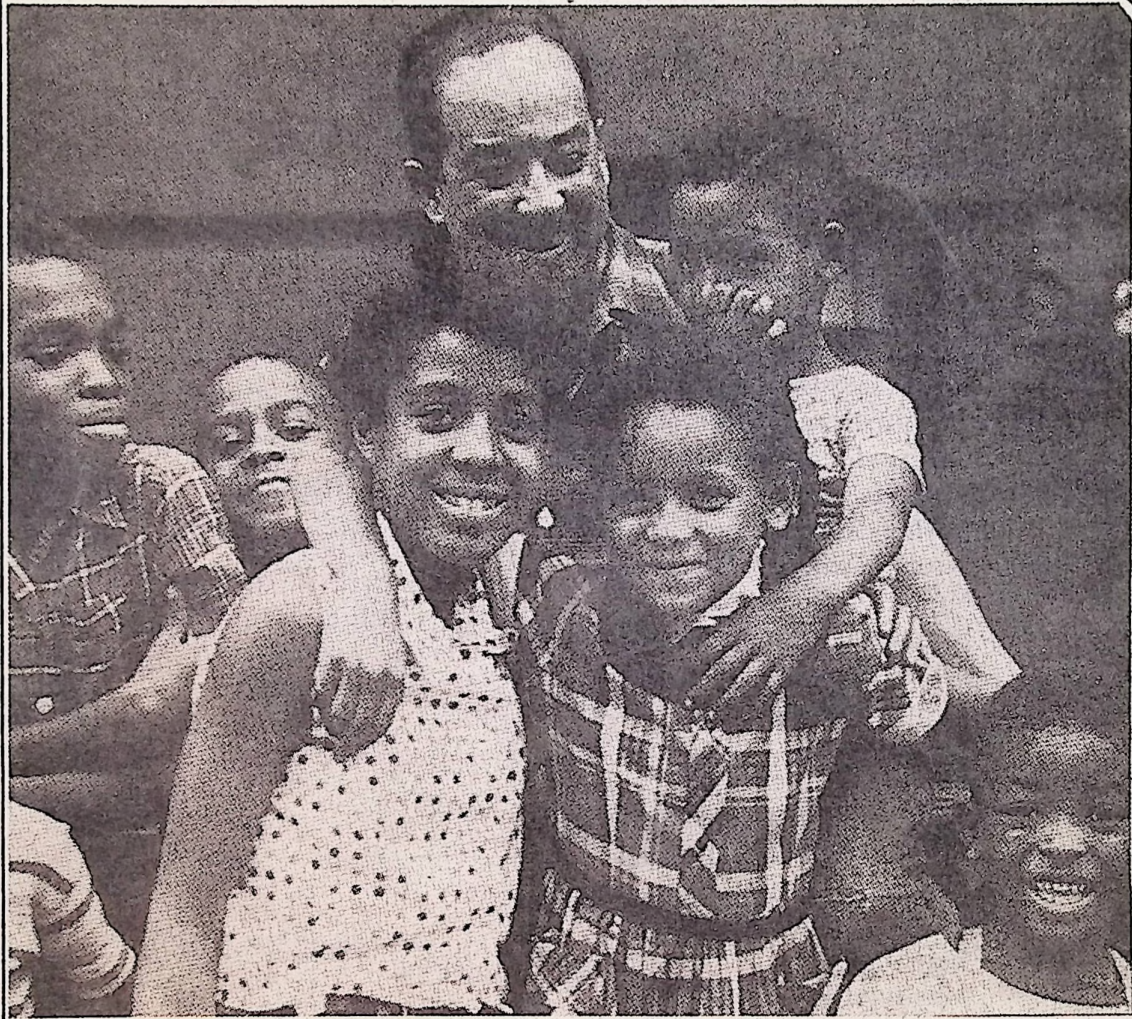


BLACK LIBERATION JOURNAL



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Chant For May Day

The first of May:

When the flowers break through the earth,

When the sap rises in the trees,

When the birds come back from the South,

Workers:

Be like flowers,

Bloom in the strength of your unknown power,

Grow out of the passive earth,

Grow strong with the Union

All hands together—

To beautify the hour, this spring

And all the springs to come

Forever for the workers!

Workers!

Be like the sap rising in the trees

Strengthening each branch,

No part neglected—

Reaching all the world.

All the workers:

White workers,

Black workers,

Yellow workers,

Workers in the islands of the sea—

Life is everywhere for you,

When the sap of your own strength rises

Life is everywhere.

May Day!

May Day!

When the earth is new.

Proletarians of all the world

Arise,

Grow strong,

Take power,

Till the forces of the earth are yours

From this hour.

—Langston Hughes

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Cover Photo: Langston Hughes and some of his friends



THE BLACK FAMILY: MOYNIHAN REVISTED

By Angela Davis & Fania Davis

"God knows there was plenty wrong with Walter Younger—hard-headed, mean, kind of wild with women—plenty wrong with him. But he sure loved his children. Always wanted them to have something. Big Walter used to say, he'd get right wet in the eyes sometimes, lean his head back with the water standing in his eyes and say, 'Seem like God didn't see fit to give the Black man nothing but dreams—but He did give us children to make them dreams seem worthwhile.'"

Lorraine Hansberry. *Raisin in the Sun*

There is probably not a culture in the world where children don't represent the most solid basis for future promises of material and spiritual riches not yet achieved by their mothers and fathers. African-American culture is no exception and as Lorraine Hansberry's character insists, children make those grand aspirations toward progress—inaccessible to their parents—seem realizable. In the oft-quoted words of José Martí, "Children are the hope of the world."

Over the centuries following the forcible transplantation of African people in North America, children have represented something very special—the promise of freedom for an entire people. Even as Black people's efforts to hold on to and strengthen their family ties were cruelly assaulted, the family remained for generations an important cauldron of resistance, forging and preserving a vital legacy of collective struggle for freedom. Though grandmothers and grandfathers could not expect to free themselves

from slavery or sharecropping or Mr. Charlie's kitchen, at least they could pass on the dream.

Today, however, in the era of Reaganism, the lives and future of those to whom the dream should be offered are in greater jeopardy than ever before. According to the most recent report of the Children's Defense Fund, Black children today, as compared to five years ago, are much more likely to be born into devastating conditions of poverty. They are twice as likely as white children to die in the first year of their lives and they are three times as likely to be placed in classes for the educable mentally retarded. African-American children are twice as likely as white children to have no parent employed, to be unemployed as teenagers and to live in substandard housing. They are three times as likely to have their mothers die in childbirth. Those between the ages of 15 and 19 are four times as likely as white children to be incarcerated in jails and prisons. Perhaps the most startling fact about the present predicament of Black children is that in some major urban centers they have been found to suffer from diseases of malnutrition like kwashiorkor and marasmus, diseases of malnutrition usually associated with famine areas of Africa.

In the meantime, thanks to Reagan administration budget cuts, 20 million people have had their food stamps reduced or eliminated and 3 million children are no longer receiving free lunches. Yet, the administration's ideologues have mounted a campaign designed to convince the public—the Black community included—that these appalling conditions emanate directly from the breakdown of the Black family structure.

Our families, of course, have never corresponded in structure and function to the ideal called for by the shapers of the dominant ideology in this

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country. First of all, the original cultural traditions of Africa defined the family as much more expansive than biological parents and their progeny. Especially during the earlier phases of the African presence in the Americas, the extended family was a vital tradition. Secondly, the brutal economic and political pressures connected with slavery and continuing through subsequent historical eras have inevitably prevented African-American family patterns from approaching any similarity with prevailing social family models. Finally, Black people—during and after the slave era—have been compelled to creatively and often improvisationally build a family life consistent with the dictates of survival.

Yet, because the African-American family does not reflect the norm, it has been repeatedly defined as pathological in character and has been saddled with layers of blame for the complex problems of the Black community—problems so often directly attributable to the social, economic and political promotion of racism.

BLAMING THE VICTIM

This is not, of course, to say that Black families are not beset with serious difficulties. But to myopically focus on family problems as the basis for the oppression of the African-American community—as if setting the family in order will automatically eradicate poverty—is to succumb to the classical “blaming the victim” syndrome.

The current ideological blame-shifting which targets the Black family reflects a larger trend of singling out the family in general, falsely represented as an isolated, privatized area of social life, as the locus of dangerous dysfunction in the moral well-being of U.S. society. As the traditional male supremacist hierarchy in the family, based on male “providers” and their economically dependent wives and children, is being fundamentally challenged by the increasing participation of workingclass women in the labor force, ultra-right propagandists argue that the family itself is falling apart due, for example, to the rising acceptance of abortion rights and socialized childcare. They even go so far as to claim that homosexuality threatens to destroy the fabric of the family. In this way they attempt to divert public attention from some of the most serious demands of the contemporary women’s movement—demands such as equal

pay for jobs of comparable worth, reproductive rights, paid maternity leave and subsidized childcare—which are increasingly acquiring an anti-monopoly character.

The 1980s, ushered in by the election of Ronald Reagan, have witnessed a renewed propagandistic attempt to impute major responsibility for the erosion of material well-being in the Black community to the breakdown of the Black family structure. It is pointed out that almost half of all African-American families revolve around single women and that 55% of Black babies are born to unmarried mothers—a substantial number of them under the age of 20.

Emanating from the Reagan administration are arguments that this breakdown in the structure of the Black family has been promoted by the welfare system. Thus, an immediate solution would involve the reduction of government programs and the requiring of individuals on welfare to offer their labor to the state as well as the implementation of programs designed to apprehend absent fathers, compelling them to contribute to the support of their children.

This is how the pro-Reagan economist George Gilder formulates the so-called welfare problem:

Illegitimacy means that the sons will be brought up in homes where money is seen as an always-inadequate entitlement to women from the state. Many of these youths express no comprehension of the requirements of a job; most have hardly ever met a working man who supports his children. They will find their manhood not by emulating adults but by fierce street rivalries with their peers. ...But, any girl is offered an irresistible solution by the U.S. government. It presents here, at age 16, a chance for independence in an apartment of her own; free housing, medicine, legal assistance and a combination of payments and food stamps worth several hundred dollars a month. There is only one crucial condition. She must bear an illegitimate child.” (1)

Robert B. Carleson, Reagan’s advisor for social policy development has put forth similar arguments, holding existing government social programs responsible for the increasing number of single parent, female centered households. Moreover, he has asserted that the main problem is the failure in the

Black community to form families.

Yet the statistical evidence demonstrates that the great majority of female centered households are caused, not by women bearing children who have never entered into legal marriage partnerships, but by the breakup of married couple families.

Of the single women heading families, only one-fourth have never been married: 28.7% are married with an absent spouse, 22.2% are widowed and 21.9% are divorced. Would the withdrawal of welfare payments resurrect dead fathers, annul divorces or cause unemployed husbands to return to their wives and children? Would it make sex education available to teenagers and would it bring into being safe, effective and accessible contraceptive measures?

This last question has serious implications since the birth rate among single Black teenagers actually declined during the 1970s—a fact which clearly flies in the face of the prevailing belief that Black teenage girls are having more babies than ever before. What has caused a disproportionate number of births to unmarried teenagers is the even more rapid decline in the birth rate among older and married Black women. These groups are far more likely to rely on contraception and to have abortions—and indeed to become sterilized—than unmarried Black teenagers.

While the relatively high rates of pregnancy among Black teenagers are cause for alarm, it should not be assumed that the isolated eradication of this problem will automatically lead to a significant reduction of the impoverishment of the Black population. As James McGhee has pointed out in his article on the Black family in *The State of Black America: 1985*,

“There is nothing inherent in the married state that leads to higher family income. Black married couples have higher incomes primarily for two reasons: because both householders are often in the labor force and because males generally have higher median incomes than females do.”(2)

The impoverishment of Black families will not automatically disappear if the high rate of teenage pregnancy should descend to a more manageable level. However urgent a problem this may be, it is certainly not the root cause of the deteriorating economic status of the Black community. On the contrary, it is a symptom of a deeply rooted structural cri-

sis in the U.S. monopoly capitalist economy. The reverberations are being felt most painfully in the African-American community.

THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

There is a direct correlation between the unprecedented rates of unemployment among Black teenagers and the rise in the birth rate among Black women under 20. Yet, the policy shapers for the Reagan administration continue to formulate the problem of teenage pregnancies in terms that by implication hold Black girls at least in part responsible for the depressed state of the Black community.

The conservative ideologues who express outrage about the accelerated rate of Black teenage pregnancy and the corresponding breakdown of the Black family call forth directly or by implication old historical distortions about Black women's—and men's—morality—or lack thereof. They accuse government welfare programs of having encouraged the ethical failures of the Black community. Shortly after the Black Family Summit, jointly convened by the NAACP and the National Urban League in the spring of 1984, William Buckley praised the Black organizations which had recognized that the Black family's problems were the Black community's problems.

In an article appearing in the *National Review*, Buckley quoted John Jacobs, who said that “...we may have allowed our just anger at what America has done to obscure our own need for self-discipline and strengthened community values.” However, Buckley criticized the Black Family Summit for not recognizing that there is an “inverse correlation between state welfare and Black progress.”

“Welfare checks do more than merely convert a government voucher into food and rent. They tend to affect the spirit and particularly they tend to dissolve the natural bonds of loyalty a man feels toward the woman he has impregnated and the child born of a union that is increasingly fleeting rather than lasting.”

While there are many destructive pressures exerted on Black families, such as the increasing lack of quality education available to young Black people, the proliferation of drugs and the prevalence of other anti-social phenomena directly encouraged by the racist institutions of this country, the most devastat-

ing encumbrance is the pervasive joblessness, especially among young Black men and women. Current observations on the Black family never fail to point out that in the two decades following 1960, the percentage of single Black women with children rose from about 21% to 47%. What is seldom noticed, however, is that during the same period, the percentage of employed adult Black men plummeted from approximately 75% to 55%. It is common knowledge that government census figures undercount the Black population, which means that probably less than half of African-American males in this country actually hold jobs. Official unemployment rates among Black teenagers project a 50% rate of joblessness. However, the reality is that less than 20% actually hold jobs. The rest are simply not counted as being a part of the labor force.

Moreover, to unemployment must be added underemployment as well as underpaid jobs. According to the Children's Defense Fund annual report, if almost half of all Black children are poor (as compared to one in 6 white children) it is because the median family income of Black families is less than 60% of that of white families. Half of all Black families had incomes below \$14,000 in 1983.

While the difficulties besetting the family should by no means be dismissed, any strategies designed to ameliorate the circumstances prevailing among poor Black people which methodologically focus on the family as the primary locus of change—leaving intact socio-economic conditions promoting Black unemployment and poverty—are from the outset doomed to failure.

MOYNIHAN'S MATRIARCHAL STRUCTURE

Exactly 20 years ago, the government report authored by Daniel Moynihan, entitled, "The Negro Family: Case for National Action," had strategic implications which justified the withdrawal of government measures designed to counter the special racist edge of the social crisis leading to the permanent impoverishment of the Black community. The real problem, Moynihan argued, was the matriarchal structure of the Black family. As far as government programs were concerned, the most effective ones would directly intervene in Black family life. Problems such as unemployment, the decline in the quality of housing, education, health care, etc., would be eventually

solved, once the Black family began to correspond to the prevailing nuclear (male supremacist) model.

Today, official spokesmen are proposing that government programs designed to bring some relief to poor families be curtailed ostensibly in order to revive a two-parent family structure in the Black community. Just as the ulterior aim of the Moynihan Report was to provide a philosophical justification for the reversal of government policy to eradicate the causes of racism in U.S. society, the present strategy is designed to shore up the Reaganite posture of denying the existence of institutionalized forms of racism in the post-civil rights era. If Black people are suffering in the 80s, it is because of our own inadequacies, Reagan propagandists assert, which we must deal with without the assistance of such institutions as the Aid for Dependent Children welfare programs.

STRATEGY OF VOLUNTEERISM

While the 1984 Black Family Summit did not entirely dismiss the deleterious impact of objective economic factors on the Black community, the greatest emphasis was placed on strategies of volunteerism.

John Jacobs asserted that it is high time Black people begin to independently address our problems. "In concentrating on the wrongs of discrimination and poverty," he said, "we have neglected the fact that there is a lot we can do about our problems ourselves." Even as most conference participants agreed in principle to the notion that help from the government is essential, the need for self-help was the clear thematic emphasis of the gathering. This is the consensus that emerged from the 200 delegates present:

Black churches could create credit unions, establish and support Black entrepreneurship, use their publishing houses to publish Black authors and teach sex education. Affluent Blacks could make venture capital available to Black businesses. Organizations could register voters and urge them to vote in elections from the school board to the presidency. Youths could consider the military for employment and skills training.(3)

In a recent *New York Times* article entitled "Restoring the Traditional Black Family" Eleanor Holmes Norton sets forth views on the Black family which ap-

pear to bear the imprint of the blame-the-victim syndrome of ruling class ideologues. While acknowledging the destructive pressures of extreme poverty and unemployment, she argues that the causes for the actual disruption of our families must be sought elsewhere. "If economic and social hardships could in themselves destroy family life, the family could not have survived as the basic human unit throughout the world," she theorizes.(4) According to Norton, the true culprit today is the "destructive ethos" and the "self-perpetuating culture of the ghetto." Moreover,

"The remedy is not as simple as providing necessities and opportunities. The family's return to its historic strength will require the overthrow of the complicated predatory ghetto subculture, a fact demanding not only new government approaches, but active Black leadership and community participation and commitment."(5)

'GHETTO' INSTITUTIONS AND SELF-HELP

Norton urges the government to replicate successful training and jobs programs already in existence for "ghetto males." Similarly, she calls for the systematic duplication of "successful workfare programs such as those in Baltimore and San Diego." Public assistance programs should "concentrate on changing lifestyles as well as imparting skills and education." She also emphasizes the need for "ghetto institutions" and Black middle class individuals with "ghetto roots" to engage in a range of self-help remedies including family planning, counseling, sex education, day care and most important, passing on the enduring Black American values of "hard work, education, respect for the Black family and, notwithstanding the denial of personal opportunity, achieving a better life for one's children."

Although Norton makes obligatory mention of the fact that "(t)he disruption of the Black family today is, in exaggerated microcosm, a reflection of what has happened to American family life in general,"(6) her proposed solutions myopically focus on what she calls, the "ghetto." Eleanor Holmes Norton has unfortunately succeeded in contemporizing and exacerbating the Moynihan approach.

Dr. Martin Luther King's 1965 critique of the Moynihan Report has not lost its relevance. He de-



tected the danger that "problems will be attributed to innate Negro weaknesses and used to justify neglect and rationalize oppression."(7)

Moynihan, in the meantime, has put forth a reassessment of his original views. He now argues that precisely because of the current pervasiveness of single parent families of all backgrounds and the impoverishment of those families, the resulting problems should be attributed, not simply to Black people, but to the society as a whole. While this modified description of the problem certainly represents an improvement, Moynihan admits that he is incapable of proposing anything other than piecemeal solutions. He cautions that "[w]e do not know the processes of social change well enough so as to be able confidently to affect them,"(8) suggesting merely that the personal tax exemption and welfare payments be increased to take inflation into account and that the government

assume responsibility for enforcing laws against drug trafficking.

The National Council of Negro Women is one of the major Black organizations that has developed practical programs such as SMART (Single Mothers Advance Rapidly through Training) in an attempt to address specific problems associated with the Black family crisis. According to Dorothy Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women:

SMART is a program designed to improve the employability skills of young mothers through classroom and on-the-job training. The ultimate goal is to help stabilize the life of the young mother and to help her see the need for education, training and marketable and life skills development.

Our first goal must be to prevent the initial pregnancy. The second goal must be to ensure that a girl who has had a baby does not have a second. Then, we must make sure that pregnant teen mothers receive adequate prenatal care so that prematurity, low birth weight and birth defects do not additionally handicap their babies' lives. Our efforts must be targeted and tailored to reach all young people.

STRUCTURAL CRISIS

However, if such goals are to be reached, employment and educational opportunities must be readily available. And the fact is that the U.S. economy has been rapidly phasing out jobs traditionally held by Black people, thus shoving ever larger numbers of our people to the outer margins of the economic life of this country. If severe structural problems can be detected within the Black family, then even more critical structural problems can be found in the economic system.

Eleanor Holmes Norton decries the "permanent generational joblessness," with roots in the post World War II era, which is "at the core of the meaning of the American ghetto," but she simply proposes that we "cull the successful aspects" from existing training and jobs programs and duplicate these models nationwide.(9) The discordance between the magnitude of the problem and the triviality of the suggested solution is deeply disturbing. This is tantamount to calling for more model soup kitchens to remedy the ills of The Great Depression.

The world capitalist economy has entered a phase of contraction and decline. Any strategy that does not acknowledge this fundamental reality will result in half-way measures, a temporary treatment of the symptoms of this crisis, leaving the disease free to continue in its ravaging direction. Failure to appreciate the new level of the crisis of capitalism leads to a tendency to underestimate the boldness and radicalness required to effectively confront problems such as unemployment, rampant poverty and homelessness.

Steel and other basic industries have sharply declined, leaving Black people especially vulnerable to chronic unemployment. Entire plants are shut down or transferred to other parts of the country or abroad. Between 1979 and 1984 11.5 million jobs have been permanently lost due to cut backs in production.(10) Other features of the structural crisis include accumulation of large budget deficits, the unprecedented scope of inflation, the agricultural crisis as well as the urban crisis.

MILITARY ROBS JOBS

A dominant feature of the current aggregate structural crisis is the increasing militarization of the productive process. In the process of retooling the productive process in accordance with the dictates of the military-industrial complex, creating the means with which to produce untold billions of dollars in weapons, the destructive potential of which is unprecedented, Black people are being literally robbed of jobs—at the rate of 1,300 jobs for each increase of \$1 billion in the military budget.(11)

The runaway U.S. military budget is at the heart of an economic "tangle of pathology"—to borrow Moynihan's terminology—causing the devastation of the Black community and the resulting structural problems within the Black family. Since 1980, the military budget has literally doubled, as non-military programs have been slashed by almost \$100 billion. From 1981-1985, military budgets have totalled \$1.2 trillion and the Pentagon has proposed \$2 trillion more for the next five years. To place this amount in perspective, it may be helpful to consider that \$3 million spent every day for the 2000 years since the birth of Jesus would equal \$2 trillion—the amount the Pentagon proposes to spend in the next five years. This year, the Pentagon will be spending nearly \$1 billion a day, which amounts to \$41 million an hour or

\$700,000 a minute. (12)

While health programs are being steadily cut to feed the Pentagon, less than one-half of all pre-school Black children are being immunized against polio, diphtheria, tetanus and smallpox. The Reagan administration has convinced Congress to make cuts in student financial assistance programs, yet almost one-half of all the nation's poor children are not even being reached by AFDC programs. Nevertheless, Reagan has attacked the program and his policies have been responsible for severe cuts since 1980. Since 1980, 6 million more people have fallen into the ranks of the poor. Twenty million are hungry, yet 1 million have been taken off the food stamp rolls altogether. While subsidized housing has been cut by 63% since 1981, homelessness is growing at an alarming rate.(13)

PEACE WITH AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Given the historic decline and contraction of the contemporary capitalist economy, exacerbated in large part by the rapid militarization of the productive process, it is plain that conditions of mass unemployment and rising poverty in our communities will not go away unless a radical anti-monopoly program of jobs with peace is instituted. The Income and Jobs Action Act of 1985, introduced by Reps. Charles Hayes (D-Ill) and John Conyers (D-Mi) is the only proposal which even begins to measure up to the challenge to end unemployment. With 38 co-sponsors, HR1398 calls for a federal jobs program at decent wages that will bring full employment with affirmative action; a 35-hour workweek with no cut in pay; adequate income for the unemployed from paycheck to paycheck and for first-time job seekers; measures to curb the effects of plant closings; and, most important, conversion from military to civilian spending as a means of financing the program.

If the Income and Jobs Act is a strategic precondition for an effective response to the problems faced by Black families, the Black community, together with our allies in labor and other progressive circles, must vigorously challenge Attorney General Meese's racist maneuvering designed to eliminate affirmative action and prevent the enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. In this context, Rep. John Conyers' initiative to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate the illegal and unconstitutional activities of the Justice

Department deserves strong support.

Our families cannot be saved if we cannot manage to preserve our right to earn a decent living under conditions of equality and if we cannot exercise our right to make political decisions in the electoral arena. Therefore, what is necessary is a program of jobs with peace and affirmative action, democratic nationalization of basic industry and of the military industrial complex and the halting of racist assaults on Black people's political rights. This is the only framework within which practical programs addressing immediate problems of Black families will have any hope for success.

Observers of the current crisis within the Black family might find it instructive to examine the present situation in some of the socialist countries where there is also a substantial number of single-parent families. In those countries there is no suggestion whatsoever of the soaring poverty associated with the growth of such families in the United States. There, however, the economy is crisis free, and, furthermore, if there are any social privileges to speak of, they are claimed by the youngest generations. If, as Black people in the United States, we want to guarantee that the dream for a better life lives on through our children, and, indeed, that our children live on to see a better life, we must start learning to set our sights on a socialist future.

Footnotes

1. New York Times, November 20, 1983
2. The State of Black America, 1985, Urban League
3. New York Times, May 7, 1984, p A14
4. Norton, New York Times Magazine, "Restoring the Traditional Black Family," June 2, 1985, p 43
5. Ibid, p 96
6. Ibid, p 43
7. New York Times, May 3, 1984
8. New York Times, April 7, 1985
9. Norton, op. Cit., p 93
10. U.S. Department of Labor Release, USDL 84-482, 11/30/84
11. Bread Not Bombs, p 1
12. The Women's Budget, WILPF, June 1985, p 3
13. Ibid.



SOUTH AFRICA AND THE REAGAN FACTOR

by Henry Winston

As the Black majority in South Africa intensify their momentous struggle for national liberation, an ever-sharper crisis of existence is created for white-minority rule. In their efforts to contend with this deepening crisis, Pretoria and Washington have made a coordinated series of counter moves.

One of these moves was the formation by Secretary of State George Shultz, in late 1985, of the Advisory Committee on South Africa. The official function of this 12-member committee—which was selected from the corporate sector, the labor movement, academia and former government figures—is to prepare a report on South Africa to be ready in one year. But the actual function of the committee has little to do with producing an advisory report. Its real function is instead to create the appearance of a consensus around policy decisions already made by the Reagan administration and its partner in “constructive engagement,” the Botha government.

These joint policy decisions—which place Washington ever more aggressively on the side of white minority rule—were made by U.S. and South African government and corporate figures. They were first made public in September 1985, when 91 leaders of South Africa’s major corporations placed a full-page ad—with the headline “There Is A Better Way”—in the *Johannesburg Sunday Times*. A few weeks later, the U.S. Corporate Council on South Africa—consisting of the heads of such transnationals as GM, IBM, Citicorp, Mobil, Union Carbide, Exxon and duPont—reproduced the ad in the *New York Times*, with their own message affixed to it:

Today, we add our voices to theirs.
The U.S. Corporate Council on South Af-

rica strongly supports the ideas and initiatives of this group of responsible businessmen.

We pledge to play an active role in peacefully achieving their goals.

Thus these U.S. corporate leaders, with the backing of the Reagan Administration, join their South African counterparts in declaring that *there is a better way* than the way advanced by the African National Congress in its Freedom Charter, the historic proclamation that has the overwhelming support of the courageous Black majority fighting to end white minority rule.

At the same time that the U.S. corporate powers publicly endorse the goals of the South African corporate powers, they offer their assurance that these goals are to be “peacefully” achieved. But this effort to replace the goals of the Black majority—as defined in the Freedom Charter—with the goals of the racist white minority rulers can by no stretch of the imagination be construed as peaceful. On the contrary, it is a virtual declaration of war against the goals of the Black majority.

‘REFORMING’ APARTHEID

According to Shultz, the Advisory Committee will “render its advice on how U.S. policy can effectively promote equal rights in South Africa, and an end to apartheid.” Shultz’s pronouncement of “equal rights” as a goal in South Africa is a measure of his demagoguery. At home, where equal rights is a central issue, the administration is doing all it can to make the political and socioeconomic conditions of Afro-Americans more and more unequal. But in South Africa—where the goal is Black majority rule—Shultz calls for equal rights. By substituting this false goal

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apartheid-minority rule.

By linking "equal rights" to an end to apartheid, Shultz is saying that the apartheid system can be reformed. This same position was expressed by the corporate leaders, who speak in their ads of a "reform process." But apartheid can not be reformed. There is no solution to the crisis of the apartheid system outside a solution to the issue of power. It is this issue that the administration and the corporate leaders seek to camouflage with rhetoric.

For example, in elaborating on their claim that "there is a better way," the corporate heads speak of "negotiating with acknowledged Black leaders about power sharing." But the issue in South Africa is not "power sharing" but a *power shift*: a shift from white minority rule to Black majority rule based on one-person, one-vote in a unitary, nonracial state.

By speaking of negotiating with "acknowledged Black leaders" around the issue of "power sharing," these corporate leaders make it evident that those they acknowledge as "leaders" are in reality quislings. Those whom the Black majority acknowledge as their leaders—the leaders of the African National Congress, the United Democratic Front and the great new Congress of South African Trade Unions—have made it clear that apartheid and white minority rule are not two separate phenomena but an indivisible entity. It is because of this indivisibility that apartheid can not be ended by "power sharing," but only by a shift in power from the white minority to the Black majority.

At the same time, the Black majority as a whole have made it evident that they recognize "power sharing" as a divisive formula whose purpose is to preserve white minority rule. It was, in fact, the introduction of so-called tricameral representation within the apartheid state—a move hailed by Pretoria and Washington as a step toward "power sharing"—that sparked the present and ever-sharpening confrontation.

COLONIALISM OF A SPECIAL TYPE

At the heart of the struggles giving rise to a broad alliance of the oppressed of South Africa is the partnership between the ANC and the South African Communist Party. These patriotic partners have long championed the strategy calling for a shift of power from the white minority to the Black majority. This

strategy—which is accepted by the broad front for national liberation—is based on an analysis that sees apartheid as a system of relations based on both monopoly capitalism and colonial oppression of a special type. In this colonialism of a special kind, the dominant oppressor is not based outside the country but within it.

South Africa's white minority rulers and monopolists, together with their imperialist partners in the West, totally control the human and material resources in a developed capitalist economy with the world's highest rate of exploitation and profit. The white minority also occupies all of the arable land, that is, 87 per cent of the total.

This colonialism of a special kind attained its full development within the context of South Africa's increasing importance to U.S. imperialism and its allies after the defeat of the Axis powers in World War II and the consequent opening of a new era of advance for socialism and national liberation.

'RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP'

U.S. imperialism's long record of involvement with the apartheid regime was greatly intensified with the advent of the Reaganites' policy of "constructive engagement." Commenting on the underpinnings of this policy, Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, declared that there is a "reciprocal relationship" between the United States and South Africa "based on shared concerns in Southern Africa" (*TransAfrica News*, August 1981.)

It is the special features of apartheid South Africa that form the basis for its "reciprocal relationship" and "shared concerns" with the Reaganites. In fact, the very features that account for this reciprocal relationship developed as a result of shared concerns with world imperialism.

These concerns came to the fore after Winston Churchill, speaking in Fulton, Missouri, just after World War II, declared a "crusade against Communism." This declaration, which became known as the Churchill-Truman doctrine—and whose real purpose was to roll back national liberation and social progress—received its most immediate response from those forces in South Africa that had supported Hitler. It was this response—within the context of colonialism of a special kind—that ushered in full-blown

apartheid and the Suppression of Communism Act, that is, ushered in apartheid fascism.

'PERMANENT TRANSITION'

"Reforms" and "power sharing" have never ended colonial oppression anywhere, nor will they ever do so. This fact is illustrated with particular vividness in South Africa, where colonialism of a special kind profoundly intensifies the economic, social and political contradictions that generate anticolonial struggles as a whole.

That the use of such terms as "reform" and "power sharing" is a rhetorical maneuver designed to derail the liberation struggle is dramatically illustrated by the recent remarks of Gavin Relly, chief lieutenant to Harry Oppenheimer, head of Anglo American Corporation and South Africa's most powerful magnate. Relly—who, along with Oppenheimer, signed the ad calling for "reform" and "power sharing"—declared that "I don't believe in final solutions." Echoing an idea expressed earlier by Oppenheimer, Relly went on to say that he prefers a "state of permanent transition." Obviously, the final solution that he and Oppenheimer wish to avoid by "permanent transition" is the end of white minority rule. The same wish was also expressed, in only slightly different words, by Chester Crocker: Objecting to an approach that focuses on an "ultimate goal," he advocated one that concentrates instead on the "process of getting there."

As is evident from the foregoing, the supposedly liberal Oppenheimer—far from offering an alternative policy—supports the Botha-Reagan strategy. In fact, while he calls for "reform," he voices opposition as strong as Botha's to the ANC demand for "one-person, one-vote."

In the past few months, the apartheid regime—which is supposedly subject to reform—has murdered more than 1,000 children, youth, women and men. It has done so rather than agree to any of the Black majority's immediate demands.

There is, it must be stressed, a fundamental difference between these demands and imperialism's diversionary call for "reform." If the Black majority succeeded in winning any of their immediate demands, in whole or in part, and in enforcing such a victory through their united strength, this would advance the struggle to end white minority rule.

It appears, however, that the Washington-Pretoria policies, supported by the Oppenheimers of South Africa and their U.S. counterparts, have brought matters to the point where if even such an elementary democratic right as "one-person, one-vote" is to be won, it will be necessary first to replace white minority rule with Black majority rule.

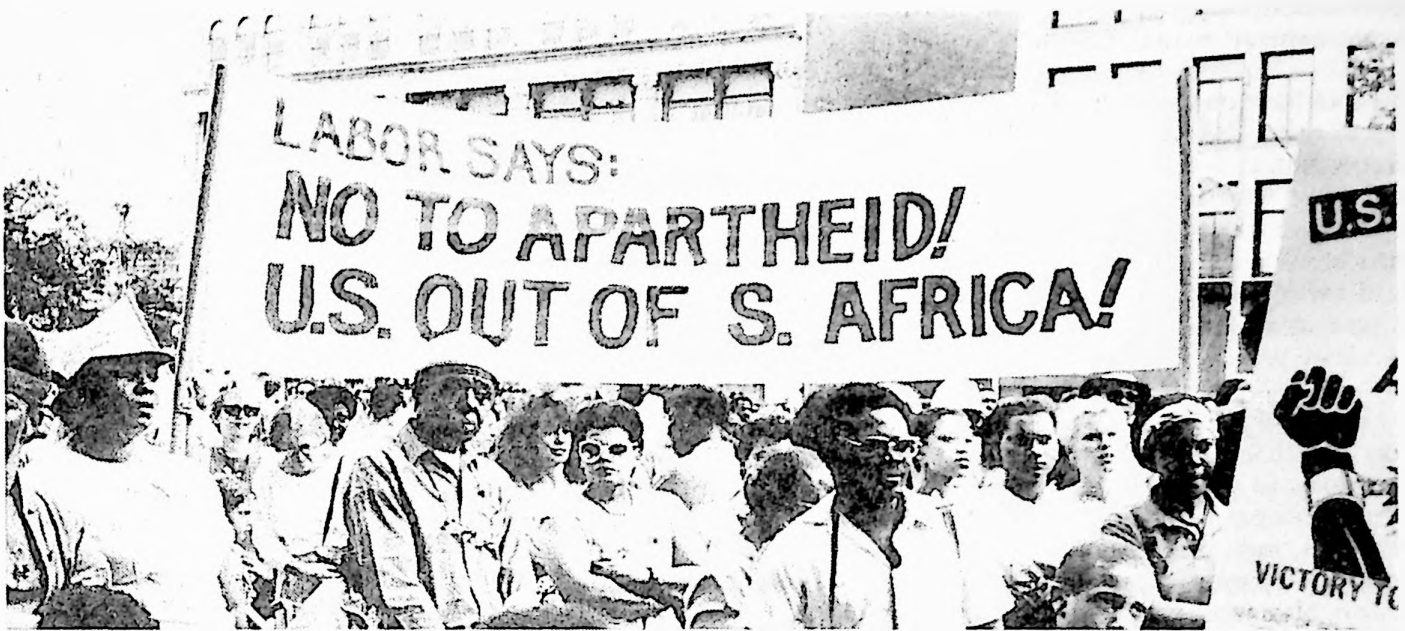
SHULTZ'S 'VISION'

In another remark that reveals the racist essence of "constructive engagement," Shultz declared that "the next months will reveal whether the South African government can muster the vision and bold leadership that will be required to move from confrontation to negotiation and a new constitutional order deriving its strength from the consent of the governed." Thus, according to Shultz, it is not the ANC and its leaders—leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo—who can provide vision and leadership, but the apartheid rulers.

Clearly, it is impossible to move from confrontation to negotiation on the racist, imperialist terms proposed by Shultz—who demands no less than that the Black majority surrender their inalienable right to national self-determination and that their oppressors, who were once partners of the Nazis and who now perpetuate Nazi ideology and practices in South Africa—"share" in determining South Africa's future.

To speak of involving the racist white rulers in "negotiation" to form a new "constitutional order" is to act from a position that is being upheld by imperialist violence—violence that has been unleashed to prevent the oppressed majority, led by the ANC, from determining—without interference from U.S. imperialism or its partners in Pretoria—their own national future on the basis of a non-racial, unitary constitutional order that they themselves establish.

Shultz, rather than projecting a vision, is evidently entertaining a fantasy, the notion that a variant of the betrayal of Reconstruction a century ago, which perpetuated the oppression of Blacks in this country in new forms, can be transplanted to preserve white minority domination in South Africa. However, the answer the heroic freedom fighters are giving Shultz is bound to remind him that the crisis of apartheid rule is not taking place during the rise of capitalism, but instead in the era of its decline and general crisis on one hand, and, on the other, of the



An anti-apartheid demonstration in New York City.

world transition to national liberation and socialism.

DEADLY PARALLEL

There is a deadly parallel between the role of Shultz's Advisory Committee on South Africa and that of the Kissinger Commission on Central America. The formation of the Kissinger Commission coincided with the mounting of U.S. military intervention, covert and overt, against the national liberation struggles in Central America—and in particular with the intensification of Washington's violent efforts to destroy Nicaragua's newly-won independence and its social progress.

The establishment of the Shultz Committee not only coincides with the Reaganites' increasing support to the internal war Pretoria is waging against the Black majority's freedom struggles. It is also geared to the Reaganites' drive to provide ever-greater funds for military aid to the contra forces that they and Pretoria have created—the proxy armies that are waging terrorist wars against Angola, Mozambique and Lesotho and against the Namibian liberation struggle. Through these efforts to destabilize the front-line states, Washington has yet another way of providing direct economic and military support to Pretoria.

In their ads, the U.S. and South African corporate leaders declared their opposition to "violence

as a means of achieving change." However, behind this rhetorical camouflage, they support the Washington-Pretoria strategy to *prevent* change by escalating violence inside South Africa, and to violently *turn back* change in the front-line states.

In a recent comment on the nature of the support provided by Washington, Winnie Mandela declared that the Reagan administration "refuses any assistance to the true representatives of the people in this country, the African National Congress. We can only conclude from this that the American government is determined at all costs to maintain and support the racist white regime in South Africa." Condemning the administration's policy in regard to the front-line states, she stated, "The South African regime continues with impunity to attack neighboring countries. The American administration not only approves of this conduct but has now followed the examples set by the racist regime by giving aid to and receiving officially in Washington the bandit Savimbi."

To gain support at home for its two-front strategy—support to Pretoria's internal policies, accompanied by efforts to destabilize the front-line states—the Reaganites carry out a calculated deception: they try to make it appear that military aid to Savimbi has nothing to do with aid to the racist ruling class' violence inside South Africa. Instead they insist that

their support to Savimbi is to stop "Soviet and Cuban expansionism" in that region.

Thus Washington follows in the footsteps of Pretoria, which used the Suppression of Communism Act as the rationale for imposing apartheid fascism in South Africa. Today, of course, Pretoria continues to use anti-Soviet, anti-Communist justifications for escalating its assaults on the South African freedom struggles—and on the neighboring states that recognize the link between their own struggles to control their destinies and the liberation struggle in South Africa.

STAR WARS AND CONTRA WARS

In late January 1986 Reagan told key Republican Senators, in remarks paraphrased by *The New York Times*, that the "Soviet Union's perception of U.S. strength and resolve in the next year depended largely on Congressional moves involving aid to rebels in Nicaragua and Angola, as well as protection of the U.S. military buildup and support for space-based missiles, popularly known as the 'Star Wars' program." *The Times* then quoted Reagan as declaring that the upcoming Summit meeting in this country will be "directly affected by Gorbachev's perception of our global position and internal solidarity."

In true McCarthyite fashion, Reagan implies that the criterion for patriotism will be adherence to "internal solidarity" in support of Star-Wars and the mercenary contras in Angola and Central America—a standard that, of course, classifies as unpatriotic the U.S. movements in solidarity with the struggle for Black majority rule in South Africa and the Central American struggles for liberation and national independence.

At the same time, Reagan converts the Soviet Union's solidarity with the anti-colonial liberation struggles in southern Africa and Central America into a "Soviet threat"—thus using this familiar fiction as the rationale for the administration's stepped-up military support to Pretoria via its support of the Savimbi bandits, for its support to their counterparts in Nicaragua, and its escalation of the nuclear-arms race.

Shortly before Reagan made these remarks, Mikhail Gorbachev commented on Washington's attempts to justify its opposition to arms control by linking arms control to events in southern Africa and elsewhere.

The pattern imposed by militarism—arms instead of development—must be replaced by the reverse order of things—disarmament for development. The noose of the trillion-dollar foreign debt, which is now strangling dozens of countries and entire continents, is a direct consequence of the arms race.

The Soviet Union is opposed to making the implementation of disarmament measures dependent on the so-called regional conflicts. Behind this is both the unwillingness to follow the path of disarmament and the desire to impose upon sovereign nations what is alien to them and what would make possible to maintain profoundly unfair conditions whereby some countries live at the expense of others, exploiting their natural, human and spiritual resources for the selfish imperial purposes of certain states or aggressive alliances.

As is made evident by Gorbachev's remarks, the Reagan administration's blocking of disarmament allows U.S. imperialism to continue to build up weapons in support of its global and regional strategy. As applied to South Africa, this strategy helps to perpetuate conditions whereby the white minority rulers and their partners in the West can continue to live at the expense of the Black majority. Thus the struggle of the Black majority demonstrates the indivisibility of the fight for peace and liberation.

ANTI-APARTHEID SOLIDARITY

It is now imperative for the U.S. anti-apartheid movement to recognize that the goal of divestment alone does not correspond to the requirements of anti-apartheid solidarity. What is needed is comprehensive, total mandatory sanctions against South Africa. And because military support to the contras in the front-line states is military support to Pretoria, the struggle for sanctions must include a demand for the end of aid to the Savimbi bandits and their counterparts in other front-line states.

Just as the struggle to end the armaments race must be extended to prevent the militarization of outer space, the U.S. struggle against apartheid must be extended to include comprehensive, total mandatory sanctions. Only in this way can we advance the fight to end Washington's "constructive engagement" with apartheid.

KEY REAGANITE STRATEGY IN '86 ELECTIONS

by James Steele

Political analysts and civil rights activists are pointing to the machinations of President Reagan's Justice Department with increasing alarm. The tandem of Attorney General Edwin Meese and Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds, head of the civil rights division of what many now call the Injustice Department, have become a veritable wrecking crew, unleashing a broadside against civil rights enforcement. Civil rights and civil liberties organizations contend, and correctly so, that this is part of a larger drive of ultra-Right forces not only against constitutional rights but the Constitution itself.

The broad range of civil rights laws have been singled out for obliteration. In special ways and for very special reasons affirmative action programs and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 have become a principal focal point of the Reagan-Meese-Reynolds onslaught. The scope of the attack potentially rivals the nonenforcement and liquidation more than one hundred years ago of the legislative measures which were the legal underpinnings of Reconstruction.

Oddly enough, some liberal commentators seem hesitant to term the stance of the Administration racism. But that surely is what it is. Indeed, racism is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Reagan policy as a whole—foreign and domestic. Even so, this in and of itself in general does not clarify what is unique in the Justice Department's offensive. Nor do general characterizations of racism sufficiently answer why it is being intensified now in the framework of President Reagan's second term and in the year in which midterm congressional elections will be held. On the surface, it would seem obvious even to

the Reagan Administration that such policies will not help Republican candidates. Moreover, the offensive flies in the face of the so-called effort of moderate circles to break with what has been described as "an article of faith" in the Republican Party—that Black masses will not vote Republican no matter what, and therefore it is useless to even try to win Black voters.

Notwithstanding New Jersey Governor Tom Kean's re-election victory in which he won 60 percent of the Black vote, President Reagan's 9 to 1 repudiation by Black voters in the 1984 elections seems to have brought virtually all Reaganite forces—as distinguished from Republicans in general—around to Jesse Helms' way of thinking: "I won't get one Black vote," he said in the fall of 1983, explaining why he continued to oppose the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday bill, despite pressure from Republican leaders who said his actions threatened the party's electoral prospects among Black voters.

REAGANISM WITHOUT REAGAN

The basic conclusion to be drawn is that the nation's most reactionary forces, holding hegemony within the Republican Party and the administration, have written off the Black vote. In point of fact, the Reaganite ultra-Right forces go a step further. They are attempting to eliminate it as a significant factor in the body politic for reasons that include but also go beyond their racist contempt for Black people.

For all its devastating and divisive effects, racism is not always the main question in a political struggle focussed against Black people. Racism may be central to other questions but in the overall spectrum of the struggle raging in U.S. society it is not the central question. Racism acquires its destructive power within the framework of class struggle. Racism

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as an ideology and a practice is utilized to enhance prospects for realization of the exploitative and aggressive class objectives of the ruling circles of monopoly capitalism—in our time, the most reactionary elements of the military-industrial complex. This is why it is always necessary to analyze racist policy in context, to see it, understand it, and fight it within the framework of struggle on the overall questions. What hones Reagan racism today is the fact that ultra-Right forces determining this Administration's agenda are actively and aggressively preparing for the days beyond Reagan. On the legislative and judicial levels, an attempt is being made to institutionalize Reagan policy concepts, in fact to make them the law of the land so as to have Reaganism without Reagan for decades to come. This is the meaning of efforts to stack the federal judiciary with Reagan's political kith and kin, of turning labor laws into their opposite, of undermining any federal regulations, even the most superficial ones, that to any degree inhibit corporate profit-making, etc.

Great stake is placed on the electoral struggles of 1986, 1988 and 1990 for realizing this long term objective. Reaganism without Reagan is possible if the ultra-Right forces are able to maintain control of the executive branch and achieve a working majority in the nation's top legislative bodies on key foreign, military and domestic policy issues. In practice this means keeping a Right-wing Republican in the White House, maintaining a GOP majority in the Senate, and increasing Republican representation in the House which would strengthen the leverage exerted by the Reaganite coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats. Indeed, a Right-wing majority in both Houses could offset the loss of the presidency. Thus, the outcome of the congressional and state legislative contests in the next three elections may prove to be as important, if not more important, than the 1988 presidential election.

Why? And how does this relate to the Justice Department's racist attacks on the voting rights of the Afro-American people?

RE-APPORTIONMENT AND GERRYMANDERING

Tactically speaking, to sustain the legislative aggression against social programs, labor laws and civil rights enforcement so as to free additional funds to

continue the military build-up, the militarist forces must first preserve the Republican Senate majority in the 1986 midterm elections. This majority is the base for the larger working majority or coalition of Republicans and Right-wing Democrats—the so-called “boll weevils”—that gave the administration success in the Senate on a number of key issues, including more than \$50 billion in budget cuts, the \$750 billion big business gained from cuts in corporate taxes, Star Wars funding, etc. The administration also has been able use this coalition to pressure the House and to prevent concessions in House-Senate conference committees on the President's minimum position.

From the strategic standpoint, the ultra-Right and in some cases fascist-oriented forces, grouped in and around the Reagan administration are striving for the Republican Party to gain control of as many state legislatures as possible to be in a position to control the re-apportionment that will take place following the 1990 census. Republican control of re-apportionment means Republican control of gerrymandering—the general method of redistricting employed by the two-party system. Such control will enable them to redraw congressional districts in ways that drastically increase the relative strength of Republican voters, leading to big gains in the number of Republican-held seats in the House of Representatives.

It is estimated that twenty states will gain or lose congressional seats in the next reapportionment. For example, Florida and Texas are projected to gain four seats each, California, three and Arizona, two. The loss of five seats seems to be in store for New York, three for Pennsylvania and two each for Illinois and Michigan. In addition, population shifts within the states will require redrawing of congressional district lines in all of the states save for the handful with a single at-large representative.

The result could be a drastic change in the composition of the Congress chosen in the 1992 elections. Republican strategists speculate that a GOP majority in the House of Representatives is possible. As a matter of fact, the Republican national leadership is doing a lot more than speculating. More than two years ago they launched the “1991 plan,” which is aimed at “dramatically increasing the number of Republican legislative seats and governorships in preparation for the crucial 1991 reapportionment.”

While the experience with the Democratic Party

leadership during the time of the Reagan administration has not been anything to write home about, the existence in the House of a bloc of Democratic members resisting Reaganism provides an indispensable lever for the broad anti-Reagan movements and struggles. One gasps at the thought of what measures might have been passed had the Republicans also held a majority in the House during the past five years.

Without retaining the Republican majority in the Senate the grand scheme for ultra-Right domination of the political and legislative processes would be in serious trouble. Speaking of serious trouble, that is precisely what several Republican Senators who were elected on Reagan's 1980 coattails face in the 1986 elections. Ironically, several of the "Class of 1980" senators from the Deep South are among those in the deepest trouble.

On the one hand, President Reagan swept the South in 1980 and 1984—largely on the basis of a racist appeal. It can be expected that Reaganite candidates will again have this working in their favor. But maybe not to the same extent. The election of L. Douglas Wilder as lieutenant governor of Virginia demonstrates that the struggle against racism in regard to Black representation has gained significant ground among white voters in the South.

Historically, in elections in which racism has become the overriding factor Black candidates still have been able to count on at least 20 percent of the white vote. In the 1983 Chicago mayoral election racism was whipped up to a frenzied level. Nevertheless, Harold Washington was able to garner nearly 20 percent of the white vote. One out of every five votes for Jesse Jackson in the Democratic primaries came from white voters. Polls showed his support among white voters was much more extensive. It was not reflected in the vote because many of these same voters felt that Jackson did not have a chance of winning the nomination. However, Wilder pulled 46 percent of the white vote in the Virginia lieutenant governor's race. This achievement could not have brought smiles to the faces of the Reaganites because it revealed some pretty deep cracks in Reagan's "Solid South."

THE BLACK VOTE AS CATALYST

On the other hand, given its size and relative independence, the Black vote in the South can be the

decisive factor should there be a substantial increase in rates of Black voter participation. The enormous size of the Afro-American voting age population potentially could neutralize the racist factor, offsetting any influence racism may have on how sections of white voters cast their ballots. Judged by historical trends, in this region the Black vote is larger than the racist vote among white voters.

Also, Black voters in the South, as elsewhere, often are a uniquely indispensable catalytic force, igniting broader coalitions of voters. This certainly has been the case in the struggle against Reaganism. Based on this legacy, the growth of what could be called the Black-white unity vote—achieved in struggle on common issues or in relation to specific candidates—could also become a powerful factor in overcoming the influence of racism on the voting patterns of some white voters.

In regard to the Black vote specifically, the following statistics are revealing:

Based on 1982 figures, Black voters make up 20 percent or more of the voting age population in 72 congressional districts. Of these, 49 are in the South; 8 in the Northeast; 11 in the Midwest; and 4 in California. Black voters also account for 20 percent or more of the voting age population in 7 states (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina); and 10 to 20 percent of the voting age population in another 10 states (Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia).

Afro-Americans constitute the majority of the voting age population in 15 congressional districts: the First, Second and Seventh districts of Illinois (Chicago); the First and Thirteenth districts of Michigan (Detroit); the Fifth C.D. of Georgia (Atlanta); the Seventh C.D. of Maryland (Baltimore); the Twelfth C.D. of New York (Brooklyn); the Twenty-First C.D. of Ohio; (Cleveland); the Eighth C.D. of Tennessee (Memphis); the Tenth C.D. of New Jersey (Newark); the Second C.D. of Louisiana (New Orleans); the Second C.D. of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia); the Twenty-Ninth C.D. of California (Los Angeles) and the Second C.D. of Mississippi, covering the Delta region. Afro-Americans hold the seats in all but three of these districts—Atlanta, Newark and Mississippi. The other eight members of the Congressional Black

Caucus represent districts in which Afro-Americans are not the majority of the voting age population. In fact, Black voters comprise only 20 percent of Congressman Alan Wheat's district in Kansas City, Missouri. Overall there are just 20 Afro-American members of Congress and not a single Black United States senator.

What stands out most especially is the lack of a single Black representative from the Deep South despite scores of congressional districts with high percentages of Black voters. Of the 49 congressional districts in the South in which Blacks account for 20 percent or more of the voting population, there are 20 in which Black voters constitute 30 percent or more of the voting age population. Probably half of the latter would become majority Black if the lines of these congressional districts were drawn in conformity with the Voting Rights Act. In other words, the number of majority Black districts would most likely double.

THE ROLE OF THE SECOND PRIMARY

In the main, massive violation of voting rights accounts for the gross under-representation of Afro-Americans in regard to voter registration and participation and in elected officials. More than 20 years after passage of the Voting Rights Act there are still millions of Afro-Americans that have not been registered to vote in these areas! Violation of voting rights also is the decisive factor undermining a breakthrough in Black representation in the Congress.

Many states require a second primary in contests where no one wins better than 50 percent of the vote. In practice, this acts against Black candidates who win primaries in which there is more than one white candidate. Second primaries are held in states other than in the South but the fact that nine southern states—each with a large Afro-American population—require a second primary makes this measure a unique and extremely effective mechanism of discrimination against Black voters in a region in which more than one-half of the nation's Black population resides.

For example, in 1982, H.M. "Mickey" Michaux, running for the Democratic nomination for the Second Congressional District in North Carolina, won the primary with 44 percent of the vote. But Michaux was deprived the nomination by virtue of a second primary in which he faced a single white candidate

behind whom the political establishment united. Blacks are 36 percent of the voting age population in North Carolina's Second Congressional District. In point of fact, the second primary helps to offset the strength of the Black vote in districts where Black people are not the overwhelming majority of the electorate. Bear in mind that Black people are not the overwhelming majority, let's say two-thirds or more, in all but eight of the country's 435 congressional districts.

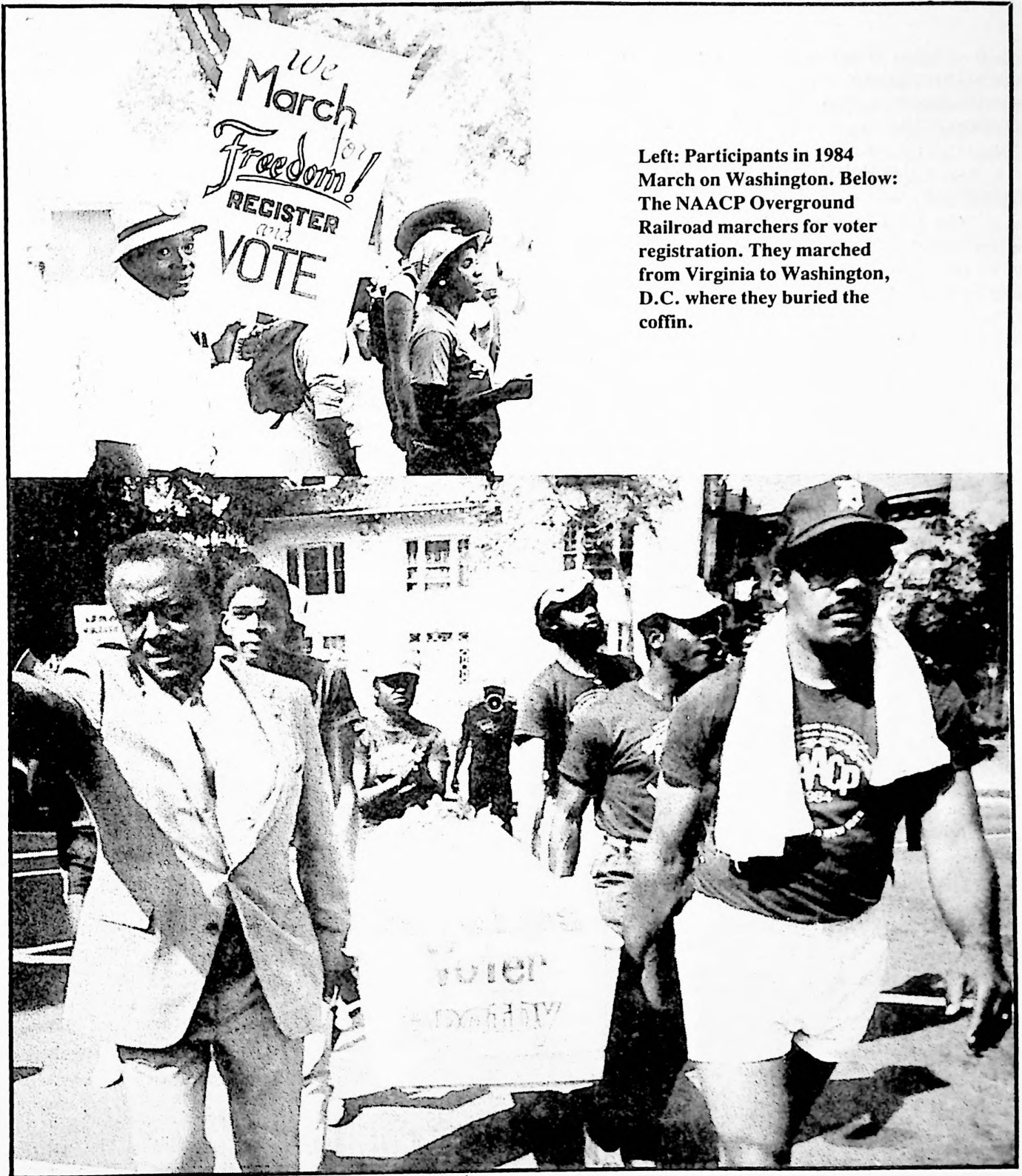
A multitude of other maneuvers by city, county and state officials in the South prevent large numbers of Black people from registering to vote. That's on the one hand. Systematic purging of the registration rolls removes tens of thousands of registered Black voters without notification or justification, on the other hand. Hours and times during which one can register are irregular, severely restricted or unpublicized. Or, voters are required to travel great distances, often to the county seat, which poses a great problem in rural areas and wherever there is the additional factor of intimidation. Similar tactics are applied in regard to voting.

All of this adds up to a situation in which *literally millions of Black voters and, on the basis of this discrimination, millions poor white voters are effectively disenfranchised*. On the practical level it is simply impossible for them to exercise one of the most basic of constitutional and human rights—the right to vote.

The Atlanta-based Voter Education Project estimates that nearly one million Blacks may have been purged from the registration lists in the first half of this decade alone. In this way, the massive voter registration drives amount to merely keeping pace. This is part of why a significant increase in voter turnout in the South is not being achieved.

If Black people in the Deep South were registered and voted in the same proportion as, say, Black voters in the Midwest, there is no question that a breakthrough could be scored, including in the U.S. Senate. For example, 76 percent of Black voters are registered in the state of Illinois, 72 percent in Michigan and 65 in Ohio. The corresponding figures for Alabama, Georgia and North Carolina respectively, are 57.7 percent, 51.9 percent and 43.6 percent.

In the latter three states, Blacks make up 22.9 percent, 24.3 percent, and 20.3 percent, respectively, of the voting age population. Blacks account for 25



Left: Participants in 1984 March on Washington. Below: The NAACP Overground Railroad marchers for voter registration. They marched from Virginia to Washington, D.C. where they buried the coffin.

percent or more of the voting age population in four out of North Carolina's seven congressional districts, five of Alabama's seven, five of Georgia's ten, five of Louisiana's eight, four of Mississippi's five, and five of South Carolina's six.

If Black voter participation in these states equalled that achieved in the Midwestern states, that plus at least 20 percent of the white vote could result in a significant increase in Afro-American representation in the Congress and on the state level in the South as well. As matters now stand, gerrymandering based on intent to minimize the strength of the Black vote is the only reason why there are only four majority Black congressional districts out of a total of 123 in the South as a whole.

REAGANITES' DEATH KNELL

Significantly higher rates of Black voter participation in the crucial 1986 elections could help sound the death knell on the re-election hopes of a number of Reaganite senators and representatives. In the course of which the linchpin of the ultra-Right strategy for an electoral takeover of the legislative branch could be loosened. In a basic sense, the struggle for adequate Afro-American representation goes hand in hand with the struggle to defeat as many Reaganite candidates as possible in the 1986 elections. One depends upon the other. The struggle for equality in regard to political representation is profoundly interlaced with the general struggle for democracy and world peace. Such a breakthrough in Afro-American representation would strengthen the bloc of forces in the legislatures supporting disarmament, trade unionism and the meeting of the people's needs.

It is precisely the potential of the Southern Black vote in this context that accounts for the new, extremely ominous Meese-Reynolds edition of textbook voting rights violation. To prevent Afro-American voters in the South from playing a full role in the struggle for peace, democracy and social progress in the 1986 elections is the framework in which the Justice Department's struggle against the movement for enforcement of voting rights can be properly understood.

ROLE OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

The Reagan administration's Justice Department, taking up where local officials left off, has assumed

the role of aggressive initiator in persecuting and prosecuting voting right activists on trumped-up charges. Hundreds of FBI agents have been deployed in the South, particularly Mississippi and Alabama, to investigate voter fraud—not on the part of local officials that are staging a massive defiance of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 but on the part of the victims of this federal-state-county officials' conspiracy of non-compliance. Clearly, the Justice Department's intent is to intimidate the movements for increased Black voter registration and participation, throw its leaders in jail, which has been done, and to encourage local Democratic and Republican officials to step up efforts to deny the franchise to Black voters. The immediate object is to stifle maximum Black voter participation in the 1986 elections.

In this sense, the Reaganites have made careful calculations knowing that Black people who voted for and otherwise supported the candidacy of Jesse Jackson are highly unlikely to vote for Reaganite Republicans. The same is true of millions of Black voters, mobilized by trade unions and independent Black-led Democratic Party organizations more so than the Democratic leadership, who supported Walter Mondale. In fact, the unity of the forces of the Rainbow Coalition and the trade union and other forces that backed Mondale in the Democratic primaries represents a potential strategic coalition that could assure the defeat of many of the President's Senate and House supporters running for re-election in 1986.

Many attribute the assault on voting rights to the racism of the administration in general, and of Attorney General Edwin Meese and civil rights division chief, William Bradford Reynolds, in particular. While their racism is undeniable, this still does not explain why this offensive is being undertaken now. The racism is profoundly political, corresponding to the class objectives of the most reactionary circles of the monopoly capitalists.

After five years of experience with the disastrous consequences of the foreign and domestic policy of Reaganism, broad sections of the public are revolting against Reagan administration policy. Voters may well express their repudiation of Reaganism against those candidates most closely associated with administration policy. That leaves Jeremiah Denton (Alabama), Paula Hawkins (Florida), Matt Mattingly (Georgia) among the most severely exposed. Should

there be a meaningful challenger, New York's Alphonse D'Amato, Pennsylvania's Arlen Specter, Wisconsin's Robert Kasten and several other of the 22 Republican senators up for re-election would not be in such great shape either.

The loss of the Republican majority in the United States Senate, which has been key to the President's assault on legislation benefitting and protecting the people's needs as well as his drive for first-strike military superiority, is in jeopardy. Such an achievement would help to weaken the offensive of the administration, the corporations and the Pentagon against everything peaceful and progressive. At the same time, the anti-Reagan fightback could be considerably strengthened on virtually every issue coming before the 100th Congress, including Star Wars funding, jobs creation, tax reform, fiscal policy, affirmative action and civil rights enforcement. All that is necessary to lay the basis for such a development is a net loss by the Republicans of four Senate seats.

BREAKING THE STRANGLEHOLD

Breaking the back of the reactionary stranglehold on the Senate and House seats of the South has profound implications, especially if achieved in significant measure as a result of the contribution of Black voters. Indeed, such a breakthrough is not possible without a massive anti-Reagan turnout of Black voters.

Consider the following:

Alabama Senator Jeremiah Denton won in 1980 by a margin of slightly more than 33,000 votes. While Black voters make up 22.9 percent of the state's voting age population more than 272,000 voting age Blacks are not registered to vote—better than nine times Denton's margin of victory. But better than 460,000 are registered and more than half of these turned out in the last election. That also is nine times Denton's margin of victory.

Senator Paula Hawkins of Florida, also elected in 1980, won by 117,000 votes. The state's voting age Black population totals 923,000 or 11.3 percent of the voting age population. However, more than 50 percent or 459,000 are not registered to vote.

In Georgia, where Matt Mattingly won a Senate seat in 1980 by 27,652 votes, Blacks constitute 24.3 percent of the voting age population. Out of nearly a million voting age Blacks, close to 472,000 remain un-

registered.

The incumbents are not running in the Senate races in Louisiana, Maryland and North Carolina. These states' Afro-American voting population breaks down as follows:

Louisiana	26.6 percent
	256,000 unregistered
Maryland	20.8 percent
	256,000 unregistered
North Carolina	20.3 percent
	506,000 unregistered

Incidentally, North Carolina Senator John P. East, who is not running for re-election, won by only 10,411 votes in the 1980 election.

For a number of senators the so-called Reagan landslide victory that swept them into office in 1980 may turn out to be a mudslide into which their hopes of re-election will surely sink if there is a sufficient breakthrough in the registration and participation of Afro-American voters in the context of a broad coalition with other sectors with whom a stake in the struggle against Reaganism is shared. In this connection, a coalition of the Afro-American community as a whole, the trade union movement which has a substantial membership among Blacks, and the peace movement could become a particularly potent force even in the South. For example, there are almost 90,000 trade unionists in Alabama, over 100,000 in Florida, 79,000 in Georgia, 80,000 in Louisiana, 145,000 in Maryland and the District of Columbia, and over 60,000 in North Carolina. In each of these states the number of potential members is at least double the figure given. Taking into account trade union households and families, the number of voters the labor movement could mobilize at minimum might be two or three times its actual membership.

The Republican-Reaganite hopes for retaining the Senate majority would be considerably weakened if Black people in the South were able to register and vote in the same proportion as Blacks in other parts of the country. Massive voting rights violation is the chief obstacle standing in the way of Black voters in the South making an historic contribution to the struggle against Reaganism in the 1986 elections. This exposes the underlying reason for the Justice Department's offensive against voting rights activists. The connection between the possibility of the President losing his working majority in the Senate and the

onslaught against the movement to enhance Black voter participation is not coincidental. It is a conscious political act by the Reagan Administration in alliance with reactionary forces in both parties in the South.

The role Afro-American voters in the South can play in the 1986 elections profoundly demonstrates the great self-interest stake the broad range of anti-Reagan forces in every part of the country have in the struggle against racism, in this case for full enforcement of voting rights laws. Achieving the greatest possible registration and mobilization of Black voters serves the interests of the social progress for the nation and peace for the world.

Indeed, the political potential of the Black vote—in alliance with other sectors—to help render a crushing defeat for Reaganism in the 1986 elections is not restricted to the South. For example, New York Republican Senator Alphonse D'Amato won a three-way race in 1980 by a margin of 81,304 votes. Even though Black people make up only 12.4 percent of that state's voting population, the number of Afro-American voters totals 1.6 million, more than half of whom are unregistered.

Similarly in Pennsylvania's senatorial race. First-term Republican Arlen Specter won by a narrow margin in 1980, just slightly more than 8,000 votes. Afro-American voters, accounting for over 9 percent of the state's registered voters, could be the margin of victory in another close race.

Reference has been made to the fact that violation of the voting rights of Afro-Americans in the South is a joint project of the two-party system. State and county Democratic officials seemingly have shown a willingness to sacrifice their party's interests for the sake of curtailing Black elected representation. Many of the Southern state legislatures are controlled by Democrats. Similarly, Democrats hold the majority in the congressional delegations of Louisiana, North Carolina, Georgia and Alabama. There can be no doubt that Afro-American representation would increase if the Democratic Party used this leverage on behalf of enforcement of voting rights to encourage maximum participation of Black voters. This undoubtedly would be chiefly to the benefit of the Democratic Party because virtually all of the increase would come about at the expense of the Republican

Party.

FULL REPRESENTATION

However, it is also true that a breakthrough in Afro-American representation in the congressional delegation from the South and other regions would not have been advanced from liberal quarters to the effect that seats presently held by white liberals ought to be exempted from the Afro-American people's just demand for equality in political representation. Seniority and track record of support for the positions of the Congressional Black Caucus are generally cited as reasons. Attention is often drawn to Representatives Peter Rodino of New Jersey's Tenth Congressional District and Joseph Addabbo of the Sixth Congressional District in Queens, New York.

The Congressional Education Association, which rates the voting records on minority issues, gives Rodino a 100 percent rating. Addabbo likewise has a high rating. It is also true that the seniority that both hold is of considerable tactical advantage on many important questions. Representative Rodino for example is chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, which considers matters relative to civil rights, the criminal justice system, electoral regulations, etc.

However, tactical problems is not the point. What is being advanced by the demand for political equality is a far cry from nationalist politics that only Blacks should represent Blacks, irrespective of policy. What is contained in the demand for political equality is the call for full representation of a people subjected to historic discrimination in all walks of life, including by elected officials insensitive to their needs. If, indeed, white liberals—although from this writer's point of view progressives or even better revolutionaries who happen to be white—have better positions than a Black candidate, the record shows that Black voters respond accordingly. Either that or they carefully weigh the tactical considerations as well. That is one thing. But to artificially stifle the struggle for political representation either by violation of voting rights or through paternalism is quite another thing. It puts the weight of redress on the victims of discrimination. And this is precisely what the argument amounts to that a breakthrough in Afro-American representation should not be attempted in seats held by white liberals. Historically, most of the seats now held by Blacks were previously held by white liberals. Yet, the fact is, on balance the policy positions of the

Black representatives have been more advanced than the liberals who preceded them.

Racism explains only in part the systematic resistance to voting rights. There are deeper underlying reasons, including a deeper basis to the racism, that relate not so much to the self-interests of petty politicians as to the vested interests of the powerful corporate forces that dominate the South.

Speaking at an open political forum held during the Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Weekend in 1983, Representative John Conyers said, "The Congressional Black Caucus stands for everything the American people hold dear." A profoundly true statement. And that is the crux of ruling class opposition to equality in political representation of the Afro-American people. When a correlation is made, as Representative Conyers did, between the basic policy positions of the Afro-American members of Congress and the fundamental interests of the nation's working people, ranging from funding for jobs creation and adequate health care to disarmament and cutting military spending to fund programs that meet human needs, the essence of corporate opposition can be clearly seen. Such policies are an obstacle to corporate profits. So the corporations and their hand-picked politicians (bear in mind that reactionary politicians remain in office mainly because of all-round support from monopoly corporations and the military-industrial complex) oppose measures that would result in an increase in the number of elected officials advocating pro-labor, pro-people policies for the same basic reason the monopolies oppose sanctions against the South African apartheid regime—corporate profits. And profit-making in the South greatly exceeds the going rate of profit nationally.

For a number of years the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has introduced a "Constructive Alternative Budget Resolution" as a substitute amendment to the budget submitted by the administration. Particularly in regard to the Reagan budgets, the CBC alternative budget has restored cuts in social programs, cut military spending and reduced the federal deficit—chiefly by eliminating the first-strike military build-up. The highest vote on the CBC alternative budget came in 1984 when the then 21 members were supported by more than 60 other representatives.

Generally the Caucus is able to count on three votes minimum from white and Latino members for

every one CBC vote. Increasingly, the Caucus is able to achieve much broader support on a growing number of issues. For example, over two-thirds of the House sided with the CBC on legislation imposing sanctions against the South African apartheid regime.

All CBC members have excellent ratings from the AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education, Americans for Democratic Action, the American Civil Liberties Union, SANE and the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. As a rule, the Congressional Black Caucus can be counted on as one of the most consistent elements of the all-people's front against Reaganism, taking positions and, more often than not, the initiative, on measures advanced by the civil rights, trade union, farmers, youth, women's, seniors, and peace movements.

..... Many political scientists calculate that a breakthrough in Afro-American representation in the Congress corresponding to the strength of the Black vote would bring the size of the Congressional Black Caucus up from its present 20 members to about 70. Consider then the significance of the 3 to 1 ratio in votes the CBC has been able to achieve. It would come close to equaling half of the House of Representatives. Bringing about such a prospect has profound meaning and not just for the Afro-American people, for the CBC and most Black elected officials have decisively demonstrated that they are not narrow-minded nationalist politicians seeking to serve the Black community only. The truth is it is impossible to do so even if this were the intent because the social composition of the Afro-American people largely overlaps with the working class. Having the base of their constituency in the most oppressed sector of the working class amplifies the tendency of CBC members to "stand for everything the American people hold dear."

Because the absolute majority of Black people are of the working class, responding to the basic interests of this working class majority within the Afro-American people is objectively inseparable from responding to the interests of the working people as a whole. To the extent that the Afro-American congressional representatives pursue policies in this general direction, to that extent their policies acquire a broader popular character expressing the interests not only of the Black community but of all working people.

The socio-economic status of Blacks is consider-

ably worse than that of white working people as a whole. Yet, the numbers of white workers in dire straits far exceeds the number of Black workers in similar situations. This is why the legislative proposals of CBC members to remedy the horrible conditions imposed on the Black community also address the general problems faced by the working class.

Many members of the CBC very much have this in mind when taking legislative initiatives. The fact is most of them are very conscious of the community of interest between the special needs of the Afro-American community arising from racial and national oppression and the general needs of the American people as a whole. That the majority of Afro-American members of Congress do not represent overwhelmingly Black districts, taking into account overcoming the factor of racism, predisposes them to the necessity of coalitions based on workingclass forces. In other words, it has taken a coalition to get elected in the first place. And coalitions are not possible without a program and track record of involvement and concern on issues broader than the exclusive needs of Black people.

Not only that. The level of political independence and mass radicalization in the ranks of the Afro-American people, Black workers in the first place, finds its reflection in the ranks of Afro-American elected officials. Certainly not all, but many, hold advanced positions on the range of basic domestic and foreign policy issues facing the nation. This is dictated in large measure by the character of their constituencies. Most CBC members represent industrial areas in which there are large numbers of steel, auto, electrical, and public service workers.

Less dependent on the Democratic Party machine, often elected in defiance of it, and generally much less distanced from the concern of the mass of voters, Afro-American members of Congress carry into office a special sensitivity to society's inequities.

Elected officials advocating programs in the people's interest, and this typifies Black elected officials over and above the norm, are not in the interests of the two-party system. The forces of reaction have a great stake in the preservation of the South as a support base for ultra-Right policies in general, those of the military-industrial complex in particular. Monopoly capital, including non-U.S. — based transnational corporations, see the Southern states with their le-

gacy of "right-to-work" laws, segregation, pervasive influence of great-power chauvinism, and allegiance to anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism, as good places to invest.

Reaction is well aware of the fact that it is doubtful that an Afro-American candidate would run or could get elected on the basis of right-wing policies. The vote for Jesse Jackson in the Southern states helped demonstrate that the mass of Black voters favor an entirely different policy. The reality, and one which the majority of Black masses are very well aware, is that an alternative policy that is liberal at the very least but in truth needs to be radical in nature is the only way out of the crisis of everyday living. An alternative policy, including an alternative to racism that an Afro-American candidacy expresses, is also the only way of attracting that necessary 20 percent minimum of the white vote. The search for alternative in policy explains why growing numbers of whites vote for Black candidates. There is no basis upon which to conclude that white voters influenced by right-wing and racist concepts would somehow prefer a reactionary Black candidate over a reactionary white candidate. They certainly would not vote this way because they had been won to the struggle for equality. Equality would not be the motivation of voters influenced by racism.

The point is, a breakthrough in Afro-American representation in the congressional delegations from the South would carry into the House a new group of representatives most likely politically aligned and ideologically identified with the working people, Black as well as white, the struggle for world peace and progressive issues generally. Most likely they would be personalities un beholden to monopoly corporations, wealthy landowners, agricultural conglomerates, military installations, and arms manufacturers. If past patterns hold, it is more likely that Afro-Americans elected to Congress as a result of a breakthrough in the struggle for political representation will have strong associations with mass movements for equality, trade unionism, democracy and social progress. Indeed, it is probable that they will have emerged from the ranks of these movements and struggles. How could it be otherwise? For it will have been precisely such movements and struggles—and that alone—that could elect them in the first place. There simply is no other way.

THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY AND THE TRADE UNIONS

by Sandra Jones

The Draft Trade Union Program of the Communist Party U.S.A. states, "These are very critical times for the working people of the U.S. and the trade union movement. Unions in basic industries are grappling with the problem of rapidly disappearing jobs."

The Draft Program then explains, "U.S. workers and the trade union movement are suffering from the impact of a triple-layered crisis of the capitalist system. This crisis is cyclical, structural and general.

"An additional factor is the vicious element of big business racism. As a result, Afro-Americans and other nationally and racially oppressed workers suffer doubly from the effects of the triple-layered economic crisis. Black unemployment is more than double the rate of other workers. Afro-American communities are also suffering disproportionately from the rash of plant closures in basic industry."

The triple-layered crisis has been most harsh for Afro-Americans, especially in seeking and maintaining employment in industry. Within this framework, this paper will deal with the effects of the triple-layered crisis on Black workers and their role and relationship to the trade union movement.

The triple-layered crisis is a new level of the development of U.S. state monopoly capitalism. It is a permanent development. The structural deterioration in basic production industries (steel, auto, mining, etc.) means that they will never again be the source of mass employment that they have been in the past. The result for working people is higher rates of permanent unemployment. For example, the rate of "normal" unemployment has risen from 4% to 7%. This undercuts the ability of labor unions to negotiate contract agreements and win strike struggles. It has

meant a relatively weaker bargaining position for trade unions.

RACISM AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

In recent years we have seen an epidemic of plant closings, and corporate extortion and attacks on collective bargaining agreements. This has resulted in a relative reduction in wages and benefits. Coupled with this is the legislative attack on the very programs designed to assist working people during times of economic recession—unemployment compensation, welfare, etc. Housing, education, and other social programs are also the target of this corporate/government assault. Thus, the triple-layered crisis has resulted in a general decline in the standard of living of working people.

Political policies help shape economic conditions. In the context of the triple-layered crisis, the racist policies of the Reagan administration have had disastrous results. The racist aspects of the triple-layered crisis are reflected in rapidly deteriorating economic and social conditions within the Afro-American community. These conditions have been shaped by political policies that extend beyond the Reagan administration, but certainly they have been profoundly deepened since Reagan took office.

BLACK WORKERS IN LABOR FORCE

The impact of the triple-layered crisis on Afro-Americans is most visible in the areas of job status and income, unemployment, and social conditions within the Afro-American community.

Approximately 11,647,000 or 12% of the U.S. labor force is made up of Black workers. They are concentrated largely in basic industry. According to Phillip Foner, in *Organized Labor and the Black*

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Worker, 1619-1973, "In industries such as steel and metal fabricating, retail trade, food-processing and meatpacking, railroad, medical services and communications, Black workers number one-third to one-half of the basic blue collar workers."

Foner goes on to say that "...during the 1960s considerable gains were made by Black workers and many industries once traditionally closed to Blacks were forced to abandon their 'lily-white' employment policies. Yet...Blacks are still disproportionately concentrated in unskilled and semi-skilled work earning the lowest wages."

The 1984 Bureau of Labor Statistics report showed large numbers of Afro-Americans in these kind of jobs. For example, Blacks are 14% of the category, Operator's, Fabricators and Laborers.

6.8% of mechanics and repairers

11.3% of fabricators, assemblers and hand working occupations

13.0% of production, inspector's testers, samplers and weighers

15.0% of handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers and laborers.

Black workers are concentrated in jobs that pay least and the most insecure with constant layoffs. Much of the job loss is permanent, causing unemployment.

These trends can also be seen in other industries. Black workers hold 16.6% of service occupations. Within this category, they are:

6.7% of firefighters and fire prevention workers

10.5% of food preparation and service occupations

23.5% of health service occupations

27.5% of nursing aides, orderlies and attendants

22.6% of janitors and cleaners

27.8% of private households workers.

The jobs that Black workers are likely to hold are low paying and unskilled. Certainly they don't compare in income to basic production industry. When a worker loses a job in a factory or shop, and finds employment in these kinds of jobs, with lower pay and fewer benefits, the result is a substantial wage cut.

A significant number of Black workers are part-time or underemployed. These are workers who work less than 35 hours per week. Of the more than 19 million underemployed, close to 2 million are Afro-Americans. These workers are unprotected by

trade unions.

The underemployed usually earn the minimum wage. The average weekly earnings of part-time employed persons 16 years and older is \$87.00, with no medical coverage or sick leave, or vacations. Many in this category work second jobs to supplement low incomes to make ends meet. However, cannot find other jobs, so part-time employment is their only source of income.

The underemployed are usually young, first-time job seekers and single women who head households. Many are on their way to becoming "discouraged" workers who are off the unemployed roles and no longer included in the job market. Around 10.4% of part-time workers are unemployed and not eligible for unemployment compensation. There are 1,108,000 "discouraged workers," 315,000 of whom are Afro-Americans.

Traditionally barred from skilled jobs in basic industry, Black workers are more harshly affected by unemployment than any other sector of the population. Other factors in the mass unemployment of Afro-Americans include planned unemployment, shifts to military production and the government's failure to create jobs.

Even when the U.S. economy has been in recovery, the rate of Black unemployment has increased steadily. It is almost triple that of other workers. A look at past trends of joblessness is revealing.

From 1972 to 1982, Black unemployment increased 6.8% compared to 1.6% overall. At no time during this period has it been less than 10%. During the last three years—the "Reagan recovery" years—unemployment for Blacks has not dropped below 17.2% compared to a low of 7.2% low overall.

Government sources claim that 10 million new jobs have been created during the last three years. This seems unlikely—and certainly there is little evidence of any job creation as far as Afro-Americans are concerned. There certainly is no evidence of it among Black youth, who are unemployed at rates ranging from 40% to 60%.

The impact is lower real income, rising poverty, and more homeless and hungry in the Afro-American community. Comparing the income differentials of Blacks and whites today, there is essentially no movement towards closing the income gap. Afro-Americans earn over 40% less than whites.

These kind of economic conditions, coupled with the racist policies of the Reagan administration, means that the conditions of Afro-Americans are deteriorating rapidly.

BLACK WORKERS IN TRADE UNIONS

The general crisis of capitalism gives rise to sharp class struggles. In this period of the triple-layered economic crisis, the working class is fighting back. Sharp class battles are being fought in all areas—peace and anti-imperialist struggles, strikes, community struggles, the political arena—and in the fight for the trade union movement itself.

Historically, Black workers have been militant supporters of unions and trade union struggles. The facts point to the conclusion that Afro-Americans see unions as the main vehicle for economic and political progress. According to an AFL-CIO document on *The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions*, "Unionized workers earn on an average 33% more than their non-union counterparts. The higher pay of unionized workers generally prevails among all age groups, occupations and industries." Trade union struggles are a major avenue for further economic advance and for closing the income gap between Black and white workers is through trade union struggles.

The Urban League correctly places the question when it states that "the most critical challenge Afro-Americans now face in the labor movement is the viability of the movement itself." Black workers are increasingly playing leading roles (especially in the political arena, and more and more in the trade union movement) because the special conditions that Blacks are confronted with make this necessary.

Black workers have fought for their right to belong to trade unions. Progress has been made—but much remains to be done.

Phillip Foner states, "Clearly by 1968 only a few unions still had some form of racial membership bars." Few statistics are available on racial composition, union by union. However, of the 10 million workers represented by trade union movement, more than 3 million—or 14%—are Black workers.

Blacks join unions at a greater rate than other workers. For example, 35% of all Black males belong to unions compared to 29% of white males. Twenty-four percent of all Black women belong to unions compared to 15% of all white women. Large numbers



Unite. Packinghouse Workers sign up and get their union books checked at shop gates. (1945)

of Afro-Americans are found in the ranks of organized steel workers, auto workers, public workers, etc.

Even today, certain barriers limit Black workers' participation in trade unions; not only as members, but in leadership and policy-making bodies in particular. The trade unions have been slow to give priority to and move on issues that are of particular importance to the Afro-American community.

Throughout labor's history, many organizations have fought to break down barriers that limit Afro-American workers in unions. They have included both all-Black unions and organizations of Black and white workers. They include organizations with proud histories in the labor movement: The National Negro Labor Council, The Negro-Labor Alliance, A. Phillip Randolph Institute, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and others. Their main objective has been full association with the organized trade union movement.

BLACK LEADERSHIP IN UNIONS

The most important organization of Black workers today is the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), which represents the majority of Black workers in the trade union movement. Its founding convention, in 1972, was attended by 1 200 Black un-

ionists, representing 36 international and national unions. In the 13 years since then it has grown to include chapters in 26 cities, including three state-wide chapters. CBTU now has members from 72 national and international unions and chapters in important industrial centers, including Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Gary, Milwaukee and New York.

CBTU's program is aimed at "strengthening the role and maximizing the participation and influence of Blacks in the organized labor movement in the U.S. and around the world."

CBTU's basic objectives are to:

- To put forth greater and more creative efforts to improve the image of labor throughout the community;
 - Improve economic development and employment opportunities for Black workers;
 - Organize unorganized workers;
 - Increase voter registration and participation;
 - Seek passage of important legislation specifically beneficial to Black people;
 - Support activities of civil rights groups working to improve living and working conditions in the Black community.

CBTU has been active on many issues including voter registration and education, the fight for a free South Africa and affirmative action.

A survey on Blacks in union leadership positions was conducted by Dr. Everette J. Freeman, assistant professor of labor studies at Rutgers University. He concluded that, based on the number of people in their organizations and aside from the Black church, "Blacks in union leadership positions—that is, those holding jobs as local union presidents or full-time, paid, elected or appointed, union staff officials—constitute the largest group of Blacks who may properly call themselves leaders."

The number of Black union leaders has increased significantly since the 1960s, but mainly on the local level. While 14% of trade unionists are Black, only three—Frederick O'Neal, president of the Associated Actor's and Artists of America; Barbara Hutchinson, director of Women's Activities for the American Federation of Government Employees; and Gene Upshaw, newly elected president of Federation of Professional Athletes—serve on the Executive Board of the AFL-CIO.

Other high ranking Black leaders are William Lucy, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation

of State, County and Municipal Employees; Robert White, president of the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees; Roosevelt Watt, secretary-treasurer of the Transport Workers Union; Marc Stepp, vice-president of the United Auto Workers Union; Mary Futrell, president of the National Education Association; Leon Lynch, vice-president of the United Steel Workers Union.

Also, Jacqueline Vaughn, president of the Chicago Teachers Union; William Pollard, director of the Office of Civil Rights, AFL-CIO; Robert McGlotten, associate director of Legislative Affairs, AFL-CIO; Walter Davis, director of Community Affairs, AFL-CIO; Cecil Toppin, vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; Calvin Moore, vice-president of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union; William Simons, president of the Washington, D.C. Teachers Union.

Upgrading Afro-American leadership of the labor movement will help in answering the special problems of Black workers and Black communities. Afro-American workers are among the best fighters for the whole trade union movement as the outstanding contributions of Congressman Charles Hayes, who has deep roots in trade union and community struggles, makes clear.

CONCLUSIONS

The special problems that confront Afro-Americans are rooted in class exploitation. They are the direct result of the triple-layered crisis and the racist policies of the Reagan administration.

Gus Hall, general secretary of the Communist Party, USA, points out in *Fighting Racism* that "The ruling class uses racism, as it uses anti-Communism, to set precedents.

"When they get away with deep cuts in housing funds for racially and nationally oppressed residents of inner cities, they set the stage for cutting funds for housing construction elsewhere.

"When they eliminate busing programs and desegregation plans, this is a precedent for an overall cut in the quality of education everywhere."

This is true especially on the job. Racism and discrimination are sharpest in the work place, and this sets the stage for increased exploitation and reaction in all other areas of life.

Hall goes on to say: "In their own interest and in

the interest of justice and equality, white workers and people must fight against racism, discrimination and segregation. To fulfill their class responsibilities and better their own lives, white Americans need to take on the struggle against racism concretely, to take specific initiatives on all fronts."

The trade union movement must address, concretely, the special problems of Black workers and the Afro-American community. Improving conditions for Afro-Americans is necessary to improve conditions for the entire working class. The following questions must be addressed.

- *Organizing the Unorganized.* No issue more clearly demonstrates the need for unity of Black and white workers and for coalition between organized labor and the Afro-American people than the problem of organizing the unorganized. This is a major task has been adopted by the trade union movement. Organizing the unorganized embodies building the fighting strength of the trade unions in economic and political struggles. It would extend economic protection for more and more working people. It also means initiating a process to close the income gap between Black and white workers. Special approaches to Black workers must be developed—for example, targeting industries and occupations which employ large numbers of Black workers, developing special approaches to unemployed and underemployed workers, and concrete programs to improve the social and economic conditions in Afro-American communities.

- *Affirmative Action and the AFL-CIO.* With mass unemployment as a permanent nature problem for Black workers, affirmative action becomes the main solution. The trade union movement must take up this fight concretely. Affirmative action must be included in contract negotiations, with emphasis on quotas and implementation. Upgrading and training programs are needed to guarantee equal employment opportunity and solve the problem of disproportionate unemployment among Afro-Americans.

The recent AFL-CIO resolution on affirmative action—which included the question of modifying seniority systems and advancing affirmative action in collective bargaining—is a major, historic step towards organized labor taking up this question as never before. It is a concrete act against racism by the trade union movement.

- *Unemployment.* Unemployment is at depression

levels for Afro-Americans. In the framework of the racist attack on Blacks in industry, the fight for jobs is a major battle against racism. It must be aggressive and effective, demanding massive government intervention to create jobs with affirmative action. The trade unions must take responsibility for building fighting organizations of the unemployed.

- *Black Leadership.* Finally, a unified, strong trade union movement, able to combat the many complex problems presented by the triple-layered crisis, needs the talents and strength of all components of the working class. The special contributions that Afro-American workers can and do make must not be limited. The trade union movement itself must take affirmative action measures to rapidly guarantee the full participation of Afro-Americans on all levels of leadership.



THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT AND THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY

by Frank Gibson

The triple-layered crisis of U.S. capitalism, which currently holds 30 million white and 12 million Afro-American, Latino and Asian people in poverty, has inevitably led to increased polarization between our government and the majority of the people. Today this manifests itself mainly in the Reagan administration's drive to undermine democracy while preparing a mass base for its racist, reactionary, and warlike policies. The increased efforts by monopoly capital to trample the democratic process and institutions is a direct response to the mass democratic struggles for jobs, peace and freedom and the more advanced political consciousness of the anti-monopoly forces.

The struggle for the franchise—the right to be elected and fully represented in the political process—has always been a cornerstone of the struggle for Afro-American equality. The acid test of bourgeois democracy in the United States has been, and continues to be, whether our government will abolish all remnants of slavery and racist discrimination.

Two hundred and fifty years of slavery followed by 87 years of legalized racial segregation demonstrates that the bourgeois ruling class in our country has a very low tolerance for equal rights for Afro-Americans and other oppressed peoples. Restricting the political activity of Afro-Americans has always formed the basis for denying suffrage rights to other racially oppressed peoples and to the working class generally.

In the former slave-owning South, where 52% of the Black population still lives, the state legislatures, and county and municipal government bodies are still dominated by reactionaries who are racist and anti-working class. The white Southerners who

wield tremendous power in the U.S. Congress come from those districts and states where Black people are denied proportional representation and are still segregated, impoverished and prevented from voting by various illegal means which violate the Voting Rights Act. This so-called "Solid South" consistently supports the racist, anti-labor warmongering policies of the Reagan administration. The South remains in the grip of predatory reaction.

This is the context in which a major struggle for political democracy in our country—for enforcement of the Voting Rights Act—is unfolding.

THE 'FRAUD' CASES

These cases originated in 1984, when the Justice Department brought voter fraud charges against three leading civil rights activists and Black elected officials in West Alabama's Black Belt counties (so called because they have Black majorities). The U.S. government brought 29-count indictments against Albert Turner, Evelyn Turner and Spencer Hogue, Jr. Each defendant faced over 100 years if convicted. The Justice Department also ordered the FBI to investigate whether the absentee ballot had been misused to commit voter fraud in several counties in the 23rd Senatorial District, which had recently elected a progressive Black civil-rights lawyer, Hank Sanders.

The government used these prosecutions to combat and undermine Black political gains and dilute the Black vote in the West Alabama Black Belt. It is made up of 12 counties—eight of which have Black majorities, and four that are over 40% Black.

The figures in the table below, compiled by Sen. Hank Sanders, show the percentages of Afro-Americans in the population and among elected officials. They do not include judges and district attor-

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County	Black % of population	Total elected officials	Elected officials		Countywide elected officials	
			Black:	white:	Black:	white:
Greene	78.2	16	16	0	16	0
Lowndes	75.1	17	11	6	11	6
Sumter	69.5	15	13	2	13	2
Wilcox	68.9	16	15	1	15	1
Hale	63.0	16	2	14	1	11
Perry	60.2	16	10	6	10	6
Dallas	55.2	16	0	16	0	16
Marengo	53.4	17	2	15	2	15
Monroe	43.7	16	2	14	0	7
Choctaw	43.6	16	3	13	0	7
Clarke	42.9	16	2	14	0	7
Pickens	42.0	16	16	0	16	0
Total		193	76	117	68	90

nies, since these officials are elected in at-large elections and therefore are all white. The population in this 12-county area is 56.36% Black. Of the 193 elected officials and 76 are Black. There are white elected officials in every county except Greene, and there are no Black county-wide elected officials where Blacks are not a decisive majority.

Before the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965, there were no Black elected officials in the West Alabama Black Belt. Compared to that the number of Blacks now holding office is a dramatic increase. Yet Black people do not have proportional representation.

On the basis of population, there should be 109 Black elected officials—not 76. But the Voting Rights Act, which was extended in 1983, does not mandate proportional representation. So no legal challenge can be made to the fact that few Black elected officials in the 12 counties hold the higher offices. Only one of the 12 probate judges is Black; only two circuit clerks, three district judges, and four of the 12 sheriffs. There are no Black prosecutors.

Even where Blacks hold the majority of elected offices, they don't control the police agencies, the criminal justice system, the economic system, communications and the election apparatuses. That is why progress has been slow and difficult, and has come only as the result of determined struggle, over the 20 years since the Voting Rights Act was enacted.

REAGAN'S PLAN FOR WHITE SUPREMACY

It's not because of lack of progress, however, that Black political leaders in Southwest Alabama are currently under government attack. Consistent with Reagan's efforts to turn the clock back to the days of undisputed white supremacy, the present attacks are focused on the limited gains and meager reforms that have been made.

Since the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965, Afro-Americans have been elected to county commissions in seven of the Black Belt counties. They control the county governments and school boards of five counties, and the municipal government in nine towns. Afro-Americans have won effective political control in Greene, Sumter, Perry, Lowndes and Wilcox counties. The limitation on these gains is that the criminal justice systems are white controlled and operate in the interest of the land barons and the banks. It is these criminal justice systems which are being used by the ruling class to suppress Black participation in the political process, and to prevent Black political leaders from using the power of their office to advance the struggle for equality.

In these small counties the largest employer is the county government and its sub-units, and generally the board of education is the recipient of large tax revenues. In the past, the millions of dollars in tax revenues for education were ripped off by grafters

and corrupt politicians; this was a natural byproduct of keeping Black people oppressed, illiterate and disfranchised. Today Afro-Americans control these revenues in at least five counties—and in these counties relentless efforts are being made to paint Black leadership as “criminal.” The racist grafters and corrupt politicians have suddenly become fighters for clean government and defenders of the sanctity of the ballot.

THE ABSENTEE BALLOT

In 1978 Black voters successfully used the absentee ballot to elect majorities to the county commission and board of education in Perry County. They took Lowndes County. And in 1982—again using the absentee ballot—Afro-Americans voters elected majorities to the county commissions and boards of education in Wilcox, Sumter and Greene counties.

These political victories were also a direct result of the civil rights movement. The Perry County Civic League, the spearhead of voting rights activism in Black Belt counties, perfected the use of the absentee ballot and successfully challenged some of the racist gerrymandering. Its leaders had been involved in the historic march on Selma and in the many other civil rights battles that routed Jim Crow and led to the enactment of the Voting Rights Act.

It was only after the wake of these electoral victories of the early 1980s that local white prosecutors began to investigate “election fraud.” No indictments were resulted from their investigations because the district attorneys knew Blacks would be on the (local? county?) grand and petit juries. Therefore, the district attorneys asked the federal government to intervene figuring that white-dominated federal grand juries and petit juries would readily bring indictments.

In 1982 the Justice Department, then headed by William French Smith, had regulations which prevented it from initiating prosecutions in local elections that did not involve federal candidates. By the time of the presidential elections of 1984, this regulation had been changed and Edwin Meese III—over the vigorous objections of civil rights and civil liberties organizations—was on his way to becoming Attorney General of the United States.

In September of 1984, immediately following the primaries for local elections the Justice Department dispatched FBI agents into the five Black Belt counties in which Blacks had recently gained control. This was

done under the pretense of investigating “voter fraud” to “protect” the voting rights of Afro-Americans. State Senator Hank Sanders testified about the reasons for his concern about the scope and methods of these investigations before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, on September 26, 1985:

1. the investigation occurred only in counties where Black officials controlled the governing bodies, ie., Lowndes, Perry, Greene, Sumter and Wilcox;

2. the investigations were . . . against Blacks only;

3. all absentee ballots were tagged so that each absentee voter's preference could be determined;

4. most Black absentee voters were contacted even though there were no allegations that anything was wrong with their ballots;

5. the investigations were accompanied by an orchestrated press buildup and leaks from the Justice Department;

6. voters, mostly elderly, were boarded on a bus with great fanfare and numerous law enforcement (officers?) standing by and taken 165 miles to Mobile to testify before a grand jury.

IN THE SERVICE OF RACISM

Hot on the heels of these investigations, the Justice Department charged eight long-time civil rights leaders and Black elected officials in the targeted counties. In Perry County Albert Turner, Evelyn Turner and Spencer Hogue, leaders of the Perry County Civic League, were charged with conspiring to commit voter fraud. They were found not guilty by an interracial jury in July, 1985. But one of their lawyers, Howard Moore—who was also a defense attorney in the historic Angela Davis case—was found guilty of contempt and fined several hundred dollars.

In Greene County five were indicted: Mayor James Colvin; Spiver Gordon, Alabama Southern Christian Leadership Conference vice-president and a member of the Eutaw City Council; Bessie Jones Underwood, a Board of Education employee; Frederick Douglas Daniels, a Greene county nursing home employee; and Boffie Nell Simpson, the only white defendant, an employee of the Planning and Development office. To date only Spiver Gordon and Bes-



Left: Voter registration in Detroit. Below: The Perry County Three —Spencer Hogue and Evelyn and Albert Turner, voting rights activists acquitted of voting fraud charges in Selma, Alabama, last July.



sie Undewood have been convicted.

The Justice Department's actions in these cases has been called into question by—among others—the *Washington Post*, Rev. Jesse Jackson, and the Black press. The National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, working mainly with organizations in the Black Belt counties and Alabama civil rights organizations such as SCLC, made an important contribution in terms of political agitation and mass mobilizing against the Justice Department. Many more indictments are expected, and the struggle will continue.

Meanwhile massive noncompliance with the Voting Rights Act continues throughout the South. This was extensively documented in a 1981 report by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights entitled "The Voting Rights Act—Unfulfilled Goals." The Reagan administration has not only ignored this report and its recommendations for more effective enforcement but, as the Alabama cases illustrate, has joined forces with local racist elements to reinstitute racist control even where the status quo is only slightly challenged.

CONCLUSIONS

The Alabama voting rights cases expose in all its meanness the naked racism of the Reaganites and their utter contempt for the democratic rights of the people.

The main object of the political system under capitalism is to keep the capitalist class in power. There is no "supra-class" political system in operation in our country. Let us recall the past.

The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides that "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any state, on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude" and further that "The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

In 1946 the Justice Department claimed it was to enforce the 15th amendment to the U.S. Constitution because Congress had passed no enabling legislation. This statement came long after the Southern states had disenfranchised Blacks by means of open terror. Today there is enabling legislation—the Voting Rights Act passed by Congress over 20 years ago. Yet as in the past, the ruling class is planning to take this reform back.

Diluting the voting strength of the Black population is an essential part of the total process of excluding the working class and the poor from representative organs of the state. Failure to enforce of the Voting Rights Act constitutes a serious blow to political democracy in that it gives the ruling class a free hand to limit the franchise—using stringent requirements for voter registration, limiting access to polls and the absentee ballot process, gerrymandering, etc. These measures exclude and restrict not only Afro-Americans but all workingclass votes and oppressed peoples of color. It is no accident that all the Deep South states are Right-to-Work (for less) states.

Si Gerson's article, "How to Win Political Democracy," in the November 1985 issue of *Political Affairs*, calls attention to a Coalition for Free and Open Elections. It is currently lobbying for a uniform election law—HR-2320—recently introduced by Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich). This would strike down many barriers to ballot access for independent political parties. We must fight to link the struggles for a uniform election law and for enforcement of the Voting Rights Act in the Deep South.

Communists have a special responsibility and rare opportunity to help the labor movement and all progressive forces understand the vitalizing and tremendous democratic effect the unleashing of millions of Black votes in the South would have on our nation. It would be a decisive blow for labor, women's rights, peace and the democratic promise inherent in the broad anti-monopoly struggle. This is a cardinal demand of our time which our party must impart to the whole democratic movement, and help translate into a truly national campaign.



STRENGTHENING TIES BETWEEN ZIMBABWE AND THE SOVIET UNION

Excerpts are taken from the joint Soviet-Zimbabwean Communiqué, which appeared in Moscow News on January 29, 1985.

At the invitation of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers, the First Secretary and President of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, paid an official visit to the Soviet Union at the head of a Party and government delegation from December 2 to 4, 1985.

R. Mugabe had a high-level discussion with the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, M.S. Gorbachov. The two Party leaders exchanged views on questions of principles pertaining to further strengthening of the friendly Soviet-Zimbabwean state relations, as well as Party cooperation. They also discussed current international problems.

In the course of the discussions, the Soviet leaders informed the distinguished Zimbabwean guest about the achievements of the Soviet people in various fields of socialist construction, of the implementation in the USSR of the CPSU strategic course at the acceleration of the country's socio-economic development, in the achievement of a qualitatively new state of Soviet society. Special attention was paid

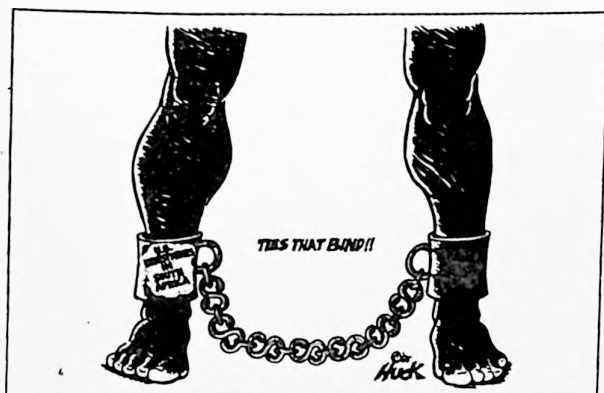
to the question of preparations for the 27th Congress of the CPSU and the nationwide discussion of the programme documents, which will be put forward at the Congress, of new peace initiatives by the Soviet Union, directed at the cessation of the arms race and radical improvement of the international situation. The determination of the Soviet Union to further consistently pursue the principled course at the elimination of nuclear threat, and the development of international relations in the spirit of peaceful coexistence and detente.

SUPPORT FOR PEACE AND SECURITY

On his part, R. Mugabe outlined the activities underway in Zimbabwe to implement the decisions of the Second Congress of ZANU-PF, which set the goal of progressive development of Zimbabwean society toward socialism. He highly commended the Soviet Union's peaceful foreign policy and its efforts to curb the arms race, to strengthen international peace and security, and to support the countries and peoples who struggle for their national liberation and social progress.

In the course of the talks the Soviet side expressed support for the measures being taken by the Zimbabwean leadership to strengthen the country's sovereignty and independence, the policy of non-alignment conducted by Zimbabwe in international affairs. The role played by Zimbabwe in the common struggle of peoples against imperialism, colonialism and racism, and its growing prestige in Africa and throughout the world were noted.

The two sides reaffirmed their conviction that personal meetings between the leaders of the two countries are useful and important, and also expressed mutual interest in developing Soviet-Zimbabwean political contacts at various levels.



PROTOCOL ON COOPERATION

It was noted with satisfaction that the ties of friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and Zimbabwe, which had been established in the course of the Zimbabwean people's struggle for their national liberation, are steadily gaining in strength, and that favourable conditions exist for a further enhancement of relations between the USSR and the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Proceeding from the principles of international solidarity and a common commitment to the ideals of social progress, a Protocol on Cooperation between the CPSU and ZANU-PF was signed during the visit

The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe expressed their determination to broaden and deepen mutual advantageous cooperation in various fields, such as economic cooperation, trade, science and technology, as well as in the fields of culture, education, health, sports, the training of national personnel and also the development of ties between social organizations in the two countries.

With a view to achieving the goals stated above, the two sides signed an Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the USSR and the Republic of Zimbabwe.

The leaders of both countries reaffirmed the identity or similarity of the positions held by the Soviet Union and Zimbabwe on major contemporary international problems.

In reviewing the world situation, the two sides expressed serious concern over the growing danger of war and tensions caused by the policy of the aggressive imperialist circles which are pushing mankind toward a possible nuclear catastrophe, committing acts of gross interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states and creating hotbeds of international conflicts in various parts of the globe.

Consolidating the interaction of all progressive and peace-loving forces in the struggle for a stronger peace and international security, and ensuring the rights of peoples to independence and social progress were stressed as being highly important.

UNITED, DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

During the talks special attention was paid to the situation in southern Africa where, in an attempt to prevent the inevitable collapse of the inhuman system of apartheid, the racist regime of South Africa

carries out massive brutal reprisals against the African population, launches incessant aggressive raids against Angola and the other front-line states and seeks to impose on them its diktat and to undermine their free development along socio-economic paths of their own choices.

The two sides resolutely condemned these actions by Pretoria's racists and demanded that they be immediately and completely terminated. They expressed their solidarity with the fighters for national liberation, the elimination of the criminal apartheid regime and the establishment of a united, free and democratic state in South Africa. It was reaffirmed that it is important to consolidate further the cohesion and unity of the front-line states in their common struggle against the forces of imperialism and racism.

The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe proceed from the understanding that the attainment of genuine independence by the people of Namibia is the primary objective in the struggle for the elimination of the last bastion of colonialism in Africa and provides the key to a real stabilization in southern Africa. They reject any attempt to find a settlement to the Namibian problem outside the United Nations framework and in disregard of its decisions and the interests of SWAPO which is the only legitimate representative of the people of Namibia. The two sides stated that a series of relevant United Nations decisions, including especially Resolution 435 of the United Nations Security Council, constitute the only internationally recognized basis for a political settlement in Namibia, and called upon all the members of the United Nations Security Council to meet their obligations concerning an immediate and unconditional implementation of those decisions. They reaffirmed their full support for SWAPO and its just struggle for the freedom of Namibia.

MANDATORY SANCTIONS

The two sides expressed their common conviction that the so-called policy of "constructive engagement" with South Africa's racist regime, pursued by the U.S. administration, as well as the attempts to portray the situation in southern Africa as part of "East-West" confrontation are not only unte-

nable but also spearheaded against the vital interests of the African peoples. That policy serves only to encourage South Africa's racists to continue aggression and violence.

The two sides supported the demands of the broad international public that comprehensive mandatory sanctions be applied against South Africa in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe gave a high assessment of the activities of the Organization of African Unity which is an important instrument of the African countries in the struggle against imperialism, for the elimination of the remnants of colonialism in Africa and the solution of the continent's pressing socio-economic and political problems.

Both sides strongly condemned the escalation of imperialist interference in the internal affairs of the countries of Central America, the building up of foreign military presence in that region and the intensification of hostile actions against Nicaragua which endanger peace in the region, affect the overall international situation and run counter to the desire of the peoples of the region for a peaceful settlement on a mutually acceptable basis.

The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe expressed their grave concern over the situation in the Middle East which remains tense and explosive through the fault of Israel and its patrons. They stressed the need for a just and comprehensive Middle East settlement based on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all the Arab territories occupied since 1967, the realization of the legitimate right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and the establishment of their own state, as well as on ensuring secure existence to all the countries of the region. Such a settlement could be brought about only through the collective effort of all the parties concerned, including the PLO, in the framework of an international conference.

The two sides expressed their concern over tensions in South-East Asia. They were convinced that a solution to the problems in that region could be found through a dialogue between the states of the region, with a view to seeking mutually acceptable solutions on the basis of respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe welcome the constructive proposals made to this effect by the countries of Indochina and think that their implementation could help to

make this region a zone of peace, stability and cooperation.

SUPPORT FOR NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

The two sides noted with satisfaction an ever increasing role played by the non-aligned movement which is a major factor in international relations striving for international detente, the cessation of the arms race, stronger national independence, the development of international cooperation on the basis of justice and equality, the democratization of international relations, and the establishment of a new international economic order.

The Soviet side noted with satisfaction that Harare has been chosen as the venue for the Eighth Conference of the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries, which attests to the high prestige the Republic of Zimbabwe and its leadership enjoy in the international arena, and expressed wishes for success in organizing the Conference.

The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe stated that they regard the United Nations as the main authoritative international forum making an important contribution to the maintenance and consolidation of peace and international cooperation, and reaffirmed their adherence to its purposes and principles.

Note was taken of the need for enhancing the role of the United Nations in the main area of the struggle to terminate the arms race on Earth, to prevent its extension into outer space and to remove the threat of nuclear war.

Confidence was expressed that both countries will continue to cooperate successfully in the United Nations for the purpose of strengthening peace, eliminating the vestiges of colonialism in all its manifestations and establishing equitable international economic relations.

Both sides express their profound satisfaction over the results of the visit the Party and Government delegation of the Republic of Zimbabwe paid to the USSR and regard them as an important contribution to strengthening friendship and understanding between the Soviet and Zimbabwean peoples.

The First Secretary of ZANU-PF Robert Mugabe extended an invitation to the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Comrade M.S. Gorbachov to visit Zimbabwe in the future.

It was accepted with gratitude.

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